



Mobile Phone and Camera Policy

January 2019

Date of review: January 2021

MERSEA ISLAND SCHOOL

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Mobile Phone and Camera Policy

Mersea Island Primary School fosters a 'culture of safety' in which the children and staff are protected from abuse, harm, and distress. We therefore have a clear policy on the acceptable use of mobile phones by staff, children, visitors and parents.

Rationale

Mobile phones are now a feature of modern society and an increasing number of staff, visitors and pupils own one.

Increasing sophistication of mobile phone technology presents a number of issues for schools:

- The integration of cameras into phones leading to potential child protection and data protection issues
- The increasing number of young children owning mobile phones
- The increasing number of social networking sites easily accessible to children
- The high value of many phones

Abiding by the terms of the school's mobile phone policy ensures that we all:

- Protect children from harm and abuse
- Prevent staff from being subject to false allegations
- Help staff remain focused on the care of children
- Work in an open and transparent environment

Upon registration, permission is sought from parents/carers for photographs to be taken of their child.

These photographs will be used for a number of reasons listed below:

- To record the child's daily routine
- To record the child's development
- To share with parents via newsletter, prospectus etc.
- We also request permission for the photographs that have been taken of the child may be displayed in the following locations:
 - On display within classroom/shared areas
 - On the school website
 - In the media

If and when photographs are used and shared, full names of children will not be used.

No payments will be made or taken for using photographs of a child in any of the above situations.

Staff/Governor and Volunteer Use of Mobile Phones

- Staff are asked to keep personal mobile phones out of sight in their bags / desks / store cupboards during working hours other than in the case of an emergency
- Phones must not be used for any purpose (e.g. phoning, texting, internet, taking photos, checking the time, recording videos) during lesson time and must be on 'silent' or switched off.
- If a member of staff needs to make an urgent personal call they can use their phone at an appropriate non-contact time
- If a member of staff has a family emergency or similar and needs to keep their mobile phone to hand, prior permission must be sought from their phase leader/Head Teacher.
- Under no circumstances may staff use their personal mobile phones to take photographs/video footage in school or on visits. School cameras and IPADs are provided for this purpose.
- Any staff member, governor, volunteer or student found to be non-compliant with this policy will face disciplinary action.

Children's Use of Mobile Phones

- Whilst we understand that some children have mobile phones, we actively discourage them from bringing them to school.
- Children are permitted to bring mobile phones into school. Their phone must be turned off and handed in to office at the start of the day. It will then be given out at the end of the day to take home.
- The school does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to mobile phones brought to the office by the children.
- Children must not use their mobile phone to take photographs of any kind whilst in school, in the playground or on visits.
- If a child is found with a phone on their person or in their bag, the phone will be confiscated and handed to the main office. It will be returned to the child after a discussion with parents.

Visitors' Use of Mobile Phones

- Parents, governors, contractors and all other visitors must not use their mobile phone, or any other device, to take photographs in school or on school visits.
- Contractors, governors and visitors are requested to put their phones on silent and told not to use to take photos or video footage whilst on site. There will be exceptional circumstances regarding contract workers who will need to seek permission in advance to use their phones solely for the purpose of the work they are completing. Should contractors, governors or visitors need to make or receive a phonecall whilst on school site, they will be advised by staff of an appropriate location.
- Parents are advised when they can take photographs, i.e. during an activity or at a performance, sports day etc. and they are asked to not share these pictures or upload them to social networking sites.

School Mobile Phones

Applicable to site staff and any adults using a school mobile phone whilst on school visits or residential.

- Staff are responsible for the security of the school mobile phone. It should not be left unattended or on display (especially in vehicles).
- Staff will report the loss or theft of any school mobile phone equipment immediately
- The school remains responsible for all call costs until the phone is reported lost or stolen (providing staff have adhered to policy).
- School SIM cards must only be used in school provided mobile phones.
- All school mobile phones are barred from calling premium rate numbers and any numbers outside of the UK as the default.
- Staff must not send text messages to premium rate services.
- In accordance with the Finance policy on the private use of School provided mobiles, you must reimburse the school for the cost of any personal use of the school mobile phone. Payment arrangements should be made through the finance administrator.
- Never use a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving a vehicle. Only genuine 999 or 112 emergency calls may be made if it would be unsafe to stop before doing so.

Policy agreed by: Governing Board of Mersea Island School

Date: 25th January 2019