



St Winefride's Catholic Primary School

Use of Mobile Phones Policy

St. Winefride’s Catholic Primary School Social Media Policy for Staff, Children and Parent/Carers

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Mission Statement

St Winefride's is a Catholic Primary School where our mission statement underpins every aspect of school life.

We celebrate God's love for everyone. We enjoy learning and growing together in our caring and welcoming family.

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."

Matthew 19:14

Introduction

This policy outlines the acceptable use of mobile phones at St Winefride's Catholic Primary School in the context of safeguarding, underpinned by our Mission Statement which permeates everything we do and say. At St Winefride's Catholic Primary School we recognise the vulnerability of our children and the potential for exploitation and abuse through the inappropriate use of mobile phones. We take steps to ensure that our safeguarding procedures are all-encompassing and robust.

Mobile phone technology has advanced significantly over the last few years - and it continues to evolve. Wireless connections in particular have extended the capabilities of mobile phones, enabling access to a wide range of new content and services globally. Many phones now offer Internet and email access, alongside the most often standard functions of messaging, camera, video and sound recording. Mobile phones, alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance; however there are also associated risks. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe. As with online safety issues generally, risks to children and young people can be broadly categorised under the headings of content, contact and conduct and they may be managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

Aim of the Policy

The aim of the Use of Mobile Phones Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools - which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

The policy aims to:

- Ensure that there is clear and shared understanding of and adherence to its principles of by all stakeholders and visitors (including contractors, kitchen staff, mid-day assistants and cleaning staff).
- Raise the awareness of all staff (including students on placement, volunteers and those from Supply Agencies) of the crucial role of safeguarding in all areas of school life.
- Alert staff members to the potential for predatory behaviour in a range of contexts through various means and ensure increased vigilance.
- Secure an environment in which children (and their families) are protected from the risk of images being recorded and used/stored for inappropriate purposes.
- Make sure that children receive the undivided attention of adults at all time.

Scope and Key Principles of the Policy

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones on site.

This includes governors, staff, volunteers, children, young people, parents/carers, visitors and community users, contractors etc. This list is not exhaustive.

The key principles of this policy are:

- Every child has a right to be valued as an individual and treated with dignity and respect.
- The safeguarding of children is of paramount importance.
- All children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm.
- Every staff member is accountable for the safeguarding of our children.

Personal Mobiles

This policy is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity. It is therefore ensured that all practitioners:

- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse of a mobile phone.
- Are vigilant and alert to potential warning signs of misuse.
- Know how to minimise risk.
- Avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- Understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use of a mobile phone.
- Are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours.
- Are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

It is fully recognised that studies consistently indicate that imposing rigid regulations and/or 'bans' on the actions of others can be counterproductive, leading to a culture of suspicion, uncertainty and secrecy. The imposition of rigorous, inflexible rules is therefore avoided, unless the potential risks of not enforcing them far out-weigh the benefits. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting environment, which is agreed to by all practitioners. Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile phones causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against potential misuse. In the interests of equality, and to further promote safety, the guidance applies to any individual who has a mobile phone on site, including children, parents and visitors, as detailed below:

Governors, Staff, Volunteers and Student Teachers are permitted to have their mobile phones about their person; however there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to allocated lunch and/or tea breaks. Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, phones must be switched off and calls and texts must not be taken or made during lesson time.

The only exceptions to this are those people designated as first contacts by Blake's Security in case of a fire alarm, those people being the Headteacher, the Deputy Head, the School Business Manager, the Admin Manager and the site Supervisor. These people **MUST** keep their mobiles switched on at all times.

In addition the only areas in which a mobile phone should be used are those to which children have no access i.e. Staff Room, Headteacher's Office, School Office, DSCR, etc. Mobile phones should not be used in classrooms, the dinner hall, corridors, stairways or the playground.

St. Winefride's Catholic Primary School Social Media Policy for Staff, Children and Parent/Carers

Children may bring mobile phones to school but they must be handed in to the class teacher at the beginning of the day. They will be returned at the end of the school day as the children are dismissed to go home. If a child is found to be using a mobile phone during the school day it will be confiscated and held in the School Office until the child's parent/carer is able to come in and collect it.

Visitors, including parent/carers, professionals, contractors etc. may bring mobile phones on to the school site but, when visiting the school, are asked to switch them off and place them out-of-sight until they leave the premises (including the playground) and have exited the school.

Visitors waiting briefly in reception – e.g. to collect a child – may keep phones to hand but they must be stored out of sight and not used.

Visitors found to be using their phones in contravention of this guidance will initially be reminded of the policy and ultimately asked to leave.

Where possible, all visitors are made aware of the mobile phone policy in advance either through written or verbal communication (e.g. for parents this may be in 'New Starter' documentation, school newsletters, letters inviting parents to annual review meetings, mailings, emails, etc.)

If contractors are required to have their mobile phone to hand in order to convey live information to their line manager or head office they will seek prior permission to do so in advance and will be accompanied around the site.

The use of personal mobiles to take photographs of the site (internal or external e.g. corridors, classrooms, central areas, playground, etc.) or of children or staff is strictly prohibited.

Any individual bringing a personal device into the school must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

The Use of Mobile Phones to Capture Images

Staff, Volunteers and Student Teachers, etc. are generally not permitted, in any circumstance, to use their phones for taking, recording or sharing images and 'mobile free' areas must be observed at all times. However the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) do recognise that staff members may find the use of a mobile phone to be the best method of taking photographs at events such as sporting events and educational visits however this must be authorised by a member of SLT before the event. Staff members must transfer the images to the school intranet as soon as is practical after the event and delete the images from their personal mobile phone. Best practice would be to ensure that another member of staff watches as this is done.

Educational Visits

In the case of Educational visits it is expected that each member of staff WILL use their mobile phone to ensure the safety of the children. This means that any Educational Visit Leader (EVL) will provide their mobile phone contact number on the Educational Visit Form (EVF). The EVL will also gather the contact information of the other adults supervising the visit, whose names will be listed on the EVF, and ensure that each adult on the visit has the contact details of the others. The Home Contact listed on the EVF must also give their mobile phone number to ensure that they may be contacted in any and all eventualities. It must be remembered that the use of the mobile phone on the visit should be limited to contacting the school and in emergency, the other members of staff on the visit. Mobile phones should not be used to capture images of the visit, each phase have allocated cameras for this purpose. However if there is no camera available and a member of the SLT gives permission to do so, mobile phones may be used to capture images as long as the protocol above is followed.

Social Media

It is recognised that many members of the School Community will have Social Media Accounts, and most will access their account through their mobile phone. We would therefore recommend that this policy is read in conjunction with the Social Media Policy. Social Media use is not allowed in the school building during school time, except in cases where it is used to aid the children's learning and then only with permission of the SLT. Particular attention should be paid to the sections on 'Terms of Use', 'Guidance and Protection' and 'Cyber Bullying'.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

If you have any evidence of pupils or adults using mobile phones in an inappropriate way, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead¹ in school.

¹ The Designated Safeguarding Leads are: Mrs Sheila Britton, Mr Paul Underwood and Mrs Nicola Brosnan.

Review

The Governing Board reviews this policy every two years, or when new guidance is provided by the local authority. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved

Date: 22nd November 2017

Review Date: 22nd November 2019

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Underwood', with a large, sweeping initial 'P'.

Paul Underwood
Headteacher

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Fernandes', with a large, sweeping initial 'T'.

Tony Fernandes
Chair of Governors