

# THE ARUN VILLAGES FEDERATION

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### Amberley C.E.P School and St. James' C.E.P School

#### **Safe Use of Mobile Phones Policy**

*See also Acceptable Use Policy; Online Safety Policy*

#### **Rationale**

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, particularly associated with social media. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe. As with e-safety issues generally, risks to children and young people can be broadly categorised under the headings of content, contact and conduct, and are managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

#### **Aim**

The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice; to avoid distraction and disruptions to the working day; and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images of children, or to misuse the technology in any other way. 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.

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, governors, children, young people, parents, carers, professional colleagues, visitors and community users.

#### **Practice**

We aim to ensure that all members of the school community:

- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- Know how to minimise risk and 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.
- Are responsible for and manage their own behaviours and are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

#### **Personal Mobiles**

Employees are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during lesson time.

Staff must ensure that mobile phones are turned off or on silent at all times while on school premises. They must be kept in a locker or bag and not be left on display.

In the event that an employee has a particular reason, for a specified period of time they may request via the Headteacher that they leave their phone on during working hours.

Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children

Mobile phones are not be used by anybody in a space where children are present (e.g. classrooms, playground).

Staff driving the minibus always have a mobile phone with them in case of emergencies. This is usually one of the school phones (see below) but may have to be a personal mobile phone if the school phones are not available.

### **Work Related Mobile Phones**

The school has two mobile phones. These are used for trips and residential visits. They are pre-loaded with key telephone numbers and enable members of school staff to remain in contact with each other and with parents with the need to disclose personal mobile phone numbers. The phones are managed by the School Business Manager, who signs them out as appropriate. Staff must always use these phones for school matters and must not use their personal mobile phones to contact parents.

### **Pupil Use**

We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and that they also play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, mobile phones can cause distraction and/or distress, and therefore as a general rule, children are expected to leave them at home. Where a parent/carer thinks it is essential for the child to bring his/her phone to school, the following procedures are to be followed:

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- Children must have permission from the head of school before they bring a mobile phone to school.
- Mobile phones are handed into the pupil's class teacher at the start of the day, are locked away during the school day and collected at the end of the day.
- Children are not allowed to use their mobile phones on site at the start or end of the school day.

If a pupil is found to be using their own, or a "borrowed" mobile phone during the school day, outside of the above guidelines, the phone (including sim card) will be confiscated and taken to the school office from where it can be collected at the end of the day; parents will be notified.

The school reserves the right to refuse to allow persistent offenders to bring a mobile phone to school.

### **Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors**

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy whilst on the premises. This means that they should be kept out of sight and on silent whilst on school grounds. We request that only urgent calls are made or received whilst on site. Any calls must be taken well away from children. The mobile phone policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction.

### **Parents**

Parents are requested only to use mobile phones for urgent communication when in the school building. They are asked to ensure that they are switched off or on silent during assemblies or productions or when visiting classes.

However, we allow parents to use phones to photograph or video school events such as shows and sports day. We insist that parents do not publish any images (e.g. on Facebook) that include children other than their own and that they follow the guidelines on display.

### **Review**

This policy will be revisited annually by the Governing Board as part of the September review, and reviewed/updated/amended as appropriate.

