



# The Consortium Trust

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## Mobile Device Policy

### 1. Introduction:

- 1.1 Mobile 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 and other mobile devices including smart watches, enabling access to a wide range of new content and services globally. Many devices now offer internet and email access, alongside the most often standard functions of messaging, camera, video and sound.
- 1.2 Mobile technology is changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They provide security and reassurance; however there are also associated risks. Children, young people and their parents 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 managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.
- 1.3 This policy must be read in conjunction with the Online Safety Policy.

### 2. Aim:

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

### 3. Scope:

- 3.1 This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones at any of the Trust's schools or establishments. This includes staff, volunteers, children, young people, parents/carers, visitors and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

### 4. Policy Statement:

- 4.1 It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile devices that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.
- 4.2 It is also recognised that mobile devices can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.
- 4.3 When mobile devices are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.
- 4.4 It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile devices is therefore limited regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.



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4.5 Designated 'mobile free' areas situated within all of our settings are:

- Changing areas – (classrooms whilst children are changing for activities)
- Toilets

4.6 A zero tolerance policy is in place with regards to the **use** of personal or work-related devices by any individual in these areas.

## 5. Staff Code of Conduct:

5.1 A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect for each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

5.2 It is therefore ensured that all practitioners:

- > Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse
- > Are vigilant and alert to potential warning signs
- > 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
- > Are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours
- > Are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly

5.3 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.

5.4 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 devices within the setting environment, which is agreed to by all practitioners.

## 6. Procedures for EVERYONE

6.1 Personal devices: effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile devices causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the school or establishment, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against potential misuse.

6.2 In the interests of equality, and to further promote safety, the following guidance applies to any individual who has a mobile device on site, including staff, children, parents and visitors, as detailed below.

6.3 **Staff, volunteers and student teachers** are permitted to have their mobile devices about their person; however there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to allocated breaks and within staff only areas.

6.4 Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances with the Academy Head or line manager, devices must be switched off or silenced and calls and texts must not be taken or made during directed time.



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- 6.5 **Staff, volunteers and student teachers** are generally not permitted, in any circumstance, to use their devices for taking, recording or sharing images and 'mobile free' areas must be observed at all times. However, it is recognised that staff members may find the use of a mobile device to be the best method of taking photographs at events such as sporting events and educational visits, however this must be authorised by the Academy Head, line manager or authorised person 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 device.
- 6.6 **Staff, volunteers and student teachers** are not permitted to use their own personal devices for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside the setting unless authorised by the Academy Head or line manager.
- 6.7 **Parents/carers, visitors and contractors** are required not to use their mobile devices in any of the designated mobile free areas. Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children in order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others. Under no circumstances is **any** individual permitted to take images or make recordings on a mobile device. Any individual bringing a personal device into the setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.
- 6.8 **Pupils** are required not to use their mobile phones in any of the designated mobile free areas. Under no circumstances is **any** individual permitted to take images or make recordings on a mobile device. Any individual bringing a personal device into the setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content. Primary age pupils: are not permitted to retain mobile devices on their person, refer to section 9 'Safe Storage' Any personal devices will be handed into the school office and collected at the end of the day.

## 7. Work mobile (staff only)

- 7.1 The use of a designated work mobile device is promoted (each school and establishment will assess the precise need and implementation) as it is:
- An essential part of the emergency toolkit which is taken on off-site educational visits
  - An effective communication aid, enabling text, email messages and calls to be made and received
  - A back-up facility should problems be experienced with the landline – or where contact needs to be made outside of work hours
- 7.2 Effective security measures are in place to safeguard against any potential misuse. Only authorised individuals have access to the work mobile device, stored securely when not in use.
- 7.3 Personal calls are not permitted to be made on the work mobile device, other than agreed exceptional circumstances. Contact or calls can be made via the work mobile device in the event of an emergency. All calls are logged.
- 7.4 The work mobile device is clearly labelled as such, and additional features such as cameras are disabled or not in use.

## 8. Driving

- 8.1 If any practitioner is required to drive in a working capacity, and has responsibility for the work mobile device, the device must be switched off whilst driving. It is strongly recommended that practitioners follow the same procedures regarding their own personal mobile devices.



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8.2 Under no circumstances should practitioners drive whilst taking a phone call. This also applies to hands-free and wireless connections, which are considered a distraction rather than a safer alternative.

## 9. Safe storage

9.1 A designated safe and secure area for practitioners and pupils to store their personal mobile devices during the working day, including extended and holiday school sessions will be made available. Exact storage arrangements will be confirmed at each site. Practitioners and pupils have the **option** to store their mobile devices in this area, should they choose. However this is not a mandatory requirement. The exception is Primary aged pupils, where there is a system of collecting, storing and returning mobile devices on a daily basis. Any school devices will be collected and returned to the school office and a Loan Agreement Form must be filled in and signed by the parent.

9.2 Belongings left in safe storage is at the individuals own risk. It is therefore recommended that devices are security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damage is accepted by the school or the Trust.

9.3 As well as safeguarding children and avoiding any unnecessary disruptions during the day, this procedure also aims to protect staff against any unfounded allegations.

## Document Control

### Changes History

Version	Date	Amended By	Details of Change
V2	04/02/2021	Principal/CEO	To extend the policy to cover all mobile enabled devices

### Approval

Name	Job Title	Signed	Date
Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	Principal/CEO	Electronic signature	11/10/18
Dawn Carman-Jones	On behalf of the Trust Board	Electronic signature	11/10/18

### Equality Impact Assessment

Date	Name	Details

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