

Camphill Primary School



Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones and Related Technologies Policy

May 2018

Camphill Primary School accepts that some parents/guardians give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently.

Camphill Primary School therefore has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones and Related Technologies. The policy provides teachers, pupils, parents/guardians with guidelines and instructions for their appropriate use during school hours.

This policy also applies to students during school excursions and extra-curricular activities.

Camphill Primary School **strongly discourages** pupils from bringing mobile phones to school. The school takes no responsibility for mobile phones. Mobile phones are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

If pupils bring mobile phones to school, the phones must remain **switched off** and kept in their school bag while pupils are in class, the school building, the school grounds or during off site activities.

Should parents need to contact pupils during the school day, or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures: via the school office.

Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone during the school day, the phone will be taken from the pupil and handed to a member of the school's Senior Management Team (SMT). The mobile phone will be stored in the school office and the child's parent/guardian will be contacted to collect the phone from the office.

Phones must **NEVER** be used to photograph other children within the school. There are children in school whose parents have opted for 'no photographs' in the consent forms.

If a pupil uses a mobile phone (eg. Phone calls on school premises, to send texts or to take photographs/video footage of either other pupils or teachers), this will be regarded as a serious offence and the Principal will decide on appropriate disciplinary action in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

If a pupil repeatedly misuses their mobile phone on school premises they will be required to leave the phone at the school office during the school day. The pupil would collect the mobile phone before leaving the premises at the end of the school day.

It should be noted that it is a **criminal offence** to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. The Principal or a member of the school's SMT may consider it appropriate to refer any such matter to the PSNI.

If images (photographic or video) of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the pupil, in the presence of a member of the SMT and the child's parent/guardian has removed the images.

In exceptional circumstances a mobile phone may be retained until further advice has been sought.

A member of the school's SMT will contact parents/guardians in all cases where inappropriate photographs/video/audio footage has been found and the PSNI may also be contacted.

RELATED TECHNOLOGY

The procedures applying to the inappropriate use of mobile phones, apply equally to the inappropriate use of related technologies with similar capabilities, eg, messaging, recording (audio & video), photography etc.

EXEMPTIONS

Exemptions of this policy can only be approved by the Principal and then only in exceptional circumstances. Pupils may be allowed to use these technologies under the specific guidance of their teacher on a specific day. Eg., the last day of term.

ADULT USE OF TECHNOLOGY AT SCHOOL

Staff:

- Staff must have their phones on 'silent' or switched off during class time.
- Staff may not make or receive calls during teaching time. If there are extreme circumstances (eg. acutely sick relative) the member of staff will have made the Principal aware of this and can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- Use of phones must be limited to non-contact time when no children are present.
- Phones must be kept out of sight (eg. drawer, handbag, pocket) when staff are with children.
- Calls/ texts must be made/ received in private during non-contact time.
- Phones will never be used to take photographs of children or to store their personal data.
- Staff should never send to colleagues or pupils text or images that could be deemed as inappropriate. If any staff receives an unwanted text or image from colleagues, pupils or parents the Principal will be informed.
- Staff should contact parents using the school phone. When it is necessary to use a personal mobile phone "Caller ID" should be deactivated.
- A school mobile will be carried to sporting fixtures away from school or on an educational visit for contacting parents in the event of an emergency.

Parents & other visitors:

- Normally mobile phones must not be used to take photographs in the school building or grounds. An exception may be made during a school event.
- On certain 'Special Occasions' such as Christmas, PTA events etc. the Principal will permit **photographs** to be taken. However, such photographs must not be published on social media without the permission of everyone included.
- In the event of an unplanned school closure (ie. snow closure or a heating failure) the school will send each family a message using the Call Parents System informing them of the change of circumstances. It is therefore imperative that parents supply school with at least one up-to-date mobile number to be able to use the Call Parents System.

This Policy was updated in May 2018.

Related Policies:

- E-Safety
- Acceptable Use of the Internet and Digital Technologies
- Child Protection
- Positive Behaviour
- Educational Visits