

The Diamond Learning Partnership Trust



Mobile Phone Policy

This policy will be checked annually and revised accordingly, or where there is a change in the law or circumstances

Mobile Phone Policy

Introduction and Aims

At schools, in the Diamond Learning Partnership Trust, welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the working day, and which are most susceptible to misuse - including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. However as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

Code of conduct

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 each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

Our aim is therefore that all practitioners:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes 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;
- are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

Personal Mobiles –Staff

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts **during contact time** with children.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight during class time.
Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present.
- Where possible, the use of phones (inc. receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present. It is also advised that staff use the security on their phones to protect against access.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Head of school aware of this and they can have their phone available.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Head of School.
- Staff should not share their mobile phone numbers with children, past or present.

Mobile Phones for work related purposes

We recognise that mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on offsite activities. However, staff should ensure that:

- Mobile phone use on these occasions is appropriate and professional and where possible a school mobile phone rather than a personal mobile should be used;
- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office;
- Where parents are accompanying trip's they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children.

Personal Mobiles – Pupils

We recognise that mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others. Therefore:

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips.
- If, in the rare event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school, to contact the parent after school:
 - The parent must discuss the issue first with their child's teacher.
 - The phone must be handed in to the school office, switched off, first thing in the morning and collected from them by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk).
- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff, whilst on the premises. On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones.

Parents

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones at school, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as essential means of communication at all times.

We therefore ask that parents' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site, is *courteous* and *appropriate* to the school environment.

We also allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phones – **but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.**

Please refer to Guidance on the Use of Photographic Images and Videos of Children in Schools.

Dissemination

The mobile phone policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available to parents via the school website.