



Mobile device, smartwatch, camera and electronic device Policy

Ratified	Reviewed	Review dated
November 2018	November 2022	November 2024

Introduction and Aims

The aim of the Mobile device, smartwatch, camera and electronic device 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.

For the purposes of this policy please read 'digital device' and 'mobile device' as any mobile device, camera/smart phone, smart watches, tablets and other communication devices.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile devices on site. This includes staff, volunteers, Board of Governors, children, young people, parent(s)/guardian(s), carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

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

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Effective Responses to Bullying Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety Policy

Camera/smart mobile devices, smart watches, tablets and other communication devices

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile devices, smart watches, tablets and other communication devices that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of e.g. images of pupils/staff to other mobile device users or email addresses or social media which could result in bullying or harassment.

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. When mobiles phones 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.

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.

Staff Use

- Staff are not permitted to use personal mobile devices during contact time with children.
*Emergency contact situations may require use.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer or handbag) during contact time.
- Use of phones (inc. receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present.
- Staff are also advised to security protect access to their device i.e. set a PIN number.
- Staff should NEVER contact pupils or parent(s)/guardian(s) from their personal mobile devices, or give their mobile device number to pupils or parent(s)/guardian(s). If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with parent(s)/guardian(s), please do so via the school office.
- Staff are not at any time, permitted to use recording equipment on their personal mobile devices, for example: to take recordings of children. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and ipads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Principal or Vice-Principal.

Staff should understand that failure to comply with this policy is likely to result in disciplinary action.

Mobile Devices for work related purposes

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

- Mobile device use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children).
- Mobile devices should not be used to make contact with parent(s)/guardian(s) during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office.
- Where parent(s)/guardian(s) are accompanying trips, they are informed not to make contact with other parent(s)/guardian(s) (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their device to take photographs of children.

Pupil Use

St. MacNissi's Primary School discourages pupils from bringing mobile devices to school due to the potential issues outlined above.

- Exceptions will be made for those pupils who travel home independently, and may need to use a mobile device outside of school premises. These pupils will require parental permission (contained within our yearly permission requests). All other communication home should be made via school office.
- Where permission has been provided, and a pupil carries a mobile device to school, this device should be switched off and given to the teacher to whilst in school.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are advised that St. MacNissi's Primary School accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile devices which are brought into the school or school grounds.

- Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile device, the device will be taken from the pupil, placed in the care of the Safeguarding Team, and the pupils' parent(s)/guardian(s) contacted immediately.

If a pupil is found taking photographs, audio or video footage with a mobile device of either other pupils or staff, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action will be taken according to the school's Behaviour Policy.

- If images, audio or video footage have been taken, the mobile device will not be returned to the pupil until the material has been deleted in the presence of the Principal or Vice-Principal and the parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Should a pupil be found to be using a mobile device inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a mobile device into school.

Pupils are not permitted to have mobile devices on school trips, unless the Principal has granted permission in exceptional circumstances.

Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors

All volunteers, Board of Governors, contractors and other visitors are expected to follow our mobile device 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 devices.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

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

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

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

Please talk to your child about the risks and responsibilities when using mobile devices and social media platforms which can be accessed from mobile devices.

Should parent(s)/guardian(s) need to contact pupils, or vice versa, this should be done following via the school office.

Dissemination

The mobile device policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their Induction, and on an annual basis thereafter. It will also be available to parent(s)/guardian(s) via the school office.

