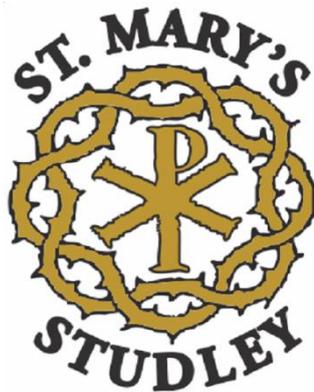


**ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL,  
STUDLEY**



**Mobile Phone and Wearable Technology Policy**

**Headteacher**

O. Finnegan

**Chair of Governors**

S. Coyne



## Mobile Phone and Wearable Technology Policy

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Mobile phone and wearable 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, enabling access to a wide range of new content and services globally. Many phones now offer Internet and email access, alongside the most often standard functions of messaging, camera, video and sound recording.

### 2. AIM

- 2.1 The aim of the mobile phone and wearable technology policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines. 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.

### 3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones and wearable technology on site. This includes practitioners, volunteers, committee members, 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 phones and wearable technology that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.
- 4.2 It is also recognised that mobile phones and wearable technology can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others. When mobile phones and wearable technology 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 phones 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.
- 4.3 Designated 'mobile and wearable technology free' areas which are situated within the setting are:
- All classrooms and learning spaces during the school day: 8.50am - 3.20pm and 8.45am - 4.30pm when school clubs are running.
  - Pupil toilets.

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

- 4.4 Staff, volunteers and contractors are permitted to use the offices and Staff Room during break time and lunchtime to check their phones.

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

- 5.2 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. 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 phones within the setting environment, which is agreed to by all practitioners.

## 6. PROCEDURES FOR PERSONAL MOBILE PHONES

- 6.1 Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile phones and wearable technology causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against potential misuse. In the interests of equality, and to further promote safety, the guidance applies to any individual who has a mobile phone on site, including children, parents and visitors, as detailed below:

- 6.2 **Practitioners** are permitted to have their mobile phones about their person; however there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to allocated lunch and/or break times in areas where pupils are not present. Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, phones must be switched off and calls and texts must not be taken or made during lesson time. Practitioners are not permitted, in any circumstance to use their phones for taking, recording or sharing images and 'mobile free' areas must be observed at all times.\* Practitioners are not permitted to use their own personal phones for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside of the setting, unless it is an emergency.

6.3 **Parents, visitors and contractors** are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones in any of the designated mobile free areas.

\*Footnote: The head and deputy only populate the school Twitter site and (given parental consent) occasionally will photograph and upload photos from their mobile phones to the site. The photos are then deleted (please see Social Networking Policy for more details).

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.

6.4 Should a pupil have to bring a phone into school for a particular purpose this is to be handed into to the office in the morning and can be picked up again at the end of the school day.

6.5 Under no circumstances is any individual permitted to take images or make recordings on a mobile phone (see footnote 1). Any individual bringing a personal device into the setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

## 7. PROCEDURES FOR WORK MOBILE PHONE

7.1 The use of a designated work mobile is promoted as it is:

- An essential part of the emergency toolkit which is taken on off-site trips.
- Used to communicate in an emergency to parents of children with medical conditions, e.g. diabetes.
- 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, stored securely when not in use. Personal calls are not permitted to be made on the work mobile, other than in agreed exceptional circumstances. Contact or calls can be made via the work mobile in the event of an emergency. All calls are logged. The work mobile is clearly labelled as such, and additional features such as cameras must not be used.

7.3 Staff may use their mobile phone on a school trip or residential visit in agreement with the Headteacher. In certain circumstances it is 'safer' to use a familiar device than the work mobile.

## 8. DRIVING

8.1 If any practitioner is required to drive in a working capacity, and has responsibility for the work mobile, the phone must be switched off whilst driving. It is strongly recommended that practitioners follow the same procedures regarding their own personal mobile phones. 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 Practitioners leave their belongings in safe storage at their own risk. It is therefore recommended that phones are security marked, pin protected and insured. The school will accept no liability should a mobile go missing or is damaged in school. As well as safeguarding children and avoiding any unnecessary disruptions during the day, this procedure also aims to protect staff against any unfounded allegations.

## **10. EMERGENCY USE**

- 10.1 It is recognised that mobile phones provide direct contact to others, and at times provide a necessary reassurance due to their ease of access, particularly at stressful times. Practitioners therefore, in agreed exceptional circumstances are permitted to keep the volume of their phone switched on. This is to enhance their own well-being and peace of mind, to reduce stress and worry and to enable them to concentrate more effectively on their work. Such use will be for an agreed limited period only, until any concerns or issues leading to the exceptional circumstance request have been resolved.
- 10.2 It is ensured at all times that the landline telephone remains connected and operational, except in circumstances beyond control. This means that it is available for emergency/urgent contact at all times. The reliance on an answerphone is avoided and only used in exceptional circumstances. If used, the answer phone is always checked promptly on opening or return.

## **11. WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY**

St Mary's Primary School has taken the decision to ban wearable technology e.g. Apple watches. These items can be used as communication devices just like a mobile phone and go against our policy. They are also incredibly expensive and we would not want to see a child lose or damage an item such as this while at school. Also App's and games are also potentially a big distraction to learning. If you are intending on buying such a device, please be aware that children will not be allowed to wear them at school. If a child is found to have wearable technology, then this will be treated in the same manner as using a mobile phone.