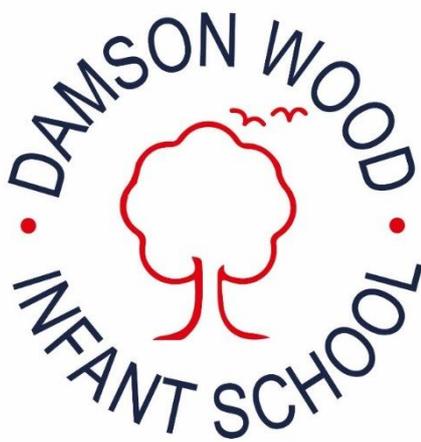


Central Schools Trust

Mobile Phone Policy



Introduction and Aims

The welfare and well-being of all pupils within the Central Schools Trust 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 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 conjunction with the following documentation:

- Safeguarding Children 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 of a mobile device
- 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.

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting, which is agreed to by all users.

Personal Mobiles - Staff

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children; emergency contact should be made via the school office

- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a closed classroom cupboard or locker) during the school day
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground)
- Use of phones (including receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas and staff room
- It is also advised that staff 'security protect' access to functions of their phone
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the Headteacher aware of this
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example, to take recordings of children, or share images
- Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and ipads and uploaded to the school server for storage
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Headteacher, in line with the trust's Whistle Blowing Policy

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 use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children)
- A designated staff photographer can be nominated for each trip where photographs of children enjoying the activity might be posted on the school's twitter account for the pleasure of the parents
 - A designated staff member may also have occasion to take pictures on a mobile in school in order to publish school events on Twitter
 - However, these photos should never be of a single child and, once tweeted, should be deleted from the phone
- 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 trips 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 and devices 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 use mobile phones or devices within the school grounds
- If a child brings a mobile phone into school, then it must be switched off and handed to the class teacher to be looked after until the end of the school day
 - The phone is left at the owner's own risk - staff will not accept responsibility for loss or theft of mobile phones or devices

- Pupils are not permitted to take mobile phones or other mobile devices on any school trip
- Pupils found using phones on school premises, or not handing them in, will have their phone confiscated and returned to them once parents have been contacted
- School will reserve the right to confiscate a phone or other device until a parent is able to come and collect it from the Headteacher in person

Where mobile devices are used in, or out of, school to bully or intimidate others, then the Headteacher does have the power to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site' - refer to Anti-Bullying Policy.

Volunteers, Visitors and Governors

All Volunteers, Visitors and Governors 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.

We recognise that keeping children and young people safe is of paramount importance. If you have a concern regarding the safe use of mobile phones in school, please share your concern directly with the Headteacher.

Site Managers and Contractors

The Trust recognises that the use of mobile phones and Notepads/iPads is an essential part of maintaining communication between Site Managers, Contractors and Office Staff. Job sheets, suppliers and consultants all need to be called upon at any given time. Photographs of works to be carried out or completed need to be taken and, in some cases, kept as a permanent record. However, we expect the use of mobile devices to be kept to a minimum and avoided when children are present if at all possible. Furthermore, when photographs are needed to be taken, it is carried out in such a way that no children are in the photograph.

Parents

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phones while 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.

However, any parents that are working with children on the school premises must adhere to the same conditions as school staff and refrain from using mobile devices where children are present, putting mobiles on silent or turning them off altogether. At other times, we ask that parents' use 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 or videos (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.**

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 office and website. A sign will also be prominently placed in the entrance hall to remind visitors that mobile devices are not to be used around children and that further details are available in the Mobile Phone Policy available in the school office. Contractors will be advised on permitted usage by the point of contact at the school.