



## Park Mains Cluster Primary Schools

### Policy on the use of Personal Mobile Devices

#### Vision

'To enable all schools and local authorities to develop an ethos of citizenship that leads to respectful and responsible use of mobile technology. This will encourage schools to positively embrace mobile technology to enhance learning now and, in the future, whilst helping them protect staff, children and young people from the possible disruptive and harmful consequences of misuse.' Scottish Government "Guidance on Mobile Phones in Scotland's Schools" – Update 2024

#### Context

Mobile technology is an integral part of the lives of children across Scotland, with many bringing their own mobile phone devices into school.

When used responsibly, mobile devices such as phones, smart watches and tablets can be powerful tools to enhance communication and social experience, but it should also be recognised the significant challenges and impact these can have on children. They can bring a sense of security to parents as their children enjoy more independent activities, such as walking to and from school unsupervised.

There is a clear commitment to recognising, respecting and promoting children's rights in Scotland through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and any local decisions relating to the use of mobile devices in school should be made acting in the best interests of the child and taking their views into consideration.

#### Purpose

The purpose of policy to provide advice that encourages safe and responsible use of personal mobile technology in school, and beyond, whilst adopting a robust but measured response to their inappropriate use. This will include restrictions and limitations on the use of mobile phones in schools. This policy has been designed to protect children and staff from harassment and abuse which can arise from the misuse of such technology. They includes the promotion of positive relationships and behaviour in a digital context and the important role of educators in preparing children to become "digital citizens".

#### Guiding Principles

- This policy was development in partnership with all Park Mains Cluster primary schools
- Consistency: Children need to understand that unacceptable behaviour remains unacceptable whether it occurs in an online environment, the playground, the classroom or anywhere else. Expectations for responsible conduct remain consistent, regardless of the context, and any breach of expectations in relation to mobile technology should be treated in accordance with the school's policies. It is expected that staff will respond consistently to any irresponsible use of mobile technology and will explain to children why certain behaviours are unacceptable, and what the potential impact of such behaviours might be in line with existing positive, nurturing relationships or behaviour policies, which will set out how incidents will be dealt with.
- Respect for Rights: We uphold the rights of the child, including their right to express their views and participate in decisions that affect them. We respect the rights of staff and pupils to have a safe and conducive learning environment and recognise that these rights are interconnected. Consideration must be given to how they impact each other.



- Features of a respectful and responsible use of mobile technology policy would fall within three broad categories:
  - digital rights and responsibilities (what individuals can and cannot do)
  - digital etiquette (standards of conduct when using mobile phones)
  - safe and secure use (precautions that can be taken to ensure digital safety)

### Digital Rights and Responsibilities (what individuals can and cannot do)

- Unacceptable Behaviour: Unacceptable behaviour, whether online or offline, is not tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, bullying, harassment and the sharing of inappropriate content.
- Consequences: Pupils who misuse their phone will be subject to the school's own positive relationships and behaviour policies, which already set out how incidents will be dealt with, including agreed consequences and sanctions. Consistency is key to the successful implementation.
- Reporting: Incidents of misuse should be reported by pupils to a teacher or member of staff and there should be clear protocols outlining the support available in school for staff and pupils who are the subject of harassment using mobile devices.

### Digital Etiquette (standards of conduct when using mobile devices)

- On arrival in class, devices should be stored in an agreed place. In Primary, this could be outwith the classroom. There should be an emphasis on the need for safe and responsible use of mobile devices technology by children and staff outwith formal learning and teaching purposes.
- General restrictions: At all times during the school day, mobile phones must be switched off and out of sight (e.g. in school bags). This includes movement between classes/toilets and inside toilet areas.
- Privacy: There is a need to respect privacy and the camera and filming functions on mobile devices must not be used without prior consent of subjects (children or staff) being filmed or photographed, including the uploading of these on social networking or other websites. Camera and filming should not be used in a classroom setting. This also applies within the playground before and after the school day. The use of phones is prohibited at all times in PE areas and in changing/toilet areas.

### Safe and Secure Use (precautions that can be taken to ensure digital safety)

- Curriculum Support: We will incorporate lessons on safe and responsible mobile technology use into our curriculum. In addition, work is ongoing in schools in developing responsible and global citizens, recognising and respecting children's rights, creating an anti-bullying culture and raising awareness of digital and online safety through Health and Wellbeing.
- Parental Involvement: We encourage parents and carers to discuss safe mobile device use with their children.

### Implementation and Enforcement

- Clear Communication: Cluster schools have collaborated on this policy which will be shared on school websites.
- Consistent Enforcement: All staff will consistently enforce this policy, explaining the reasons behind the rules and the potential consequences of non-compliance.
- Review: This policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

### Emergency Contacts

In the case of emergency, pupils should contact a member of staff who will facilitate communication with parents or carer. Parents who need to make urgent contact with their child should contact the school office. Any unwell pupils or required absences should follow the school procedures and protocols.



## Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy may be made for pupils with specific needs, or those with medical conditions. The parameters of any exceptional arrangement will be agreed on by all relevant stakeholders and managed on a case-by-case basis.

## Legal Aspects

We will adhere to all relevant legislation regarding mobile phone use, including laws related to data protection and online safety.

Regardless of specific legal aspects, staff and children need to feel safe and protected. The school's policy promotes positive relationships and behaviour and anti-bullying will provide a framework which should underpin responses to cases where mobile devices have been, or are perceived to have been, misused.

This policy makes clear that there are consequences for misusing mobile technologies. In cases of extreme misuse where criminal events have been recorded using a mobile device, this immediately becomes a police matter and the school will

place the device in the hands of the police without trying to access the contents. School staff cannot access content on a pupil's mobile phone without the pupil's consent, or the consent of their parent or carer where the pupil does not have capacity to consent.

Taking photographs, videos or audio recordings of an individual without their permission may be regarded as a breach of that person's rights, and may, in some instances, be regarded as an offence by the police.

Should images of recordings be uploaded onto social networks without permission from the data subject, the individual should be asked to remove this as part of the normal behaviour policy of the school.

The Council does not accept responsibility for any damage to mobile devices whilst on school property.

## Cluster Practice

These have been collated from our schools to guide and support in the implementation of this policy. Consistency is key.

- On arrival to school all mobile phones should be switched off and wearables e.g. Smart Watches, should have notifications turned off.
- Each class will agree the storage of mobile phones e.g. switched off in bags or in a designated storage area.
- Staff should not handle the mobile phones – the pupil puts their mobile phone in the box / storage area/bag and retrieves it, so they remain responsible for the device.
- Agree with staff, pupils and parents the procedure should a pupil refuse to put the mobile phone in the box/storage area/bag to ensure this is dealt with the same way in every class. This matter should be referred to the Senior Leadership Team who will seek the support of parents in this matter.
- Regular reminders are given to pupils to ensure all are clear about the procedures. This is linked to the positive relationships policy and not just about mobile phones.
- This policy also applies to after school clubs, events and residential with staff, pupils and parents. Any exceptions will be communicated in advance.



- When schools are made aware of inappropriate mobile device usage out with school, with a potential impact on relationships and wellbeing a message will be sent by the school to raise awareness of this issue and provide links allowing parents the opportunity to discuss this further with their child.

*\*\*\*ONLINE SAFETY\*\*\* I have been made aware of inappropriate chats between pupils online which is causing concern. I would encourage parents to check their child's phone and set boundaries for online safety. Thank you for your support with this. We will continue to educate pupils about online safety as part of our health and wellbeing approach and encourage pupils to show school values when online to their peers.*

- Fire evacuation procedures – the priority is to evacuate pupils, not the mobile phones. AirPods and wearables should not be used in class as pupils cannot hear the fire alarm.
- Schools may find it helpful to provide parents with reference to useful literature that will help them understand the need for this policy:
  - TED talk – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DpjSEY3pe7U>
  - Get Safe Online
    - <https://www.getsafeonline.org/personal/article-category/safeguarding-children/>
  - Health and Wellbeing resources
    - <https://sway.cloud.microsoft/8m9tr0cQVAE5mKOC?ref=Link>
    - <https://sway.cloud.microsoft/SpUNDeYyeo8YblbH?ref=Link&loc=mysways>

#### Further Links

- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/mobile-phone-guidance-scotlands-schools/>
- <https://www.adesscot/Content/UserGenerated/file/RRlearningbeyondboundaries1.pdf>
- [https://www.adesscot/Content/UserGenerated/file/InsightsfromYoungPeopleandTeachersinScotland\\_LearningBeyondBoundaries\\_TheStaffCollegeandADES\\_final301024.pdf](https://www.adesscot/Content/UserGenerated/file/InsightsfromYoungPeopleandTeachersinScotland_LearningBeyondBoundaries_TheStaffCollegeandADES_final301024.pdf)
- <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/swiped-the-school-that-banned-smartphones>