



## **MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES POLICY**

Reviewed policy agreed by GB on:	Autumn 2024
Reviewed policy shared with staff on:	Autumn 2024
Policy to be reviewed again on:	Autumn 2027
Committee responsible for review:	Policy Committee

## **Mobile Technologies Policy**

### **Introduction**

The term 'mobile technologies' refers to equipment which is portable, and which has recording and/or photographic capability. Whilst mobile phones are the most commonly used, this policy also applies to technology such as i-pads and tablets. This policy outlines the acceptable use of mobile technologies at Willow Dene in the context of safeguarding, underpinned by our statement of vision and values which permeates everything we do and say. At Willow Dene we recognise the vulnerability of our children and the potential for exploitation and abuse through the inappropriate use of mobile technology. We take steps to ensure that our safeguarding procedures are all-encompassing and robust.

### **Aims**

The policy aims to:

- Ensure that there is clear and shared understanding of and adherence to its principles of by all stakeholders and visitors (including contractors, kitchen staff, mid-day cleaners)
- Raise the awareness of all staff (including students on placement, volunteers and those from Supply Agencies) of the crucial role of safeguarding in all areas of school life
- Alert staff members to the potential for predatory behaviour in a range of contexts through various means and ensure increased vigilance
- Secure an environment in which children (and their families) are protected from the risk of images being recorded and used/stored for inappropriate purposes
- Make sure that children receive the undivided attention of adults at all time

### **Key principles which underpin this policy**

- Every child has a right to be valued as an individual and treated with dignity and respect
- The safeguarding of children is of paramount importance
- All children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm
- Every staff member is accountable for the safeguarding of our children

### **Mobile Technology – Staff: acceptable use**

At Willow Dene we recognise that mobile technology plays an important part in the lives of a significant majority of adults and, when used as they are intended, can bring substantial benefits. We also acknowledge that there is a risk that they can be used for the taking, storing and using of images inappropriately in a way that denies children's right to dignity, privacy and respect and satiates a desire to exploit. They also have the potential to distract staff from their work with children.

Staff members (including volunteers and students on placement) may bring mobile technology onto the school site on the understanding that the device ...

- is used only in the staffroom, outside of the school gate, or (in exceptional circumstances) in office spaces
- is stored in a designated locker away from children (or pedestal drawer or cupboard in the case of office-based staff)
- only used during break times and at either end of the school day
- is not used as a point of contact by relatives, friends, child's school, GP, etc.

(Staff must ensure that all potential contacts have the school landline number so that initial contact is made directly to the school office)

- When off-site, designated members of the group will have a mobile phone available for emergency contact with the school, with each other or with the emergency services. In this context phones will not be used to make or receive personal calls
- Personal mobile technology must not be used to take photos of children except in very exceptional circumstances when permission from a senior leader must be sought and granted in advance and the image erased as soon as possible in the presence of a work colleague
- Teachers who use a personal mobile phone or other form of technology, outside of the school day, to exchange information with parents must do so with extreme caution. Teaching Assistants are strongly discouraged from doing so
- The above information is shared with new staff members as part of the induction process

### **Mobile Technology – Visitors (including parents, professionals, contractors)**

- Visitors may bring mobile technology on to the school site but, when visiting the main school, are asked to switch their devices off and place them out-of-sight until they leave the building and have exited the school gate. This is done as part of the meet-and-greet process in a way that makes clear our safeguarding priorities
- Agency supply staff will be asked to store their phones in designated lockers by reception
- Visitors waiting briefly in reception – e.g. to collect a child – may keep phones or other technology to hand but they must be stored out of sight and not used
- Visitors attending courses in the conference rooms may use their devices once inside those rooms. On leaving, devices must be switched off and kept out-of-sight until outside of the school gate
- Visitors found to be using their phones in contravention of this guidance will initially be reminded of the policy and ultimately asked to leave
- A brief, jargon-free policy summary is available for staff to share with visitors. This ensures that the message is consistent and unequivocal
- Where possible, all visitors are made aware of the mobile technology policy in advance either through written or verbal communication (e.g. for parents this may be in 'New Starter' documentation, school newsletters, letters inviting parents to annual review meetings, mailings, emails, etc)
- Visitors to the EYFS are asked to leave their mobile device either at the reception desk or in the office in the EYFS building, where they will be logged, stored and kept safe in designated lockers until the visitor signs out
- Visitors to Toucan are instructed to leave their devices in designated lockers in the classroom – there is no exception to this rule
- If contractors are required to have their mobile phone to hand in order to convey live information to their line manager or head office they will seek prior permission to do so in advance and will be accompanied around the site
- The use of personal devices to take photographs of the site (internal or external e.g. corridors, classrooms, central areas, swimming pool, etc of children or of staff is strictly prohibited unless in consultation and prior agreement with school leaders
- Visitors to The Courtyard (parents' room) may use their mobile devices whilst inside but are not to take these to the outside space from which children may be visible

### **Roles and responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all staff members to exercise vigilance at all times and to raise concerns as soon as possible, either directly with the person who is contravening expectations or by reporting the incident to a senior leader as soon as possible after the event.

Senior leaders will investigate the detail surrounding reported incidents and take action accordingly. If a staff member is found to have contravened policy expectations the matter will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

Related Documentation  
Safeguarding (including child protection policy)

On-line safety policy

DfES Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2021)

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2015)