Isaac Newton Primary School and Nursery
Policy for Mobile Phones in School

Introduction and Aims

At Isaac Newton Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils 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 establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile phone 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 relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy (CIT website)

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
- 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. This request will be made to the Headteacher or the senior member of staff on site.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight (e.g. in a drawer, handbag or pocket) during class time
- Mobile phones should not be used in a space where children are present (eg. classroom, playground)
- Use of phones (inc. receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms
- 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 (or senior member of staff on site) aware of this and can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images. 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 Headteacher.

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)
- Mobile phones should not be used to make general contact with parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office. Mobile phones may only be used to contact parents in an emergency and when the trip is outside of normal school hours (residentials etc)
- Where parents are accompanying trip's 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 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 have mobile phones at school or on trips
- If in the event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school - the phone must be handed in (switched off) to the school office first thing in the morning and collected from the office by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk)
- Mobile phones brought to school that are not handed into the school office will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day. Parents/Carers will be contacted to ensure that they understand the rules regarding phones.

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, the then the head teacher 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, Governors and Contractors All Volunteers, Visitors, Governors and Contractors 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.

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. We therefore ask that parents' usage 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 (e.g. on social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.**

This policy will form part of the induction for all staff annually (each September) and will be shared with new staff who join during the academic year.