

**BOWES HUTCHINSON'S C OF E VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOL**



**POLICY DOCUMENT**

**ESAFETY,  
INTERNET ENABLED DEVICES AND MOBILE PHONE USE**

**Date Revised: October 2020**

**Date for Review: October 2021**

**Signed: \_\_\_\_\_**

# **BOWES HUTCHINSON'S C OF E VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **INTERNET POLICY**

### **1) Policy, writing and review:**

**Our Internet Policy has been written by the school, building on the Durham NGfL policy and government guidance. It has been agreed by the senior management and approved by governors and the PTA.**

### **2) Importance of the Internet in School:**

The rapid developments in electronic communications are having many effects on society. Internet use is a part of the statutory curriculum and a necessary tool for staff and pupils. The Internet is a part of everyday life for education, business and social interaction. The school has a duty to provide students with quality Internet access as part of their learning experience.

Pupils use the Internet widely outside school and need to learn how to evaluate Internet information and to take care of their own safety and security.

The purpose of Internet use in school is to raise educational standards, to promote pupil achievement, to support the professional work of staff and to enhance the school's management functions.

- Internet use is a part of the statutory curriculum and a necessary tool for staff and pupils.
- Supervised Internet access is an entitlement for students who show a responsible and mature approach to its use.
- The Internet is an essential element in 21<sup>st</sup> century life for education, business and social interaction. The school has a duty to provide students with quality Internet access as part of their learning experience.

### **3) How does the Internet benefit education?**

Benefits of using the Internet in education include:

- access to world-wide educational resources including museums and art galleries;
- educational and cultural exchanges between pupils world-wide;
- cultural, vocational, social and leisure use in libraries, clubs and at home;
- access to experts in many fields for pupils and staff;
- staff professional development through access to national developments, educational materials and good curriculum practice;
- communication with support services, professional associations and colleagues;
- improved access to technical support including remote management of networks;
- exchange of curriculum and administration data with the LEA and DfES.
- access to learning wherever and whenever convenient

### **4) How will Internet use enhance learning?**

- The school Internet access will be designed for pupil and adult use and will include filtering appropriate to the age of pupils.

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- The school's Internet access will be designed to enhance and extend education
- Pupils will be taught what Internet use is acceptable and what is not and given clear objectives for Internet use.
- Pupils will have regular, appropriate e-learning education to ensure that they remain safe whilst online.
- Internet access will be planned to enrich and extend learning activities. Access levels will be reviewed to reflect the curriculum requirements and age of pupils.
- Staff should guide pupils in on-line activities that will support the learning outcomes planned for the pupils' age and maturity.
- Pupils will be educated in the effective use of the Internet in research, including the skills of knowledge location, retrieval and evaluation.

### **5) How will pupils learn to evaluate Internet content?**

The quality of information received via radio, newspaper and telephone is variable and everyone needs to develop critical skills in selection and evaluation. Information received via the Internet, email or text message requires even better information handling and digital literacy skills. In particular it may be difficult to determine origin, intent and accuracy, as the contextual clues may be missing or difficult to read.

- If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content must be reported to the Internet Service Provider via the ICT Co-ordinator.
- Schools should ensure that the use of Internet derived materials by staff and by pupils complies with copyright law.
- Pupils will be taught to acknowledge the source of information used and to respect copyright when using Internet material in their own work.
- Training should be available to staff in the evaluation of Web materials and methods of developing students' critical attitudes.

### **6) How will e-mail be managed?**

The durhamlearning.net email system which is contained in the Durham Learning Gateway (VLE) gives anonymity to pupils through the email address they are given. The pupil's first name and initial letter of their surname are used with a number; e.g. [James.b6001@durhamlearning.net](mailto:James.b6001@durhamlearning.net)

This means the pupil's full name is not available, nor is the location of their school. This system combines the best of practice in pupil email account names. The service is also filtered.

- Pupils may only use durhamlearning.net e-mail accounts on the school system.
- Pupils must immediately tell a teacher if they receive offensive e-mail.
- Pupils must not reveal details of themselves or others in e-mail communication, such as address or telephone number, or arrange to meet anyone.
- Access in school to external personal e-mail accounts may be blocked.
- E-mail sent to an external organisation should be written carefully and authorised before sending, in the same way as a letter written on school headed paper.
- The forwarding of chain letters is not permitted.

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- Staff should only use school email accounts to communicate with pupils as approved by the Senior Leadership Team.

### **7) How should Web site content be managed?**

- The point of contact on the Web site should be the school address, school e-mail and telephone number. Staff or pupils' home or personal information will not be published.
- Written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of pupils are published on the school Web site.
- The headteacher or nominee will take overall editorial responsibility and ensure that content is accurate and appropriate.
- The Web site should comply with the school's guidelines for publications.
- The copyright of all material must be held by the school, or be attributed to the owner where permission to reproduce has been obtained.
- The school will scan regularly (4 times per year) their own web site to check no links exist to inappropriate and potentially dangerous third party sites and any such links will be removed.

### **8) What are newsgroups and e-mail lists?**

- Newsgroups will not be made available to pupils unless an educational requirement for their use has been demonstrated.

### **9) Can Chat be made safe?**

- Pupils will not be allowed access to public or unregulated chat rooms.
- A risk assessment will be carried out before pupils are allowed to use a new technology in school.

### **10) How can emerging Internet applications be managed?**

- Emerging technologies will be examined for educational benefit and a risk assessment will be carried out before use in school is allowed.
- Mobile phones will not be used during lessons or formal school time. The sending of abusive or inappropriate text messages is forbidden.
- See acceptable use policy for adults – staff/visitors/vollunteers

### **11) How will social networking, social media and personal publishing be managed?**

- School will control access to social media and social networking sites. Pupils will be advised never to give out personal details of any kind which may identify them and / or their location. Examples would include real name, address,

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mobile or landline phone numbers, school attended, IM and email addresses, full names of friends/family, specific interests and clubs etc.

- Pupils will be advised not to place personal photos on any social network space. They should consider how public the information is and consider using private areas. Advice should be given regarding background detail in a photograph which could identify the student or his/her location.
- Staff official blogs or wikis should be password protected and run from the school website with approval from the Senior Leadership Team. Staff should be advised not to run social network spaces for pupil use on a personal basis.
- If personal publishing is to be used with pupils then it must use age appropriate sites suitable for educational purposes. Personal information must not be published and the site should be moderated by school staff.
- Pupils should be advised on security and encouraged to set passwords, deny access to unknown individuals and instructed how to block unwanted communications. Pupils should be encouraged to invite known friends only and deny access to others by making profiles private.
- Pupils are advised not to publish specific and detailed private thoughts, especially those that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory.

### **12) How will Internet access be authorised?**

- The school will keep a record of all staff and pupils who are granted Internet access. The record will be kept up-to-date, for instance a member of staff may leave or a pupil's access be withdrawn.
- At Key Stage 1, access to the Internet will be by adult demonstration with occasional directly supervised access to specific, approved on-line materials.
- Parents will be informed that pupils will be provided with supervised Internet access (an example letter for schools is included as an appendix).
- Parents will be asked to sign and return a consent form.

### **13) How will the risks be assessed?**

- In common with other media such as magazines, books and video, some material available via the Internet is unsuitable for pupils. The school will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that users access only appropriate material. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of Internet content, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material will never appear on a school computer. Neither the school nor DCC can accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences of Internet access.
- The use of computer systems without permission or for inappropriate purposes could constitute a criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act 1990.
- Methods to identify, assess and minimise risks will be reviewed regularly.
- The headteacher will ensure that the Internet policy is implemented and compliance with the policy monitored.

**14) How will filtering be managed?**

The technical strategy has been developed to restrict access to inappropriate material (commonly described as filtering):

- **Blocking strategies** prevent access to a list of unsuitable sites or newsgroups. Maintenance of the blocking list is a major task as new sites appear every day.

Despite careful design, filtering systems cannot be completely effective due to the speed of change of Web content. Filtering may be performed by the LA.

School may request that individual sites are opened or blocked.

- Careful monitoring and management of all filtering systems will be required. It is important that the school establishes the filtering criteria rather than simply accepting filtering default settings.
- The school will work in partnership with parents, the LA, and the Internet Service Provider to ensure systems to protect pupils are reviewed and improved.
- The school will work in partnership with parents, the LA and the Internet Service Provider to ensure systems to protect pupils are reviewed and improved.
- If staff or pupils discover unsuitable sites, the URL (address) and content must be reported to the Internet Service Provider via the ICT Co-ordinator.
- Any material that the school believes is illegal must be referred to the Internet Watch Foundation and CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre).

**15) How will the policy be introduced to pupils?**

- Rules for Internet access will be posted in all rooms where computers are used.
- Pupils will be informed that Internet use will be monitored.
- Instruction in responsible and safe use should precede Internet access.
- A module on responsible Internet use and E-safety will be included in the PSHE programme covering both school and home use.

**16) How will staff be consulted?**

- All staff must accept the terms of the '**Responsible Internet Use / Staff Information Code of Conduct**' statement before using any Internet resource in school.
- All staff including teachers, supply staff, classroom assistants and support staff, will be provided with the School Internet Policy, and Internet and E-mail Code of Practice and their importance explained.
- Staff should be aware that Internet traffic/access is automatically monitored and traced to the individual user. Discretion and professional conduct is essential. The

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Headteacher will have a record of what has been accessed. In extreme cases this information may form part of disciplinary action.

- The monitoring of Internet use is a sensitive matter. Staff who operate monitoring procedures should be supervised by senior management.
- Staff development in safe and responsible Internet use, and on the school Internet policy will be provided as required.
- Staff will sign the Document Log to indicate they have received, noted and understand the arrangement for Internet and e-mail use and access.

### **17) How will ICT system security be maintained?**

The school ICT systems will be reviewed regularly with regard to security.

- Virus protection will be installed and updated regularly.
- Security strategies will be discussed with the LA, particularly where a wide area network connection is being planned.
- Personal data sent over the Internet will be encrypted or otherwise secured.
- Staff will be issued with an encrypted memory stick for use in school.
- Use of portable media such as floppy disks, memory sticks and CD-ROMs will be reviewed. Portable media may not be brought into school without specific permission and a virus check.
- Unapproved system utilities and executable files will not be allowed in pupils' work areas.
- Files held on the school's network will be regularly checked.

### **18) How will complaints regarding Internet use be handled?**

- Responsibility for handling incidents will be delegated by the HT to a senior member of staff.
- Any complaint about staff misuse must be referred to the headteacher.
- Pupils and parents will be informed of the complaints procedure.
- Parents and pupils will need to work in partnership with staff to resolve issues.
- As with drugs issues, there may be occasions when the police or child protection staff must be contacted. Early contact could be made to establish the legal position and discuss strategies.
- *Sanctions available include:*
  - interview/counselling by appointed staff
  - informing parents or carers
  - removal of Internet or computer access for a period, which could ultimately prevent access to files held on the system, including examination coursework.
  - other sanctions as defined in school disciplinary system.

**19) How will parents' support be enlisted?**

- Parents' attention will be drawn to the School Internet Policy in newsletters, the school brochure and on the school Web site.
- Internet issues will be handled sensitively to inform parents without undue alarm.
- A partnership approach with parents will be encouraged. An e-safety seminar is available for parents through the Teesdale Extended Schools Cluster.
- Advice on filtering systems and educational and leisure activities that include responsible use of the Internet will be made available to parents.
- Interested parents will be referred to organisations such as PIN, Parents Online and NCH Action for Children (URLs in reference section).
- Parents will receive regular updates re. e-safety via newsletters and the school website.

**20) How will Cyberbullying be managed?**

Cyberbullying (along with all forms of bullying) will not be tolerated in school. Full details are set out in the school's policy on anti-bullying. There will be clear procedures in place to support anyone affected by Cyberbullying.

- All incidents of cyberbullying reported to the school will be recorded.
- There will be clear procedures in place to investigate incidents or allegations of Cyberbullying:
- Pupils, staff and parents/carers will be advised to keep a record of the bullying as evidence.
- The school will take steps to identify the bully, where appropriate, such as examining system logs, identifying and interviewing possible witnesses, and contacting the service provider and the police, if necessary.
- Sanctions for those involved in Cyberbullying may include:
- The bully will be asked to remove any material deemed to be inappropriate or offensive.
- A service provider may be contacted to remove content.
- Internet access may be suspended at school for the user for a period of time.
- Parent/carers may be informed.
- The Police will be contacted if a criminal offence is suspected.

**21) How will Learning Platforms and learning environments be managed?**

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and staff will monitor the usage of the Durham Learning Gateway (DLG) by pupils and staff regularly in all areas, in particular message and communication tools and publishing facilities.

Pupils/staff will be advised on acceptable conduct and use when using the DLG.

Only members of the current pupil, parent/carers and staff community will have access to the DLG.

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All users will be mindful of copyright issues and will only upload appropriate content onto the DLG.

When staff, pupils etc leave the school their account or rights to specific school areas will be disabled or transferred to their new establishment.

Any concerns with content may be recorded and dealt with in the following ways:

- The user will be asked to remove any material deemed to be inappropriate or offensive.
- The material will be removed by the site administrator if the user does not comply.
- Access to the DLG for the user may be suspended.
- The user will need to discuss the issues with a member of SLT before reinstatement.
- A pupil's parent/carer may be informed.

A visitor may be invited onto the DLG by a member of the SLT. In this instance there may be an agreed focus or a limited time slot.

Pupils may require editorial approval from a member of staff. This may be given to the pupil to fulfil a specific aim and may have a limited time frame.

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<b>Bowes Hutchinson's CE Aided School</b> <b>Responsible Internet Use</b> Please complete, sign and return to the school secretary	
<b><i>Pupil:</i></b>	<b><i>Form:</i></b>
<b>Pupil's Agreement</b> I have read and I understand the school Rules for Responsible Internet Use. I will use the computer system and Internet in a responsible way and obey these rules at all times.	
<b><i>Signed:</i></b>	<b><i>Date:</i></b>
<b>Parent's Consent for Internet Access</b> I have read and understood the school rules for responsible Internet use and give permission for my son / daughter to access the Internet. I understand that the school will take all reasonable precautions to ensure pupils cannot access inappropriate materials. I understand that the school cannot be held responsible for the nature or content of materials accessed through the Internet. I agree that the school is not liable for any damages arising from use of the Internet facilities.	
<b><i>Signed:</i></b>	<b><i>Date:</i></b>
<b><i>Please print name:</i></b>	
<b>Parent's Consent for Web Publication of Work and Photographs</b> I agree that, if selected, my son/daughter's work may be published on the school Web site. I also agree that photographs that include my son/daughter may be published and included on the school website	
<b><i>Signed:</i></b>	<b><i>Date:</i></b>

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Appendix 2

Date

Dear Parents

### **Responsible Internet Use**

As part of your child's curriculum and the development of ICT skills, Our Primary School is providing supervised access to the Internet. We believe that the effective use of the World Wide Web and E-mail is worthwhile and is an essential skill for children as they grow up in the modern world. Please would you read the attached Rules for Responsible Internet Use and sign and return the consent form so that your child may use Internet at school.

Although there are concerns about pupils having access to undesirable materials, we have taken positive steps to reduce this risk in school. Our school Internet provider operates a filtering system that restricts access to inappropriate materials. This may not be the case at home and we can provide references to information on safe Internet access if you wish. We also have leaflets from national bodies that explain the issues further.

Whilst every endeavour is made to ensure that suitable restrictions are placed on the ability of children to access inappropriate materials, the School cannot be held responsible for the nature or content of materials accessed through the Internet. The School will not be liable for any damages arising from your child's use of the Internet facilities.

Should you wish to discuss any aspect of Internet use please telephone me to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C. A. Matthewman  
Headteacher

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Making a difference where you live

## Responsible Internet Use

**These rules help us to be fair to others and keep everyone safe.**

- **I will ask permission before using the Internet.**
- **I will use only my own network login and password, which is secret.**
- **I will only look at or delete my own files.**
- **I understand that I must not bring software or disks into school without permission.**
- **I will only e-mail people I know, or my teacher has approved.**
- **The messages I send will be polite and sensible.**
- **I understand that I must never give my home address or phone number, or arrange to meet someone.**
- **I will ask for permission before opening an e-mail or an e-mail attachment sent by someone I do not know.**
- **I will not use Internet chat.**
- **I see anything I am unhappy with or I receive messages I do not like, I will tell a teacher immediately.**
- **I understand that the school may check my computer files and the Internet sites I visit.**
- **I understand that if I deliberately break these rules, I may not be allowed to use the Internet or computers.**

The school may exercise its right to monitor the use of the school's computer systems, including access to web-sites, the interception of e-mail and the deletion of inappropriate materials where it believes unauthorised use of the school's computer system is or may be taking place, or the system is or may be being used for criminal purposes or for storing unauthorised or unlawful text, imagery or sound.

## **Staff Acceptable Use Policy / Code of Conduct**

**To ensure that members of staff are fully aware of their professional responsibilities when using information systems and when communicating with pupils, they are asked to sign this code of conduct. Members of staff should consult the school's e-safety policy for further information and clarification.**

- I understand that it is a criminal offence to use a school ICT system for a purpose not permitted by its owner.
- I appreciate that ICT includes a wide range of systems, including mobile phones, PDAs, digital cameras, email, social networking and that ICT use may also include personal ICT devices when used for school business.
- I understand that school information systems may not be used for private purposes without **specific permission** from the Head Teacher.
- I understand that my use of school information systems, Internet and email will be monitored and recorded to ensure policy compliance.
- I will ensure that personal data is stored securely and is used appropriately, whether in the building, taken off site or accessed remotely.
- I will respect system security and I will not disclose any password or security information to anyone other than an authorised system manager.
- It is not permitted to use another person's log in details. On occasions when log ins are shared the details of this will be recorded in an e safety log or similar document.
- Posting anonymous messages and forwarding chain letters is forbidden.
- I will comply with the acceptable use of mobile phone policy.
- I will not try to upload, download or access any materials which are illegal (Child abuse images, criminally racist material, adult pornography covered by the obscene publications act) or inappropriate or may cause harm or distress to others. I will not try to use programs or software that might allow me to bypass the filtering / security systems in place to prevent access to such materials.
- Any inadvertent viewing of inappropriate material or messages will be reported to the network manager and recorded on the e-safety log. I understand this report would be confidential and would help protect other Young people and myself.
- I am permitted to access my own email on school premises – but I am aware that this access may be monitored and must comply with acceptable use.
- I will not install any software or hardware without permission.
- I am permitted to use school connectivity for my own personal devices but I am aware that this access may be monitored.

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- I will respect copyright and intellectual property rights. Where work is copyrighted (Including music, videos and images) I will not either download or share with others.
- I will immediately report any illegal, inappropriate or harmful material or incident I become aware of to the Head Teacher.
- I will report any incidents of concern regarding children's safety to the e-Safety Coordinator, the Designated Child Protection Coordinator or Head Teacher.
- I will promote e-safety with students in my care and will help them to develop a responsible attitude to system use, communications and publishing.
- I will only communicate with young people and their carers using approved systems.
- I will ensure that electronic communications with pupils, including email, IM and social networking are compatible with my professional role and that messages cannot be misunderstood or misinterpreted.
- I will not engage in any on-line activity which may compromise my professional responsibilities.

The school may exercise its right to monitor the use of the school's information systems and Internet access, to intercept e-mail and to delete inappropriate materials where it believes unauthorised use of the school's information system may be taking place, or the system may be being used for criminal purposes or for storing unauthorised or unlawful text, imagery or sound.

**I have read, understood and accept the Staff Code of Conduct for ICT.**

Signed: ..... Capitals: ..... Date: .....

Accepted for school: ..... Capitals: .....

## **Mobile Phone Use**

### **Introduction**

Mobile phone 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.

Mobile phones, alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance; however there are also associated risks. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe. As with e-safety issues generally, risks to children and young people can be broadly categorised under the headings of content, contact and conduct and managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

### **Aim**

The aim of the Mobile Phone 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.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones on site. This includes staff, volunteers, children, young people, parents/ carers, visitors and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

### **Policy statement**

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

It is also recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

When mobiles phones 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,

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and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

Designated 'mobile free' areas are situated within the setting are

- Changing areas – (classrooms whilst children are changing for activities)
- 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.

### **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.

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.

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.

### **Procedures**

#### **Personal mobiles**

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile phones 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:

**Staff, Volunteers and Student Teacher** 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 tea breaks.

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Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, phones must be switched off and calls and texts must not be taken or made during lesson time.

**Staff, Volunteers and Student Teacher** are generally 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. However SLT do recognise that staff members may find the use of a mobile phone to be the best method of taking photographs at events such as sporting events and educational visits however this must be authorised by a member of SLT before the event. Staff members must transfer the images to the school intranet as soon as is practical after the event and delete the images from their personal mobile phone.

**Staff, Volunteers and Student Teacher** are not permitted to use their own personal phones for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside of the setting unless authorised by a member of the SMT.

**Parents/carers, visitors and contractors** are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones in any of the designated mobile free areas. 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. Under no circumstances is **any** individual permitted to take images or make recordings on a mobile phone. Any individual bringing a personal device into the setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

### **Safe storage**

A designated safe and secure area for practitioners to store their personal belongings during the working day is available. Practitioners have the **option** to store their mobile phones in this area, should they choose. This however is not a mandatory requirement.

Practitioners leave their belongings in safe storage at their own risk. It is therefore recommended that phones are security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damages is accepted.

As well as safeguarding children and avoiding any unnecessary disruptions during the day, this procedure also aims to protect staff against any unfounded allegations.

### **Emergency contact**

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.

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Such use will be for an agreed limited period only, until any concerns or issues leading to the exceptional circumstance request have been resolved.

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 answer phone is avoided and only used in exceptional circumstances. If used, the answer phone is always checked promptly on opening or return