

9/16/2021

# Hillstone Primary School

Mobile Phone and Social Media  
Policy 2021





## Introduction

In Hillstone Primary School the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. This policy on the use of mobile phones in school and whilst with children has been drawn up in the best interests of pupil safety and staff professionalism.

## Related policies

- Child Protection policy
- Pastoral Care policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Educational Visits
- Use of Images policy

## Mobile Phones

### Pupils:

- Year 6 pupils are permitted to bring mobile phones into school and handed into the teacher on arrival. The phones are not to be used on school grounds.
- If in the rare event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school:
  - \*The parent must put their request in writing to the Head Teacher
  - \*The phone must be switched off and handed in to the main 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 without permission will be confiscated and must be collected by the parent.

### Staff:

- Staff must have their phones on 'silent' or switched off during class time.
- Staff may not make or receive calls during teaching time. If there are extreme circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative) the member of staff will have made the Head Teacher aware of this and can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- Use of phones must be limited to non-contact time when no children are present.
- Phones must be kept out of sight (e.g. drawer, handbag, pocket) when staff are with children.
- Calls/ texts must be made/ received in private during non-contact time.
- Phones will never be used to take photographs of children or to store their personal data.
- A school mobile will be carried to sporting fixtures away from school or on an educational visit for contacting parents in the event of an emergency.
- In the event of an unplanned school closure (i.e. snow closure or a heating failure) the school mobile will be used to send each family a text message informing them of the change of circumstances. It is therefore imperative that parents supply school with at least one up-to-date mobile number.

### Parents & other visitors:

- We request that parents do not use mobile phones in the school building or grounds.
- Mobile phones must not be used to take photographs in the school building or grounds except for at authorised events.

**We very much appreciate our parents' support in implementing this policy in order to keep your children/our pupils safe.**

## **Social Media**

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new and exciting ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly.

However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our school, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation. For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. They apply to all members of staff at the school.

### **The purpose of the policy is to:**

- Protect the school from legal risks
- Ensure that the reputation of the school, its staff and governors is protected
- Safeguard all children
- Ensure that any users are able clearly to distinguish where information provided via social media is legitimately representative of the school

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to: Blogs, Online discussion forums, Collaborative spaces, Media sharing services, 'Microblogging' applications, and online gaming environments. Examples include Twitter, Facebook, Windows Live Messenger, YouTube, Flickr, Xbox Live, Blogger, Tumblr, Last.fm, and comment streams on public websites such as newspaper site.

Many of the principles of this policy also apply to other types of online presence such as virtual worlds. All members of staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also operate in line with the school's Equalities, Child Protection and ICT Acceptable Use Policies.

Within this policy there is a distinction between use of school-sanctioned social media for professional educational purposes, and personal use of social media.

### **Personal use of social media**

- Any communication received from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the designated person for Child Protection (Head Teacher or Pastoral Manager)
- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be reported as above
- Members of the school staff are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts
- All email communication between staff and members of the school community on school business must be made from an official school email account
- Staff should not use personal email accounts or mobile phones to make contact with members of the community on school business, nor should any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances given prior approval by the Head Teacher.
- Staff must avoid posts or comments that refer to matters related to the school and members of its community on any social media accounts
- Staff are also must consider the reputation of the school in any posts or comments related to the school on any social media accounts
- Staff should not accept any current pupil of any age or any ex-pupil of the school under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account.
- Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times (for personal use).

- Staff should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher's Standards.
- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- Staff should read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People'.
- Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Head Teacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.

## **Parents and the use of social media**

- Parents must not post pictures of pupils, other than their own children, on social networking sites where these photographs have been taken at a school event.
- Parents should make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites.
- Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.

There are many legitimate uses of social media within the curriculum and to support student learning. For example, the school has an official Twitter account and several courses require the use of blogs for assessment. There are also many possibilities for using social media to enhance and develop students' learning.

When using social media for educational purposes, the following practices must be observed:

- Staff should set up a distinct and dedicated social media site or account for educational purposes. This should be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held by that member of staff, and ideally should be linked to an official school email account.
- The URL and identity of the site should be notified to the Head Teacher or member of the SMT before access is permitted for students
- The content of any school-sanctioned social media site should be solely professional and should reflect well on the school.
- Staff must not publish photographs of children without the written consent of parents/carers, identify by name any children featured in photographs, or allow personally identifying information to be published on school social media accounts
- Care must be taken that any links to external sites from the account are appropriate and safe
- Any inappropriate comments on or abuse of school-sanctioned social media should immediately be removed and reported to a member of SMT
- Staff should not engage with any direct messaging of students through social media where the message is not public
- All social media accounts created for educational purposes should include a link in the About or Info page to the ICT Acceptable Use Policy on the school website. This will indicate that the account is officially sanctioned by Hillstone Primary School.

Date reviewed: September 2021

Date of next review: September 2022