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Mobile Phone Policy for Staff, Visitors and Pupils

This policy provides guidance on the appropriate use of personal mobile phones and tablets by members of staff, visitors and pupils.

Camera phones are becoming increasingly popular. A built in digital camera enables users to take high quality pictures, these can then be sent instantly to other mobile phones or email address. They can also be posted on the internet or in chat rooms. There is the potential for camera mobile phones to be misused in schools as they can become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils and staff.

Visitors

Visitors to school are asked to turn off their phones and tablets at reception and instructed to not use them in the presence of children. If a phone call is expected they are advised to leave it with staff in the office – a member of staff will inform the visitor upon the call.

Staff

Staff use of mobile phones during their working day should be:

- Outside of their contracted hours
- Discreet and appropriate e.g. not in the presence of pupils

Mobile phones should be switched off and stored in a safe place not accessible by staff or children especially during lesson times. Where a phone call is expected upon the mobile phone, staff are advised to leave it with staff in the main office. They will be informed if the call is received. Staff are advised to give the school telephone number to be contacted upon during the school day.

School Excursions / residential – staff are required to take a mobile phone to ensure they have full contact with school in case of an emergency. In such cases staff are expected to carry the phone upon themselves and if appropriate ensure it is on silent. Staff are reminded of policy to not use for any other reason other than in communication with school or in an emergency. Strictly no photos should be taken of the children or activities. A school camera should be used for any photos.

Staff should never contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone, or give their mobile number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a parent or pupil, a school telephone should be used.

Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues, text or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.

With regard to camera mobile phones, a member of staff should never use their phone to photograph a pupil(s), or allow themselves to be photographed by a pupil(s).

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff and the school.

Staff should understand that failure to comply with this policy is likely to result in the enforcement of our whistleblowing policy and associated procedures.

Pupil

While we fully acknowledge a parent's right to allow their child to bring a mobile phone to school if they walk to and from school without adult supervision, Seahouses Middle School discourages pupils from bringing mobile phones to school due to the potential issues outlined above.

When a child needs to bring a phone into school it should be left in the school office at the start of the day and collected at the end of the day. Phones should be clearly marked so that each pupil knows their own phone. Parents are advised that Seahouses Middle School accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile phones which are brought into the school or school grounds.

If a pupil is found taking photographs or video footage with a mobile phone of either other pupils or members of staff, this will be regarded as a serious offence and disciplinary action may be taken according to the schools Behaviour Policy.

If images of other pupils or members of staff have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the images have been removed by the pupil's parent in the presence of a senior member of staff. Many phones, immediately share photos in the 'on-line Cloud'. Assurance needs to be given by a parent/carer that this is deleted.

Should a pupil be found to be using a phone inappropriately, the school reserves the right to withdraw this privilege and they will no longer be able to bring a phone into school.

Should parents need to contact their child or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures: via the school office.

This policy supports the school's Health and Safety, Anti-bullying, Safeguarding and Acceptable use policy.

29th June 2016