

Blanford Mere Nursery & Primary School



ACCEPTABLE USE MOBILE PHONE AND CAMERA POLICY

Date adopted by governors
January 2019
To be reviewed
January 2023

ACCEPTABLE USE - MOBILE PHONE AND CAMERA POLICY

BLANFORD MERE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Introduction

This policy outlines the acceptable use of mobile phones/cameras at Blanford Mere in the context of safeguarding, underpinned by our statement of vision and values which permeates everything we do and say. At Blanford Mere we recognise the vulnerability of our children and the potential for exploitation and abuse through the inappropriate use of mobile phones. 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 transport staff, contractors, kitchen staff, and 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.
- Ensure that we are compliant with GDPR.

Key principles which underpin this policy

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

Mobile Phones – Staff – Acceptable Use

At Blanford Mere we recognise that mobile phones play 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 satisfies 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 phones onto the school site on the understanding that the device:

- is used only at break times and at either end of the school day in the staffroom, or an empty room or outside the school gate.
- is stored safely and securely away throughout contact time with children. Staff bags should be placed securely in a cupboard/drawer within the classroom or office.

- is not used as a point of contact by relatives, friends, child's school, GP, etc., during the school day. (Staff must ensure that all potential contacts have the school landline numbers so that initial contact is made directly to the school office). If staff have a personal emergency they are free to use the schools phone or make a personal call from their mobile in the office/staffroom.
- is available for emergency contact with the school only, when off site. Designated members of the group will have their mobile phone available for emergency contact with each other or with the emergency services. In this context phones will not be used to make or receive personal calls.
- must not be used to take photos of children under any circumstances. If this occurs a member of the SLT should be informed immediately. If the member of SLT is a focus of the concern, the head teacher must be informed immediately. If the Headteacher is the focus of the concern, then the LADO should be informed immediately (01384813110 or 07811991432).
- has no inappropriate or illegal content on the device. If there is a concern about the image content of a member of staff's mobile phone, the LADO and or the police will be notified by SLT.

Under no circumstances does the school allow a member of staff to contact current pupils or parent/carers using their personal device (with the exception of a residential visit in case of emergency out of school hours). The above information is shared with new staff members as part of the induction process.

Mobile Phones – Visitors (including parents, professionals, contractors)

- Visitors may bring mobile phones on to the school site but, when visiting the main school, are asked to switch them 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.
- Parents/carers should not use mobile phones whilst on the premises. This includes filming class assemblies, sports day and any other activity that children are involved in. This is to comply with GDPR, as we have some children who are not able to be photographed or videoed for safeguarding reasons.
- Agency supply staff will be asked to store their phones away safely and securely.
- Visitors waiting briefly in reception/foyer – e.g. to collect a child – may keep phones to hand but they must be stored out of sight and not be used.
- Visitors attending meetings in the school may use their phones once inside the meeting room. On arrival/exit, phones 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.
- Signs are placed around the school regarding the use of mobile phones.
- 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.
- Where possible, all visitors are made aware of the mobile phone 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.).

The use of Cameras

- Only school owned cameras should be used in conjunction with school owned memory cards. Personal memory cards should never be put into school cameras and school memory cards should never be put in to personal cameras.
- School camera memory cards should be downloaded on to school computers only.
- Photographs must be taken for the purpose of recording a child or group of children participating in activities or celebrating their achievements and in an effective way to record their progress and development.
- Children are allowed to take their own cameras on 'residential school visits' only but staff will monitor their use.
- All staff must sign for their camera at the start of each term and are responsible for safeguarding it. The camera must be put away securely at the end of every session. Cameras will be checked regularly by the 'technician' and wiped each term. Any suspicious activity will be reported directly to an SLT member.
- Photographs of children should always be taken when they are in open spaces and visible by other adults. Photographs should not be taken on a 1:1 basis or when alone with a child under any circumstances.
- Permission to take photographs of children at school must be granted by the parents/carers. Staff should take all reasonable action to obtain permission as we recognise that photographing children's learning and development is an excellent assessment for learning tool. However, if parents do not wish for photographs to be taken, they can opt out. Parents can also specify if they consent to photographs being used in school, on published material or both. It is the class teacher's responsibility to check the records of parental consent and ensure that photographs are used in accordance with parents/carers wishes.
- Permission will not be given for photographs to be placed on any Social Networking Sites under any circumstances.
- The use of personal mobiles to take photographs of the site (internal or external e.g. corridors, classrooms, central areas, etc.) of children or of staff is strictly prohibited.

Failure of staff to adhere to the contents of this policy, will lead to disciplinary procedures being followed.

Date reviewed by Governors January 2019

Next review date January 2023

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, the matter may be dealt with as a disciplinary matter.

Policy agreed March 2019

Policy to be reviewed March 2022

Related Documentation:

Safeguarding Policy

E-safety policy

DfES Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2018)

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2015)