

Hartford Infant and Pre School



Mobile Phones Policy November 2020

Lead person: Mrs Rae Lee
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Date of revision: every 2 years

While mobile phones and personal communication devices are commonplace today, it is recognised that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately.

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.

Most mobile phones now offer Internet and email access, alongside 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. Safeguarding of children within the school is paramount.

The launch of the NHS Test and Trace App, which is available for those aged sixteen or over to download, has reinforced the need for schools to have a clear policy in place with regards to staff, pupil and visitor use of mobile phones.

Staff:

Staff may wish to have their personal mobile phones at work for use in case of emergencies, however there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to areas and times when there are no children present, or likely to be present.

- The school expects staff to lead by example. Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, mobile phones should be switched off or on silent and left in a safe place during lesson times. Staff must leave their mobile phones in personal lockers in the main staff room.
- Staff should not contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone in or out of school time or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, a school telephone should be used. *This is unless teachers are having to work from home during the coronavirus pandemic and would need to contact parents/children to check on their wellbeing – in this instant, staff would need to precede any phone call with a blocking system, so their phone number is not shared with parents/carers.*
- Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate
- Staff are not permitted to take photos or videos of pupils. If photos or videos are being taken as part of the school curriculum or for a professional capacity, the school equipment will be used for this. Staff should not allow themselves to be photographed by a pupil(s).
- In circumstances such as outings and off-site visits, staff will ask permission of the Head Teacher the appropriate use of personal mobile phones in the event of an emergency as per the risk assessment and the Critical Incident Policy.
- Whilst school staff are encouraged to download the NHS Test and Trace App to their personal devices to support contact tracing, there is no need for personal devices to remain switched on or to be carried upon the staff member's person for the purposes of Test and Trace. Staff are advised to pause the app upon arrival at school and store their phone in the usual way. In the event of a school-based contact of a staff member testing positive for Covid-19, existing school protocols would enable close contacts to be traced as guided by Public Health. This includes: staff members avoiding skin to skin contact with students; staff members avoiding congregating in areas like the staff room, where social distancing cannot be maintained; seating plans in place for all lessons being adhered to; children being organised into bubbles and contact between bubbles kept to a minimum; timetabling of staff to work with specific bubbles or individuals being adhered to; staff members who teach across bubbles maintained a distance of 2m from pupils wherever possible;

- Please be aware that these notes are not only for guidance. They are part of the school protocol and should be a safeguard for members of staff and the school. Any breach of school policy may result in disciplinary action against that member of staff.

Pupils:

- Pupils are dissuaded from bringing mobile phones to school. If a mobile device is brought onto school premises, the expectation will be to leave in the school office until the end of the day.
- Pupil under the age of 16 cannot download the NHS Test and Trace App so there is no need for any amendment to the above arrangements.

Parents, visitors and contractors:

Parents, visitors and contractors are respectfully requested to leave their mobile phone in the school office when entering the school building. Reasonable adjustments can be made whereby the mobile phone can remain on the visitor/contractor with permission from the Head teacher or her representative in her absence on a case by case basis. Visitors and contractors are **not** to use their mobile phones at all on the school site/in any area where children/young people are present. Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others.

Photos of children must not be taken without prior discussion with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 and using the 'Use of images consent form' (please refer to the school's document "Guidance for schools and other establishments on the use of images"). For assemblies/plays/events parents/visitors taking photos will be reminded not to share on social media platforms and sign a disclaimer to demonstrate they have understood.

Inappropriate or illegal content:

Any individual bringing a personal device into the school must ensure that it contains **no** inappropriate or illegal content.

Where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may be unsuitable and may constitute evidence relating to a criminal offence, the 'Allegations of Abuse' process will be followed (please refer to the school's 'Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy').

Staff, students or volunteers remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses as the school accepts no responsibility for any damage or loss to devices brought onto school property.

The school will not be displaying a QR code for the NHS Test and Trace programme. We continue to expect visitors not to use their phone on the school site/in areas where children/young people are present including for the purposes of the NHS Test and Trace App as our own arrangements enable contact tracing.

Related Policies and guidance:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (September 2020)
 Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings (April 2020)
 Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2020)
 Guidance for schools and other establishments on the use of images (July 2019)
 Data Protection: A toolkit for schools, DfE, (August 2018)