

Mobile phone and Smartwatch Policy

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The welfare, protection, and safety of every child in our care is of paramount importance, we take our responsibility to safeguard children seriously. We have procedures in place, which we all respect and adhere to, to help promote the safety of the children in our care.

Leigh Academy Paddock Wood has a no use of mobile phones policy. Members of staff and any child with a mobile phone/ smartphone should not be seen or heard on either device whilst in the academy.

Mobile phones should not be left unattended in any classroom/area where children are. They will be stored in classroom cupboards for safety and security. It is our intention to provide an environment in which children, parents and staff are safe from images being recorded and inappropriately used. This in turn eliminates the concern of staff being distracted from their work with children and the inappropriate use of mobile phone cameras around children.

Mobile phones or smartwatches must not be used, around children, during working hours.

Staff are permitted to keep their phones switched on in case of urgent calls, but they will be kept in an office, away from children and must be on silent mode. Staff are permitted to use their mobile phones/smartwatches during their lunch breaks away from the children.

Under no circumstance should a member of staff contact a parent/carer using their personal device.

The use of apple watches/smart watches etc, are also not permitted in classrooms or areas where children are. Staff wearing smart watches will be asked to turn all notifications off/on silent and only check their notifications whilst on breaks away from the children.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and to report any concerns to the safeguarding team or complete a low level concern form. Under no circumstance must a member of staff take a personal call whilst caring for children.

All urgent calls are to be taken on the main phone line. Prior permission must be sought from the Principal or Vice Principal to use a mobile phone out of staff break hours.

Trips and Visits outside of the Academy

During group outings a nominated staff member will take the allocated academy mobile phone with them in case of emergency. This should only be used for emergency calls and incoming calls from the academy.

It is the responsibility of all staff members to be vigilant and report any concerns to the Principal or Vice Principal.

Cause for concern

The Principal reserves the right to check the image contents of a member of staff's mobile phone should there be any cause for concern over inappropriate use of it. Should inappropriate material be found then our Local Authority Designated Office (LADO) will be contacted immediately, as well as the police. Guidance will be followed with regards to the dismissal of the staff member.

Parents & Visitors

Parents or visitors who either arrive using a mobile phone or take a call on a mobile whilst on site should be immediately told to end their phone call or leave the premises.

Cameras and Capturing images

Photographs taken for the purpose of recording a child or group of children participating in activities or celebrating their achievements is an effective form of recording their progression in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, it is essential that photographs are taken and stored appropriately to safeguard the children in our care.

- Only the designated academy cameras/tablets should be used to take any photo within the setting or on outings.
- Images taken on this camera must be deemed suitable without putting the child/children in any compromising positions that could cause embarrassment or distress.
- All staff are responsible for the location of the camera; this should be placed within an office or locked unit when not in use.
- The camera/tablets must be locked away at the end of every session.
- Images taken and stored on the camera/tablet must be downloaded as soon as possible, ideally once a week.
- Parental permission is obtained from the parent/carer on joining the setting to the use of photographs in the setting.

This policy is in place to protect and safeguard both children and staff.