

NOVEMBER 2020

Policy adopted on Academy Transfer 1 May 2021



USE OF MOBILE PHONES IN SCHOOL



SPRING COMMON ACADEMY
AMERICAN LANE, HUNTINGDON
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
PE29 1TQ



RIVERSIDE MEADOWS ACADEMY
ALMOND ROAD, ST NEOTS
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
PE19 1DZ

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Introduction:

While mobile phones and personal communication devices are commonplace in today's society, personal mobile phones and devices have increasing potential to be used inappropriately to cause harm to children.

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile phones causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace and as part of school life, 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 also associated risks. Safeguarding of children within the school is paramount.

1.0 School 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. They must be switched off whilst the employee is working and any messages can be conveyed in an emergency to the school office.

- 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 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 dedicated school telephone should be used.
- Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate for the school reputation or for safeguarding.
- Staff are not permitted to take photos or videos of pupils on a personal phone. 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) on their personal phone or device.
- In circumstances such as outings and off -site visits, staff will agree with the Head of school or representative the appropriate use of personal mobile phones in the event of an emergency.
- Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches and must be reported.

2.0 Work phones:

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes. Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation from Head of School.

Staff must:

- Only use work phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

This guidance should be seen as a safeguard for members of staff and the school. Any breach of school policy may result in disciplinary action against that member of staff.

3.0 Pupils:

- Pupils must not bring in mobile phones to school.
- If it is deemed necessary by Head of School for a pupil to bring a mobile phone to school, (e.g. in the case of older pupils because they travel to and from school independently), then the expectation is that the pupil hands their phone in to staff at the start of the school day and receive this back at the end of the day.
- Heads of the schools will use their discretion if phones either are not handed in or if this safety measure is challenged by pupils.

4.0 Parents, visitors and contractors:

Parents, visitors and contractors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones at all on the school site/in any area where children/young people are present.

Should any 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/Should phone calls/and or texts need to be taken or made, visitors are asked to leave the premises to do so. The school will not provide a room for phone conversations due to lack of space.

Photos of children must not be taken without prior discussion with Head of School 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 "Guidance for schools and other establishments on the use of images".)

No recordings must be made on a mobile phone or device without consent of the Head of School - This includes all meetings.

Any individual bringing any personal device into the school must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content or links to web pages or social media that may pose harm to children

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school. Phones are brought to school with this understanding.

Addendum for Covid 19

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

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 where social distancing cannot be maintained like staff rooms; 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

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.

In the event of a school based contact of a visitor testing positive for Covid-19, existing school protocols would enable close contacts to be traced as guided by Public Health. As part of our Covid-19 risk assessment, visits to the school are limited to critical business only.

All visitors must wear a mask entering the gate and in the main reception area. In the event of a visitor coming on site they are required to observe social distancing, remaining at least 2m from pupils and staff at all times. If parents/carers need to come on site, for example to collect a child who is displaying symptoms of Covid-19, they are asked to observe social distancing from anyone who is not in their household whilst on the school site. In these circumstances the school's signing in/out arrangements would document this visit.

Policy agreed on: _____

Signed on behalf of the Trustees _____

Committee: _____

Review date: following change in guidance

Website Y