



# ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY OF MOBILE PHONES AND RELATED TECHNOLOGIES: PUPILS.

## RATIONALE

- St Mary's Primary School accepts that some parents/guardians give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently.
- St Mary's Primary School therefore has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones and Related Technologies. The policy provides teachers, pupils, parents/guardians with guidelines and instructions for their appropriate use during school hours.
- This policy also applies to students during school excursions and extra-curricular activities.
- St Mary's Primary School **strongly discourages** pupils from bringing mobile phones to school.
- The school takes no responsibility for mobile phones/tablets. Mobile phones are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones/tablets.
- If pupils bring mobile phones/tablets to school, the phones/tablets must be **switched off/silent** and given to the class teacher for safe storage. The teacher will store the phone for the entire school day (to include afterschool club hours).
- Should parents need to contact pupils during the school day, or vice versa, this should be done following the usual school procedures: via the school office (02879 386360).
- Where a pupil is found by a member of staff to be using a mobile phone/tablet during the school day, the phone/tablet may be taken from the pupil and handed to a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The mobile phone/tablet will be stored in the school office until the end of the school day. The pupil may collect the phone/tablet at the end of the school day and the child's parent/guardian will be contacted.
- Mobile phones/tablets must **NEVER** be used to photograph other children or adults within the school.
- If a pupil uses a mobile phone/tablet inappropriately (eg. Phone calls on school premises, to send inappropriate texts or to take inappropriate photographs/video footage of either other pupils or teachers), this will be regarded as a serious offence

and the Principal will decide on appropriate disciplinary action in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Policy.

- If a pupil ignores the mobile technology policy repeatedly, their parents will be contacted and the principal will decide on an appropriate disciplinary action and they will be required
- to leave the phone/tablet at the school office during the school day.
- It should be noted that it is a **criminal offence** to use a mobile phone to menace, harass
- or offend another person. The Principal or a member of the school's SLT may consider it appropriate to refer any such matter to the PSNI.
- If images (photographic or video) of other pupils or teachers have been taken, the phone will not be returned to the pupil until the pupil, in the presence of a member of the SLT or the child's parent/guardian has removed the images. Each incident will be logged in accordance with Safeguarding Procedures within the school. A member of the school's SLT will always contact a parent/guardian. The Principal or a member of the school's SLT may consider it appropriate to refer any such matter to the Social Services (Gateway) or PSNI.
- A member of the school's SLT will contact the Designated or Deputy Designated Teacher and act within procedures of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures in all cases where inappropriate photographs/video/audio footage has been found.

## **RELATED TECHNOLOGY**

- The procedures applying to the inappropriate use of mobile phones, apply equally to the inappropriate use of related technologies with similar capabilities, eg, messaging, recording (audio & video), photography etc.

## **EXEMPTIONS**

- Exemptions of this policy can only be approved by the Principal and then only in exceptional circumstances.

## **CONCLUSION**

- This policy will be reviewed in June of each term and amended in advance of this timescale as appropriate in line with appropriate guidance/legislation.