



Hillcross Primary School

The Use of Mobile Devices and Digital Images Policy

Mission, Vision and Culture

At Hillcross we nurture our children to think critically and creatively within a collaborative community.

Our outstanding practice ensures our children meet their full potential, both personally and academically, and provides opportunities for them to develop their unique talents and skills. As a nationally recognized Thinking School, we nurture an empathetic community of creative and critical thinkers. We achieve success for all through our dynamic and ambitious curriculum, inclusive learning, promoting fairness and celebrating diversity.

Through our school culture of high aspiration, embracing challenge, acting with compassion, a shared responsibility and by showing respect for all, we aim to develop a resilient school community of compassionate global citizens.

Introduction and Aims

Hillcross Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children - the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount.

There are a wide range of mobile devices which can be used for a range of communication purposes including smartphones, tablets, laptops etc. Whilst there are many benefits to these, it should also be recognised that their use can offer distractions and disruption to the working day, and they are susceptible to misuse - including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

Many educational activities involve recording images which may be used for displays, publicity, to celebrate achievement and to provide records of evidence of the activity. Whilst we recognise that images are usually used for very positive purposes, adults need to be aware of the potential for these to be taken and/or misused/manipulated for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes.

This policy relates to the school's arrangements with regard to the use of mobile devices in school and the taking and use of images, which is linked to our safeguarding and child protection policy.

The aim of this policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines for pupils, staff, parents, volunteers and visitors. We aim to achieve this by balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile devices, in particular phones, are effective communication tools.

This policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices.

This policy also aims to address some of the following challenges posed by mobile device use in school including:

- Risks to child protection - educating children about how to use mobile devices safely
- Data protection issues
- Potential for lesson disruption
- Risk of theft, loss, or damage



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This policy should be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Acceptable use Policy
- Educational Visits policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy

Roles and Responsibilities

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile devices on site. This includes staff, governors, volunteers, children, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

All stakeholders are responsible for enforcing this policy. Staff, children, volunteers, governors, parents and visitors should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The Headteacher (Senior DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for monitoring the policy and holding staff, pupils and other members of the school community accountable for its implementation.

Data protection

To comply with the Data Protection legislation, staff must not use their personal mobile devices to process personal data, or any other confidential school information. Please refer to the Data Protection Policy and the Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

We gain parental/carer permission for the use of digital photographs or video involving their child as part of the school admissions form when their child joins the school, and only publish images of pupils where they and their parent/carer have given explicit written consent to do so. We do not identify pupils in online photographic materials or include the names of pupils in any published school materials.

Safeguarding

- Staff must refrain from giving their personal contact details to pupils or parents, including connecting through social media and other online opportunities.
- Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils.

Please also refer to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the Staff Code of Conduct and the Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

Staff Code of Conduct



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A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment and a team who fully understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.

Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions. Our aim is therefore that all staff:

- Have a clear understanding of what behaviour is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable.
- Know how to minimise risk.
- Avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct e.g. behave in a manner that could lead a reasonable person to question your conduct, intentions or suitability to care for other people's children.
- Understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use.
- Are responsible for self-moderation of their own behaviours.
- Are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly, including concerns relating to colleagues.

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile devices within the school, which is agreed to by all users.

Acceptable Use

The child, parent and staff Acceptable Use Policies/Agreements cover the use of digital technologies in school: i.e. email, Internet, intranet and network resources, learning platform, software, equipment and systems.

Use of personal mobile devices by staff

Staff (and governors, volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) should not use their **personal mobile phones or other mobile devices** in school during their directed hours/paid hours of employment without permission. Outside of these times where permission has been granted, personal mobile devices should only be used in areas of the school where pupils are not present.

- Staff are not permitted to make or receive calls, or check/send/receive texts, during working hours. This includes the use of Smart Watches - notifications must be switched off during working hours.
- Use of personal mobile devices must be restricted to non-contact time (PPA time, break time, lunch time), and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (such as the staff room, PPA room, offices).
- Personal mobile devices should not be carried with staff unless they are used for school purposes. This will be agreed in advance with the Headteacher.
- Personal mobile devices should be switched off or switched to 'silent' mode. Bluetooth communication should be 'hidden' or switched off.
- All members of the school community must secure their personal mobile devices as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the device's functions.

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their personal device/phone during contact time, for instance, in the case of acutely ill dependents or family members. The Headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number 0208 542 6936 as a point of emergency contact.



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Using personal mobile devices for work purposes

With the exception of the Senior Leadership Team, staff are not permitted to use their own personal device/phone in a professional capacity, such as for contacting children or their families within or outside of the setting. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile devices for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their personal device/phone in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct.
- Not use their personal device to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil, unless explicitly agreed by the Headteacher as above.
- Refrain from using their personal device/phone to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office. Where a staff member is unable to use a school phone to contact a parent, they could use their personal phone as long as they hide (by inputting 141, or using the 'Show my Caller ID' setting on smart phones) their own mobile number for confidentiality purposes and then report the incident with the Headteacher or Senior Leader.

The Senior Leadership will carry their mobile phones with them when not teaching to enable effective and timely communication with them as necessary. These will be used in line with guidance above.

Taking Digital Images

Staff must not use a personal mobile device to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil. The recording, taking and sharing of images, video and audio on any personal mobile device is to be avoided. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson, school trip or activity, this must be done using school equipment. Where this is not practicable/possible (e.g. where the nature of a trip requires groups to separate) the use of personal mobile devices may be agreed by the Headteacher. Any permitted images or files taken on a personal device must be downloaded from the device and deleted in school as soon as is reasonably practicable, usually before the end of the working day.

School Mobile Phones

The Site Supervisor and The Holiday Club Team have been issued with mobile phones they must use for work purposes. The school also has two mobile phones that can be used on educational visits. Please refer to the Educational Visits Policy and see Ruth Short at least 24 hours prior to the trip so that the phone can be appropriately charged.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation. Staff must sign an agreement to confirm they will:

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



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Sanctions

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action. Please refer to Staff Disciplinary policy for more information.

Use of personal mobile devices by governors, volunteers and visitors

Governors, volunteers and visitors (including contractors) must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school site during the school day.

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds.
- Please do not use phones where pupils are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the staffroom or a school office.
- Do not take photos or recordings of pupils or staff.
- Do not use your phone in lessons, or when working with pupils.
- The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school premises, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school. Mobile devices brought into school are entirely at the staff member, parents or visitors' own risk.

Governors, visitors and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile device use when they sign in at reception - please see Appendix 1.

Use of personal mobile devices by parents/carers

We would prefer that parents did not use their mobile devices/phones while at school, however, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their mobile phones as an essential means of communication. We therefore ask that parents/carers usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment.

Rules for mobile phone use during a school performance/event

At our school we are happy for parents and carers to take photos and videos of events for personal use but we request that these images are not distributed or put anywhere online, including on social media platforms such as WhatsApp. This is to protect all members of the community. The sharing of photographs and videos on social media is now commonplace but we must ensure we protect and safeguard all children and staff, including those who do not want to have their images stored online.

Parents should be reminded that:

- Once posted and shared online any image or video can be copied and will stay online forever.
- Some children are at risk and MUST NOT have their image put online. Not all members of the community will know who they are.
- Some people do not want their images online for personal or religious reasons.
- Some children and staff may have a complex family background which means that sharing their image online can have unforeseen consequences.
- Therefore in order to keep all members of the community safe we must all 'Think before We Post' Online.

Working together to keep our children safe

At Hillcross we work closely with families to ensure that children use mobile technology safely and considerately. Children should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to trusted friends and family members. Pupils will be taught about the appropriate use of mobile phones and other personally-owned devices and will be made aware



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of boundaries and consequences through their PSHE curriculum, this should be reinforced and monitored by parents outside of school.

An Acceptable Use policy is given to all new parents/carers when they join the school and they sign to say they will adhere to this.

Parents will be reminded of the rules for mobile phone use at the beginning of a school performance/school event – please see Appendix 2.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their mobile phone in the presence of children.
- Use their phone to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil.

Please refer to the Educational Visits Policy.

Use of mobile devices by pupils

At Hillcross we recognise that mobile phones/devices are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others. Therefore:

- Only children in Year 5 and Year 6 who travel to or from school alone should bring a mobile phone/device to school.
- Personal mobile phones/devices, which are brought into school, must be turned off (not placed on silent) and given to the class teacher on arrival.
- Personal phones/devices will be stored securely until the end of the day.
- If a child walks by themselves in the morning and then attends the After School Club at the Copse, the phone will be given directly to an appropriate Copse Team by a member of staff from their Year Group.
- If a child walks by themselves in the morning and then attends an extra-curricular after school club, the phone will be given to the school office and the child and parent can collect the phone from the office when they have been collected.

If a pupil breaches this policy, then the device will be confiscated and will be held in a secure place in the school office. Mobile devices will only then be released to parents or carers directly.

Where mobile phones are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the Headteacher or another Designated Safeguarding Lead does have the power to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site.' Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- The sharing of nudes and semi-nudes refer to section 7.9 of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation



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Digital images and video

Each Team is provided with a mobile device (iPod or iPad) so that children may be photographed or videoed as part of a learning activity to evidence learning, for presentation purposes around the school e.g. in class or wider school wall displays or in a presentation about the school and its work thus enabling us to share good practice and celebrate our achievements.

These devices are never taken off of school premises and staff are asked to ensure that images are regularly deleted from them.

The school acknowledges that the majority of people who take or view photographs or videos of children do so for entirely innocent, understandable and acceptable reasons. Sadly, some people abuse children through taking or using images. We have taken a sensible and balanced approach that is based on parental consent to take pictures and video images that capture children's achievements, activities and promote success and wherever possible, take steps to ensure anonymity when using images.

To help protect pupils, we will implement the following safeguards (see Online Safety Policy, page 6):

- avoid taking images in one to one situations;
- only take images where the child is happy for us to do so;
- only publish images where parents have given consent;
- use only the pupil's first name with an image;
- ensure pupils are appropriately dressed;
- before taking photos, teachers ensure they know which children are allowed to have their photos taken.
- children are taught that they are not allowed to take any videos or photos of another child without their permission
- encourage pupils to tell us if they are worried about any photographs that are taken of them;
- seek parents' cooperation when taking images at school events to ensure that images of unrelated children are not taken without consent or posted to the Internet or other medium without consent of the parents of children involved;
- ensure images are stored in an appropriate secure place.
- images will not be accompanied by text that will allow pupils' identity to be disclosed.
- pupils' full names will not be used anywhere on the website.
- staff must not use a personal mobile device to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil. The recording, taking and sharing of images, video and audio on any personal mobile device is to be avoided. If it is necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson, school trip or activity, this must be done using school equipment. Where this is not practicable/possible (e.g. where the nature of a trip requires groups to separate) the use of personal mobile devices may be agreed by the Headteacher. Any permitted images or files taken on a personal device must be downloaded from the device and deleted in school as soon as is reasonably practicable, usually before the end of the working day.

In rare events, your child's picture could appear in the media if a newspaper photographer or television film crew attends an event.

If we, or you, wanted your child's image linked to their name we would contact you separately for permission, e.g. if your child won a national competition and wanted to be named in local or government literature

Staff, parents and children (in Year 5 and Year 6) sign the school's Acceptable Use Policy and this includes a clause on the use of personal mobile devices for taking pictures of pupils and staff.



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Guidance for Parents taking Photographs and filming at School Events: please see section above 'Use of personal mobile devices by parents/carers', page 5.

Support for children

Children are taught about how images can be manipulated in their online safety education programme. They are also taught to consider how to publish for a wide range of audiences which might include governors, parents or younger children as part of their computing scheme of work.

Pupils are advised to be very careful about placing any personal photos on any 'social' online network space. They are taught to understand the need to maintain privacy settings so as not to make public, personal information. Pupils are taught that they should not post images or videos of others without their permission. We teach them about the risks associated with providing information with images (including the name of the file), that reveals the identity of others and their location. We teach them about the need to keep their data secure and what to do if they are subject to bullying or abuse.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, pupils and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard.

Hillcross Primary School recognises that AI has many uses, including enhancing teaching and learning, and in helping to protect and safeguard pupils. However, AI may also have the potential to facilitate abuse (e.g. bullying and grooming) and/or expose pupils to harmful content. For example, in the form of 'deepfakes', where AI is used to create images, audio or video hoaxes that look real.

Hillcross Primary School will treat any use of AI to access harmful content or bully pupils in line with this policy and our Anti-bullying/Behaviour Policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks of using AI tools whilst they are still being developed and should carry out risk assessments for any new AI tool being used by the school.

Monitoring the use of mobile devices

All mobile device use is to be open to monitoring scrutiny and the Headteacher is able to withdraw or restrict authorisation for use at any time, if it is deemed necessary.

The School reserves the right to search the content of any mobile devices on the school premises where there is a reasonable suspicion that it may contain illegal or undesirable material, including pornography, violence or bullying.

Loss, theft or damage

Pupils bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled, and given to the class teacher on arrival to school so that they can be stored securely.

The school accepts no responsibility for mobile devices, including phones, that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school. Mobile devices brought into school are entirely at the staff member, parents or visitors' own risk.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. We are committed



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to treating all members of the school community fairly and challenging negative attitudes about disability and accessibility and to developing a culture of awareness, tolerance and inclusion. This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any member of the school community and it helps to promote equality and accessibility at our school. The curriculum is planned to be inclusive and meet the needs and interests of a full range of learners. Activities and resources will be differentiated and adult support used to ensure that children access the curriculum and make the best possible progress.

Safeguarding Commitment

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, in line with the most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We take seriously our duty of care to our pupils and staff which includes safeguarding them from the risk of being drawn into terrorism - this includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. We work closely with social care, the police, health services and other services to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Radicalisation is recognised as a specific safeguarding issue and is addressed in line with the Government Prevent Strategy and The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

Privacy Policy

Hillcross School is committed to ensuring protection of all personal information that we hold. We recognise our obligations under the GDPR and Data Protection act 2018. Our practice is documented in our Data Protection Policy.

Reviewed: September 2024

Date of next review: September 2025