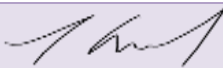





Comper Foundation Stage School

Mobile Phone Policy

2022-2025

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Signed CoG		Date:20/09/22
Print CoG	JESPER EKELUND	Date:20/09/22
Signed HT		Date:19/09/22
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MOBILE PHONE /CAMERA POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 Mobile phone and camera technology has become more sophisticated over recent years and will continue to evolve. Wireless connections in particular extends the capabilities of mobile phones further and allow access to new content and services, such as the internet, social networking sites and instant messaging. Most mobile phones offer camera, video and audio recording as standard.

1.2 Mobile phones/cameras alongside other technologies aim to change the way we communicate. The speed of communication will often provide security and reassurance; however, as with any other form of technology, there are associated risks. Children and young people must be encouraged to understand such risks to enable them to develop the appropriate strategies which will keep them safe.

1.3 As with online safety issues generally, risks to children and young people should be broadly categorised under the headings of:

Content

Contact

Conduct

Commerce

These issues are to be managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

1.4 It is to be recognised that studies consistently indicate that imposing rigid regulations and/or 'bans' on the actions of others are counterproductive and should be avoided. Such imposition will lead to a culture of suspicion, uncertainty, and secrecy. An agreement of trust is therefore to be promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones in the early years setting. This is to be agreed by all service users, including all children, young people and adults who are to come into contact with the early years setting

1.5 This philosophy should be applied to the use of mobile phones/cameras through this policy. Acceptable use and management of mobile phones/cameras is therefore to be agreed by all service users. There is to be a clear expectation that the personal use of mobile phones is to be limited to specific times and uses and agreed with the designated person for safeguarding/child protection manager.

1.6 Safe and secure storage facilities for staff are to be made available to store personal belongings in the classrooms as necessary.

1.7 Under no circumstances are images, video, or audio recordings to be made without prior explicit written consent by the designated person for safeguarding/child protection or manager.

2. Aim

2.1 The aim of the Mobile Phone/Camera Policy is to protect children and young people from harm, by ensuring the appropriate management and use of mobile phones/cameras by all individuals who come into contact with the setting

2.2 Children and young people are also to be empowered with the skills to manage the changes in technology in a safe and appropriate way; and to be alert to the potential risks of such use. Children will be taught in an age-appropriate way depending on their age and stage and developmental need

2.3 This is to be achieved through balancing protection and potential misuse. It is therefore to be recognised that alongside the potential risks, mobile phones/cameras continue to be effective communication tools. This in turn is to contribute to safeguarding practice and protection. There is no requirement or need to automatically ban the use of mobile phones or cameras in any setting.

3. Scope

3.1 The Mobile Phone/Camera Policy will apply to all individuals who are to have access to and/or users of personal and/or work-related mobile phones within the broadest context of the setting environment. This will include:

- children and young people
- parents and carers
- all staff
- governors
- volunteers
- students
- committee members
- visitors
- contractors and community users.

This list is not to be considered exhaustive.

4. Policy Statement

4.1 It is to be recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones that will give the most cause for concern; and which should be considered the most susceptible to potential misuse.

Examples of misuse are to include:

- the taking and distribution of indecent images
- exploitation
- bullying

4.2 It must be understood that should mobile phones be misused, there will be a negative impact on an individual's safety, dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not to be considered exclusive to children and young people, so the needs or vulnerabilities of the whole school community must be respected and protected.

4.3 Mobile phones and cameras will also cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and are often to be considered intrusive when used in the company of others.

4.8 It will often be very difficult to detect when mobile phones/cameras are present or being used. The use of all mobile phones/cameras needs to be effectively managed to ensure the potential for misuse is to be minimised.

4.9 The following areas will always be mobile phone, camera & ipad free areas:

- Changing areas
- Toilets
- Bathrooms
- Sleep areas will be free from these devices unless the door to the sleep area is open or there is more than one member of staff in the room.

There will be signs up to indicate this.

5. Code of Conduct

5.1 All staff will adhere to our strict staff code of conduct which will be promoted by Senior Leaders with the aim of creating an informed workforce who will work together to safeguard and promote positive outcomes for the children and young people in their care.

5.2 It is to be ensured that all practitioners and their managers will:

- Be aware of the need to protect children from harm
- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse of personal mobile phones
- Know how to minimise risk
- Be vigilant and alert to potential warning signs of misuse
- Avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to potential allegations
- Understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use
- Be responsible for the self-moderation of their own behaviours
- Be aware of the importance of reporting concerns immediately.

5.3 Colleagues will support each other to follow the mobile phone policy and staff code of conduct by ensuring that they remind anyone who is checking their phone during teaching time that this behaviour is against agreed policy. Should the staff member not change their behaviour after they have been reminded once, the headteacher will be informed and conduct procedures will be followed.

6. Procedures

6.1 Clearly defined policies and procedures will aim to ensure effective safeguarding practices are in place to protect children from harm and exposure to behaviours associated with misuse. The need to ensure mobile phones will not cause

unnecessary and/or unsafe disruptions and distractions in the workplace are also to be considered.

6.2 Acceptable use and management of mobile phones as outlined below is mandatory by all services users at Comper. The following expectations around personal mobile phone use are in place at Comper Foundation Stage School:

- ❖ Staff mobile phones are to be kept on silent or completely turned off while staff are working in the classrooms with children.
- ❖ Mobile phones will be stored in staff bags in an appropriate cupboard in the classroom out of the reach of children. Alternatively, they can be kept in the staff room or handed in at the office (if staff are concerned about security). Staff must understand that all belongings will be stored at their own risk. No liability for loss and/or damage can be accepted.
- ❖ Mobile phones should never be checked during direct teaching time with children
- ❖ Personal Mobile phones will not be used to take photos of or record observations or any other information about the children
- ❖ Staff Mobile phones will not be used to make phone calls to families of children on roll at the school unless they have been asked to by a member of SLT and only in exceptional circumstances for example when there is a fault in the landline telephone
- ❖ The use of mobile phones is to be limited to allocated lunch and/or tea breaks, unless it is to be otherwise agreed by the headteacher or designated person for safeguarding/child protection
- ❖ During break times mobile phones will only be used in the staff room, office, or off site
- ❖ Mobile phones may only be used on site in the office or staff room or before 8.40am or after 3.15pm.
- ❖ Staff working in After School Club will adhere to the same strict rules around mobile phone use as are in place during the day i.e phones will be on silent or switched off and stored safely in a cupboard out of reach of children until all the children have gone home.

6.3 There may be exceptional personal circumstances where, with permission from either the headteacher or deputy headteacher, phones can be left on during teaching time or handed to a member of office staff who will answer when there is a call and come to get the member of staff out of the setting. Such authorised use is to be monitored and recorded.

6.4 The recording, taking and sharing of images, video and audio on any mobile phone is to be avoided; except where it is explicitly agreed by the manager or designated person for safeguarding/child protection. Such authorised use is to be monitored and recorded. All mobile phone/camera use is to be open to scrutiny and the designated person for safeguarding/child protection or manager should be able to withdraw or restrict authorisation for use at any time if necessary.

6.5 No member of school staff will use their own personal mobile phones for contacting children and young people, parents and carers. If it is necessary, it must be with the explicit consent of both the designated person for safeguarding/child protection or the setting manager and the parent or carer; unless it is considered an emergency. Care is to be taken to ensure that work mobiles are not to be exploited in a similar way.

6.6 All service users, including parents, carers, visitors and contractors should be respectfully advised that their mobile phones/cameras are not to be used in designated mobile phone/camera use free areas. Should it be considered necessary for mobile phone calls and/or texts to be taken or made, efforts should be made to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to children and young people. No images, video or audio recordings are to be made without prior explicit written consent by the designated person for safeguarding/child protection/the manager.

6.7 All individuals who are to bring personal devices into the early years setting must ensure that they hold no inappropriate or illegal content.

7. Driving

7.1 Employees who may be required to drive on behalf of the setting must ensure any work/and or personal mobile phones are to be switched off whilst driving.

7.2 Under no circumstances, when driving on behalf of the organisation, should practitioners or their managers make or take a phone call, text or use the enhanced functions of a mobile phone. This should also apply to the use of hands-free and wireless connections, which should be considered a distraction rather than a safer alternative.

8. Emergency Contact

8.1 It is to be recognised that mobile phones provide direct contact to others and will often provide necessary reassurances due to their ease of access, particularly at difficult times. Agreed acceptable use of mobile phones is to therefore be promoted. This is to afford practitioners and their manager's peace of mind, by reducing stress and worry and is therefore to allow them to concentrate more fully on their work. Such use must be subject to management, monitoring and review.

8.2 It is to be ensured that the landline telephone always remains connected and operational except in circumstances beyond reasonable control. This means that the landline will always be available for emergency/urgent contact.

8.3 The reliance on an answer phone is to be avoided unless the setting is closed or where children are to be taken off the premises for a trip or outing. Any answer phone is to be checked promptly on return to the setting.

8.4 Personal mobile phones will be used by all staff when carrying out home visits. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure that the office staff have an up-to-date phone number and that their mobile phone is charged and in good working order.