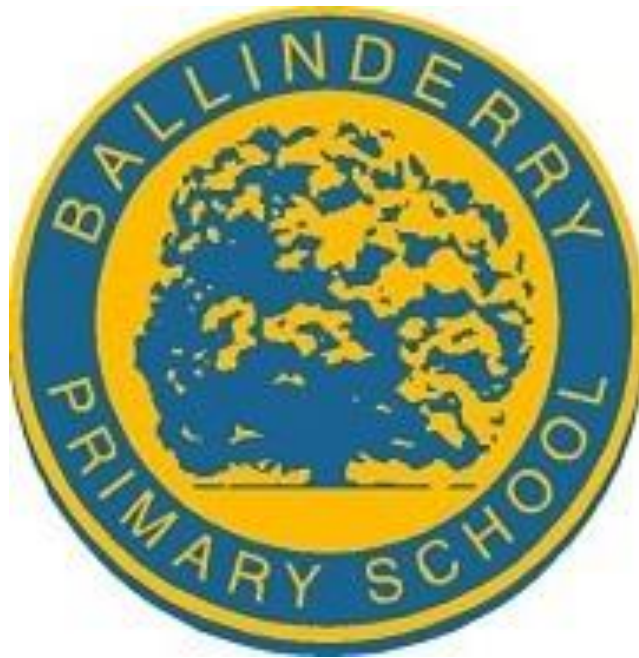


**Ballinderry Primary School
and
Nursery Unit
Mobile Phone Policy**



Introduction

At Ballinderry Primary School and Nursery Unit the welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of this policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear guidelines.

We recognise that mobile phones are effective communication tools; we also recognise that the enhanced functions of many mobile phones cause concern, creating distractions and disruption to the working day. Some of these functions are also susceptible to misuse- including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phones on site. This includes, but is not restricted to: Staff, volunteers, Governors, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Child Protection Policy
- Anti- Bullying Policy

The policy is in accordance with DENI Circular 2016/26.

Personal Mobiles: Staff

- Staff are not permitted to make/ receive calls/ texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office.
- Staff should have their phones on silent or switched off and out of sight during class time.
- Mobile phones should not be used where children are present (e.g. in a classroom, in the playground).
- Use of phones, including receiving/sending texts or emails, should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- It is advised that staff use the security function to protect access to their phones.
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative) then staff should make the principal aware of this and can have their phone in case of needing to receive an emergency call.
- Staff are not permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones; for example, to take recordings of children or to share images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be taken using school equipment such as iPads.
- Staff should report any use of mobile devices which causes them concern, to the Designated Teacher or to the Principal.

Mobile Phones for Work- Related Purposes

Mobile Phones provide a useful means of communication on off-site activities.

Staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional
- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips except in an emergency (e.g. if the school is closed). All relevant communications should normally be made via the school office.
- Parents and Volunteers accompanying trips should be informed by the trip leader that they should not make contact with other parents or volunteers (via calls, texts, e-mail or social- networking) during the trip, or to use their phone to take photos of the children.

Personal Mobiles – Pupils

Mobile phones are part of everyday life for many children and can play a part in helping pupils feel safe and secure. They can also prove a distraction in school and can be used to bully or intimidate others. For these reasons:

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on school trips including residential trips.
- In exceptional circumstances if a child requires their phone for use after- school, an explanatory note or phone call to the school office must be made by the child's parent and
- The phone must be handed in, switched off, to the teacher first thing in the morning and collected at home time.
- The School reserves the right to confiscate mobile phones brought to school without permission. The phone will be returned at the end of the day.

Parents and Visitors

We would ask that parents' and visitors' use of mobile phones on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment.

While we allow photographing of events such as school plays or sports day, we would remind you that we do not have permission for every child in school to appear in photographs or on social media. **We ask that parents do not publish images (e.g. on social networking sites) that include children other than their own.**

Ballinderry Primary School and Nursery Unit accepts no liability for the loss or damage to mobile devices which are brought into the school or school grounds.

A Galbraith November 2019