

VANAREAL GRACELAND ACADEMY

Abacha Road Mararaba



MOBILE DEVICE POLICY

Policy Number	C3 – organizational
Prepared By	Paul Ojobo
Acknowledgement(s)	All Staff
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Approvals

Role	Name	Signature / Approval	Date
Head of School (Admin)			
Head of School (Academy)			
Director of Admin	Esther Ocheikwu		
Director of Academy	Jessy Ocheikwu		
School Board			

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school e-safety policy.

1.1 Introduction

Mobile phones and devices, alongside other forms of technology are changing the way and speed in which we communicate. They can provide security and reassurance; however there are also associated risks. Children and young people need to understand these risks in order to help them develop appropriate strategies for keeping themselves safe. As with online safety issues generally, risks to children and young people can be broadly categorised under the headings of content, contact and conduct and managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

1.2 Aim

The aim of the Mobile Device Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines.

This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools - which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal or work-related mobile phones/devices on site. This includes practitioners, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and community users. This list is not exhaustive.

1.4 Policy statement

It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones/devices that cause the most concern, and which are most susceptible to misuse. Misuse includes the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.

It is also recognised that mobile phones/devices can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

When mobile phones/devices are misused it can impact on an individual's dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not exclusive to children and young people; hence there is a duty to protect the needs and vulnerabilities of all.

It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile phones/devices is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

1.5 Code of conduct (see S12 Code Of Conduct Policy)

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 leading to increased productivity.

It is therefore ensured that all practitioners:

- have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- know how to minimise risk.
- avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- 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.

It is fully recognised that studies consistently indicate that imposing rigid regulations and/or 'bans' on the actions of others can be counterproductive, leading to a culture of suspicion, uncertainty and secrecy.

The imposition of rigorous, inflexible rules is therefore avoided, unless the potential risks of not enforcing them far out-weigh the benefits. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones/devices within the setting environment, which is agreed to by all practitioners.

1.6 Procedures

The school recognises that mobile phones/devices are a useful tool for taking photo images of groups of children undertaking activities that are downloaded for display, or as evidence of curriculum activities.

Members of the school staff should only use school devices to take photographs/videos. There should be clear reasons for recording images eg. for curriculum evidence collection ie. children engaging in curriculum activities, performances in school or recording achievements. Photographs of children must not be taken on personal devices. This includes staff and visitors.

Parents will have supervised opportunities to take photos of their child only, at the end of assemblies or performances. In line with our safeguarding guidance, they will be requested not to share any school images on social media.

1.7 Personal mobiles/devices

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile phones/devices causing unnecessary disruptions and distractions within the workplace, and to ensure effective safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against potential misuse.

In the interests of equality, and to further promote safety, the guidance applies to any individual who has a mobile phone on site, including children, parents and visitors, as detailed below:

1.8 Staff are not permitted to have their mobile phones/devices on them during school hours. Personal use of mobile phone is only limited to allocated lunch and/or tea breaks.

Other than in agreed exceptional circumstances, calls and texts must not be taken or made during work time, unless it is to inform the office/SLT of an emergency.

Staff are not permitted to use their own personal phones/devices for contacting children, young people and their families within or outside of the setting.

1.9 Children are not permitted to have a phone/device in them.

2.0 Parents, visitors and contractors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones/devices in any area where children are present. Should phone calls and/or texts need to be taken or made, use is restricted to those areas not accessed by children in order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others e.g. the reception area or school office.

Any individual bringing a personal device into the setting must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content. All are asked to put a tick next to their name into the visitor's book, to confirm that they have read and agreed to our mobile device policy.

2.1 Driving

If any practitioner is required to drive in a working capacity it is strongly recommended that they follow the same procedures regarding their own personal mobile phones/devices.

Under no circumstances should practitioners drive whilst taking a phone call. This also applies to hands-free and wireless connections, which are considered a distraction rather than a safer alternative.

2.2 Safe storage

Staff are responsible for leaving their phone at designated space to be provided for in the reception. For further security, it is recommended that phones are security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damages will be accepted.

As well as safeguarding children and avoiding any unnecessary disruptions during the day, this procedure also aims to protect staff against any unfounded allegations.

2.3 Emergency contact

It is recognized that mobile phones/devices provide direct contact to others, and at times provide a necessary reassurance due to their ease of access, particularly at stressful times. Practitioners, therefore, in agreed exceptional circumstances are permitted to keep the volume of their phone/device switched on. This is to enhance their own well-being and peace of mind, to reduce stress and worry and to enable them to concentrate more effectively on their work. Such use will be for an agreed limited period only, until any concerns or issues leading to the exceptional circumstance request have been resolved.

It is ensured at all times that the school landline telephone remains connected and operational, except in circumstances beyond control. This means that it is available for emergency/urgent contact at all times.

Any breach of *this* policy will be dealt with in accordance with the school disciplinary policies.