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## WORKNLEARN

### **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 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 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. Safe and secure storage facilities are to be made available to store personal belongings as necessary.

- 1.5 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.

## **Aim**

- 2.1 The aim of the Mobile Phone Policy is to protect children and young people from harm, by ensuring their appropriate management and use by all individuals who are part of Worknlearn process.
- 2.2 Children and young people need 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.
- 2.3 This is achieved through balancing protection and potential misuse. It is recognised that alongside their potential risks, mobile phones continue to be effective communication tools and because of this there is no requirement or need for us to automatically ban the use of mobile phones.

## **Scope**

- 3.1 This Mobile Phone Policy will apply to all individuals at Worknlearn who have access to and/or are users of personal and/or work-related mobile phones. This will include children and young people, staff (paid and voluntary), parents and carers, governors and contractors.

## **Policy Statement**

- 4.1 It is recognised that the enhanced functions of many mobile phones will give the most cause for concern; and should be considered the most susceptible to potential misuse. Examples of misuse include the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.
- 4.2 It must be understood that when mobile phones are misused, there will be a negative impact on an individual's safety, dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are not considered exclusive to children and young people, so the needs or vulnerabilities of all must be respected and protected.
- 4.3 Mobile phones and cameras will also cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and are often considered intrusive when used in the company of others.

- 4.4 It can often be very difficult to detect when mobile phones are present or being used. Their use has to be effectively managed to ensure the potential for misuse is minimised.

## Code of conduct

- 5.1 The aim of our Code of Conduct is to create an informed workforce who will work together to safeguard and promote positive outcomes for the children and young people we work with.
- 5.2 All staff should:
- Be aware of the need to protect children from harm.
  - Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
  - 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.

## Procedures

- 6.1 At Worknlearn we aim to ensure that mobile phones will not cause unnecessary and/or unsafe disruptions and distractions in our educational settings.
- 6.2 It is important to understand the contexts of the environments in which we work with students. Worknlearn's main area of work is with students who are failing to cope with a mainstream school environment. The purpose of our work is to re-engage students with education through positive motivational experiences in the work place. This involves a work-based placement of between 1-3 days per week whilst their education continues in either mainstream or an Alternative School placement for the rest of the time.
- 6.3 This means that we have to consider the following scenarios with the appropriate or designated rules regarding them:
1. **Students in the workplace.** Most work environments have their own code of conduct with regard to the use of mobile phones. This is discussed at the time of placement and on their induction to the work place so that they understand the

expectations upon them. Usually this will mean that all personal use of mobile phones is limited to allocated lunch and/or tea breaks. In some placements safe and secure storage facilities are made available to store personal belongings and these can be utilised to store phones during work time. In short, whatever the rules of the work placement are with regard to mobile phones we expect our students to know and abide by them.

2. **Students who remain in their mainstream school** for the rest of their week. This is the easiest scenario for us, as the students abide by the rules of their school which they have been familiar with since they were registered there on roll.

3. **Students who attend Alternative Schools** for the rest of their school week. We often arrange such placements as part of our role with the student and their referrer. When the student is interviewed and then inducted into such schools, the rules with regard to mobile phones are made clear to them. Most AP's are small in terms of student numbers and so they adopt a policy whereby students hand their phones in at the beginning of the school day. They are stored securely in a named receptacle, and released to them at appropriate times in the school day and on leaving.

4. **Students who attend our centre.** This happens rarely and usually only for a small number of students in exceptional circumstances, such as the closure of their AP centre for a morning or afternoon. We do not store phones but do require that they are switched off (not just silenced) during the period of their time with us.

6.4 All staff and students who work with us are made aware that the recording, taking and sharing of images, video and audio on any mobile phone is not permitted.

6.5 All staff are made aware on Safeguarding induction that their own personal mobile phones should never be used for contacting children and young people, parents and carers. If it is necessary, it must be with the explicit consent of both our DSL 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.

## Work Mobile

7.1 At Worknlearn we do use designated work mobiles. This is considered to be the safest choice because it is;

- An effective communication tool enabling text, email messages and calls to be made and received.
- An essential part of the emergency toolkit which is to be taken on short trips and outings or home visits.
- A back-up facility should landline facilities be unavailable – or where contact needs to be made outside of operational hours.

7.2 Only authorised staff have access to the work mobile, which is password protected and stored securely when not in use. All use is recorded and monitored by the DSL. Material held on the work mobile or camera should only ever be downloaded onto a works computer, never on a personal device.

7.3 Personal calls are not to be made on the work mobile phone other than in agreed circumstances. Personal contact will be permitted to be made via the work mobile in the event of an emergency.

## **Emergency Contact**

10.1 At Worknlearn we recognise that mobile phones provide direct contact to others, and will often provide necessary reassurances due to their ease of access, particularly at difficult times. We therefore promote the agreed acceptable use of mobile phones. This affords staff peace of mind, by reducing stress and worry and therefore to allows them to concentrate more fully on their work. Such use must be subject to management, monitoring and review.

10.2 We maintain a landline telephone that is connected and operational at all times except in circumstances beyond reasonable control. This means that the landline is available for emergency/urgent contact at all times.