

Personal Devices Policy (Learners)

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Gretton School is owned and operated by Newcome Education, a subsidiary group of Cavendish Education.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each and every one of its learners and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside all of these policies in order to ensure an awareness of the bigger picture. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the Equality Policy, the Health and Safety Policy and the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

In all the school's policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word "parent" is used in terms of Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, which states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. [Department for Education guidance](#) considers a 'parent' to include:

- *all biological parents, whether they are married or not*
- *any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative*
- *any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person*

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school employs the services of the following consulting companies to ensure regulatory compliance and the implementation of best practice:

- *Peninsula HROnline*
- *Peninsula BusinessSafe (Health and Safety)*
- *Carecheck (DBS)*

- Educare (online CPD)

This Policy applies to all learners of Gretton School and is shared with learners, parents and staff, including senior leaders, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, anyone working on behalf of Gretton School, external agencies and members of the public.

1 INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

At Gretton School, the welfare and well-being of our learners is paramount. The aim of the Personal Devices Policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication and other technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice, through establishing clear and robust acceptable user guidelines.

This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse, with the recognition that mobile phones, and other similar devices, are effective communication and social interaction tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many devices that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the school day, and which are most susceptible to misuse - including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation, access to inappropriate materials and bullying. However, as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to ALL mobile and communication devices.

We recognise that mobile phones and personal devices are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping learners to feel safe and secure; many are also used, both in school and at home, as incentives and as tools for self-regulation. Given this mixed picture of positive and negatives, Gretton School asks learners to:

- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse
- Know how to minimise risk
- Avoid putting themselves into compromising situations
- Understand the need for boundaries and clear guidelines regarding the use of devices in school

The use of phones/other devices (inc. receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to break and personal time, and not in class during lesson time. Learners will be respectfully asked to keep their mobile phones or devices in their bag, locker or with the teacher/class staff during lesson time unless permitted use is granted and/or in the event of exceptional circumstances.

Should there be exceptional circumstances then the learner should make their class staff aware and can have their phone with them in case of having to receive an emergency call.

Learners are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their personal devices, for example: to take recordings of other children, staff or visitors, or for sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment only. Staff and learners should report any usage of mobile phones or devices that causes them concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher.

In light of recent concerns regarding devices with batteries, Gretton School also requests the following in relation to the management of any mobile phone or device in school:

- Only the correct charger and power cable should be used to charge the mobile phone or device
- Phones should not be charged for long periods (such as overnight) or left plugged in when no one is present in the room.
- When the mobile phone or devices is charged, the plug and charger should be removed from the socket
- Laptops or similar devices should be used on a suitable hard surface that allows the machine to ventilate and not covered in or surrounded by combustible materials

2 CONSEQUENCES OF MISUSE

Mobile phones or devices used in school at inappropriate times, during lesson times or without appropriate permission could be confiscated and returned at the end of the day. Where mobile phones or communication devices are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others, then the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead reserves the right to intervene 'to such an extent as it is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of learners when they are off the school site'. This may include conversations with parents, the safe storage of the mobile phone or device whilst the learner is on the school site or the request to parents to install monitoring technology to ensure safe and appropriate usage.