



# Normanthurst School

## Mobile Phone and Camera Policy

### Use of cameras and the manipulation and storage of images

In this policy terms such as 'photography', 'pictures', 'images', 'camera', 'device' and 'digital technology' include both still and video media. The term 'camera' includes mobile phones, iPads and other equipment which has the capacity to take photographs.

At Normanthurst School we recognise that the appropriate use of photography enhances many aspects of school life and the pupils' education. Mobile phone technology is becoming more and more sophisticated with easier access to the internet, social networking sites and instant messaging. Many mobile phones offer camera, video and audio recording as standard. This ease of communication raises the potential for certain risks.

This policy is intended to ensure an environment in which children, parents and staff are safe from images being recorded and inappropriately used by providing a clear framework to ensure that:

- the use of cameras and the storage of images reflect good practice
- the safeguarding needs of the pupils are met
- staff are not distracted from their work with children.

The policy also recognises that learning to use digital technology is an important part of the ICT curriculum. Teaching needs to ensure that pupils are able to learn how to use digital cameras and to edit and store photographs with an understanding of safeguarding requirements, for themselves and others, which is appropriate for their age and taking due account of the cyber-bullying aspects of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Photography is used at the school for a variety of purposes, including:

- Recording pupils' achievements, learning and progress, providing evidence to support EYFS milestones in the early year learning stories
- Providing evidence to support pupils' application for entrance/scholarship to their future schools
- Recording school events and providing material for displays
- Communication with parents, for example to help reassure new parents or carers of young children that they have settled well into school life and provide prompt information on their children's activities on residential trips
- For publicity purposes (brochures, prospectus, media articles, website etc.)
- To support work undertaken by members of staff or students on placements for training and gaining further qualifications.

The school Terms and Conditions, signed by all parents on entry, provide for publicity photographs of children to be taken by the school unless parents request otherwise. If parents withhold consent for certain aspects of photography in relation to their child, this must be respected. Images should be checked to determine whether photographs have been taken which inadvertently include pupils for whom consent has not been given. If this is the case, images should be destroyed, cropped or otherwise edited to ensure that parental consent is respected. If an image is edited for this reason, the original must be destroyed.

Periodically, professional photographers visit the school by arrangement to take portrait photographs and publicity photographs for the prospectus or website. Care should be taken that parental consent is respected. It is not compulsory for pupils to be included in portrait and team photography, nor is there any obligation on parents to purchase the resulting photographs.

From time to time a teacher, student or trainee teacher on placement may undertake a case study of a child, for example, as part of a training course to gain a qualification. In such situations, parental consent with regard to photography must be respected. Case studies will only be undertaken following prior written consent from the parent or carer and, except by prior arrangement between the Headmistress and the parent/carers, the child's name will be changed in the case study to protect his or her identity.

Occasionally a photograph may be taken that inadvertently catches a pupil in an unfortunate, embarrassing or compromising position. If this is the case, the image and any copies of it must be destroyed immediately.

### **Photography by parents**

It is very difficult to police the use of cameras by parents, for example at prize giving, in sporting events or in concerts or other performances. However, if members of staff have concerns about the suitability of photography by parents, they should consult the Headmistress, who will consider the situation with reference to this policy and the school's safeguarding procedures and take appropriate action. Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately.

Any parent who works at the school, for example as a volunteer, must abide by this policy. The teacher responsible (for example the Trip Leader for an educational visit which uses parent volunteers) must ensure that the parents involved are aware of this policy and abide by it.

### **Use of equipment**

Except with permission from the Headmistress, staff may not use their own cameras, phones or other equipment to take pictures in school or at school events. School cameras are available for this purpose.

Users bringing personal devices in to the school must ensure there is no inappropriate or illegal content on the device. Staff must ensure that this policy is observed when using other equipment which can be used in connection with photographs (photocopier, scanner, printer, ipads etc.)

### **Editing and storage of photographs**

All images taken by members of staff or volunteers at school or on school activities remain the property of the school. The school may require images to be deleted or edited as appropriate and may also select images taken by members of staff or volunteers for other purposes, with due attention paid to the requirements of this policy.

When editing images, staff must take due professional care and ensure that edited images do not mislead or misrepresent. Care must also be taken to ensure that images do not result in their subject being vulnerable to embarrassment, teasing, bullying or abuse.

Close attention must be paid to the storage of images, particularly whilst kept on portable media such as flash cards and memory sticks. Staff are responsible for the security of such media and the images they contain and must take all reasonable measures to ensure that they are kept safe and do not come into the possession of unauthorised people.

Unless specific prior consent has been obtained, members of staff and volunteers must not post school images on personal pages of social networking sites or other websites. The use of images on the school's official Facebook page, website and other approved sites is carefully monitored to ensure that it is in line with this policy and parental consent. The age limit for having a Facebook account is 13 and other social networks have similar restrictions. However, parents do not always enforce these restrictions. Staff must be vigilant in respect of any inappropriate use by pupils of school images or their own photographs of school events on social networks and must report any concerns to the child protection officer.

This policy is available on the school's website and all parents are made aware of how to find it.

Final responsibility for the appropriate use of photography at school and in connection with school events rests with the Headmistress as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on the setting's mobile phone may be unsuitable and provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the procedures set out in the school's Safeguarding Children Policy will be followed.

The school assesses the risk of access to archived images by inappropriate individuals to be very low. Staff and volunteers must ensure that their use and storage of images maintains a similarly acceptable level of risk.

### **Use of personal mobile phones by staff and volunteers**

Normanhurst School recognises that staff, students and volunteers may wish to have their personal mobile phones at work for use in case of emergency. However, safeguarding of children within the setting is paramount and it is recognised that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and therefore the following must be observed:

- Personal mobile phones should only be used outside of working hours and never whilst children are present.
- On arrival at school, staff should switch their mobile phones to silent.
- Personal mobile phones should be safely stored either in a lockable cabinet or in the staff room.
- Mobile phones may be used at break times provided that:
  - Pupils are not present
  - They are not on duty
  - This does not prevent them from responding to a request for assistance from another member of staff, or other aspects of their professional duties.
- Staff, students or volunteers who ignore this policy may face disciplinary action.
- The setting's main telephone number can be used for emergencies by staff or volunteers or by people who need to contact them.
- In circumstances such as outings and off-site visits, staff will agree with the trip leader the appropriate use of personal mobile phones in the event of an emergency.
- Where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may be unsuitable and may constitute evidence relating to a criminal offence, the procedures set out in the school's Safeguarding Children Policy will be followed.
- Staff, students or volunteers remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses.
- Certain members of staff, such as the Headmistress or Maintenance Team, are exempt from the restrictions on the use of mobile phones whilst on duty so that they can be contacted at all times by the school office in case of emergency.
- By arrangement with the Headmistress, a member of staff's personal mobile phone may be designated as the means of communication for specific activities. The use of mobile phones by staff whilst on school duties must respect national legislation and common courtesies. For example, they must not be used whilst driving and should be switched to silent at events and venues where this is expected.

### **Use of personal mobile phones by non-staff**

Normanhurst School recognises that visitors may wish to have their personal mobile phones with them for use in case of emergency.

However, safeguarding of children within the setting is paramount and it is recognised that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and therefore the following must be observed:

- Mobile phones should only be used away from the children and where possible, off site.
- In circumstances where there is a suspicion that the material on a mobile phone may be unsuitable and provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the procedures set out in the school's Safeguarding Children Policy will be followed.
- Visitors remain responsible for their own property and will bear the responsibility of any losses.
- The taking of photographs is prohibited.