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# YORK STEINER SCHOOL

## DIGITAL IMAGE & MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Approved by:	Board of Trustees	Date:	January 2024
Last reviewed on:	January 2024		
Next review due by:	January 2025		

York Steiner School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

**This policy should be read in conjunction with all other safeguarding policies as they all work together to safeguard the child, staff and school.** These policies collectively support Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 to:

- Protect children;
- To inform parents about the way in which we use, store or display images of children;
- To provide guidance that minimises the risk of allegations against staff arising from inappropriate use of mobile phones, photographs or personal cameras;
- To provide clarity on how we use and store digital images.

### **Photographs & Cameras (including video cameras)**

Parents' consent is sought for the use of photographs when a child joins the school and this consent will last for the duration of their stay at school. Parents have the right to withdraw their consent at any time but need to do so in writing to the HR/Admin Manager. A list of children whose parents have not given consent will be kept so we can ensure that publicity materials do not contain images of those children.

Photographs are taken for the purpose of celebrating the educational and class journey of the children. It is also an effective method for recording children's progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. From time to time photographs will be taken during fundraising days, concerts or on outings. When photographing groups of children, we will wherever possible, promote positive images of children as an inclusive community:

- The use of personal cameras by parents and visitors is not permitted on site (except at school festivals and other public events);
- While on the school premises or during school activity staff will only use digital cameras belonging to the school;
- School cameras are not to be removed from the school premises, unless part of an outing, school trip or other learning experience. If this does occur it will be recorded (date, time, who is responsible);

- In exceptional circumstances a Class Teacher may use their personal camera or mobile phone as long as permission is obtained in advance from the Safeguarding Officer or Administrator;
- All images taken must be downloaded onto a designated school computer;
- Electronic images will not be removed from the school however, with parental consent, class trip images may be securely shared via Dropbox or similar;
- Images taken of children will be contextual, purposeful, and accurately reflect the experience or activity;
- **Under no circumstances, are images to be taken of children or young people in any state of undress;**
- It is the responsibility of each member of staff to abide by these rules.

**No photography or video is ever permitted in sensitive areas of the school, for example, toilet cubicles and changing areas.**

Once processed, images will be deleted from the cameras/phones. Unused printed photographs will be disposed of using the secure shredding facilities. Every year, each teacher will be responsible for deciding which photos to archive and which to delete.

The school will not digitally enhance or alter photographs except to improve the quality of officially published content.

Particular care should be taken for vulnerable children such as Looked After Children, recently adopted or those who have experienced domestic violence.

**The Safeguarding Team, Headteacher and HR/Admin Manager have the right to view any images taken and/or to withdraw or modify an individual's authorisation to take or make images at any time. All teachers must ensure that all images are available for scrutiny and be able to justify any images in their possession.**

Children's names or any other identifying information shall not appear in any caption or accompanying text alongside their photograph, for example on displays, documentation panels and name cards, without specific consent.

Particular care is to be taken where such images are likely to be viewed by others, including the general public.

## ***Public Events***

The Data Protection Act 2018 does **not** prevent parents from taking images at events, such as end of term festivals and fairs but these must be **for their own personal use**. We would ask parents not to share photos and videos of other people's children on social media sites such as Facebook or Instagram without their specific permission.

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) guidance for schools states that filming and photography of events such as nativity plays, school events, sports days (please note there are certain areas within leisure centres where photography is prohibited) are exempt under the Data Protection Act **if these are solely for personal or domestic use**.

It is important to ensure that people with no connection with the school do not have any opportunity to produce images covertly. Staff should question anyone who is using a camera, mobile phone or video recorder at events or on outings whom they do not recognise.

## ***Storage of Images***

The School has a duty of care to safeguard images so that they cannot be used inappropriately, or outside the agreed terms under which consent has been obtained.

All images taken and stored on the camera must be downloaded to a password protected computer. The camera should then be given back to the Main School Office for deletion of all images stored and safe storage of the device.

## ***Professional Photography***

If the school engages the services of a professional photographer then families can choose whether to participate or not. We will endeavour to ensure that information on forthcoming sessions is disseminated to parents in good time. The photography company credentials must be viewed by a member of the Safeguarding Team.

During the photography session, individuals and groups of children will be continually supervised by at least one member of staff and at no time do any children remain unsupervised.

## ***Use of Images of Children by the Press***

There are occasions throughout the year when we may engage with the local press to promote our achievements, or for a celebratory event. The manner in which the press use images is controlled through relevant industry code of practice and law. If any parent has objections to their child being included they will have the opportunity to decline permission on the standard consent form.

## **Mobile Phones**

Mobiles phones and Smart Watches have recently become a common possession and are increasingly complex and sophisticated. Many people view them as an essential part of modern life. There are however many issues that relate to mobile phone use, or indeed possession, in school, which include:

- Disturbance of lessons and loss of concentration in class;
- Worry of responsibility for an expensive item;
- Potential for theft;
- Potential bullying situations;
- Unwanted and uncontrolled photographs and video footage;
- Now that mobile phones can connect to the internet, all the hazards involving online issues such as bullying, grooming and personal security;
- Microwave/electromagnetic radiation;
- Adults talking on the phone and not giving their full attention to the children in their care;
- Personal conversations being overheard.

We also accept that:

- Parents / carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety;
- There is increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or walking to school;
- It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently after or before

school.

## **Responsibility of Mobile Phones**

**York Steiner School accepts no responsibility whatsoever for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) relating to mobile phones/smart devices. It is the responsibility of parents/ carers to ensure mobile phones or electronic devices are properly insured.**

### ***Pupils***

- Phones may only be brought into school from Class 5 upwards, when necessary. Mobile phones are not to be used in class without specific reason (e.g. Medical) and not in the corridors, toilet, cafe, playground or any other parts of the school building or grounds.
- Smart Watches and Fitness Trackers (including Fitbits) are not allowed in school;
- Children must keep their phones turned off, in their bags and out of sight;
- Any child found to be using their phone/smartwatch or fitness tracker without permission during school time will have the device confiscated and kept in the school office, available for collection at the end of the school day. These items will be returned to the pupils at the end of the day and will not be held overnight. If this happens a second time, parents will be informed and the mobile phone will need to be handed in at Reception in the morning and picked up at the end of the day. A further infringement will mean that a child will no longer be able to bring their phone into school. A child must hand it over immediately if confiscated, or if their usage is being monitored, or their past usage checked.
- If pupils need to phone their parents at the end of the day, they must do this in the School Office or off-site.
- It is the expectation that pupils will not take mobile phones on school trips. In exceptional circumstances and with agreement of the Education Manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Class 8 pupils may be allowed to take still and video images using their phones while on their School trip;
- In exceptional circumstances for example on school trips, it may be necessary for a staff member to lend a pupil a mobile phone. The call must be supervised and numbers deleted after use.

## ***Emergencies***

- If a pupil needs to contact their parent / carer they will be allowed to use the office phone;
- Parents should call the school office if they need to relay a message to their child.

## ***Staff***

To ensure the safety and welfare of the children in our care, all adults are required to adhere to the following procedures:

- Staff may have mobile phones on the school premises. However, staff will not use mobile phones in the classroom during lessons, unless for urgent school purposes, for example, the completion of registers, urgently contacting the school office or the Head Teacher;
- As adult employees, we expect staff to behave in a responsible professional manner with regards to the use of mobile phones in school, including facilitating communication on School business e.g. contacting members of staff who may be in another part of the school, or for communication between staff with a group of children off school premises;
- Personal calls are only to be made when not teaching, in the staff room or other appropriate rooms unless in the case of an emergency;
- Staff are to inform their next of kin that they can also contact the school office in case of emergency. They will make known the relevant numbers to their family;
- During outings, including nature walks and visits to the play field, teaching staff will always carry a mobile phone for health and safety reasons. Phones must be kept on to enable fast and efficient contact. This will be covered in the risk assessment;
- The School Business Manager will keep an up to date list of all staff member's mobile phone numbers;
- All staff have a duty of care and must notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead and School Business Manager if they have any concerns regarding inappropriate or misuse of mobile phones by staff;
- Any breach of this policy could result in disciplinary procedures.
- Staff may take photos of children on the school phone (whose parents have given consent) for educational and promotional purposes. Images are to be downloaded onto a school computer and deleted from the phone. These images are for school use only.

- Staff may take photos of children on their own camera or mobile phone (whose parents have given consent) that has been approved in advance by the HR/Admin Manager. Where any device is used that does not belong to the School, all images must be deleted immediately from the device, in the presence of another member of staff, once the photos have been downloaded to a device, such as a computer, belonging to the School, or sent directly via email or secure imagery software to the Marketing Officer or HR/Admin Manager.
- It is essential that pictures do not appear on social media, in the press or on the website without pre-approval as above.

### ***Visitors to School Premises***

- Visitors, including contractors and parents, who are in contact with children, are asked to turn their phones off;
- Those who are not in contact with children will be asked to keep their phone on silent when they report to reception and to keep their phones out of sight at all times and if they do need to use them then this must be done out away from children;
- Parents are asked not to use their mobile phones on site unless in the case of an emergency.

On school outings parents may need to take and use their mobile phones to keep in touch with members of the group including the teacher. We expect parents to behave in a responsible and professional manner with regards to the use of mobile phones whilst conducting School business.