

PORT·REGIS

MOBILE PHONE, MOBILE DEVICE AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Whole school policy including EYFS.

POLICY NAME	Mobile Phone, Mobile Device & Social Media Policy	POLICY OWNER	Iain Hepburn, Deputy Head (Pastoral)
DATE OF LAST REVIEW	September 2026	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW	September 2027

There have been significant advances in mobile phone technology in the area of wireless technology where many mobile phones and devices have integral cameras, videos and recording facilities. There is therefore potential for these facilities to be used inappropriately to interfere with dignity and privacy and thus compromise the confidentiality of the children in our care, whilst putting yourself at risk.

Any reference to 'parent(s)' within this policy shall include 'guardian(s)'.

Statement of intent

It is our intention to provide an environment in which children, parents and staff are safe from images being recorded and inappropriately used in turn eliminating the following concerns;

1. Staff being distracted from their work with children
2. The inappropriate use of mobile phones/devices and their cameras around children

Aim

Our aim is to have a clear, workable policy on the acceptable use of mobile phones and devices and cameras that is understood and adhered to by all parties concerned, without exception.

Guidance for all staff

Staff may be in possession of a mobile phone, but it must be either switched off (or left on silent) at all times when the adult is working with children. **Staff who work within the EYFS must not have access to their mobile phones during the day. They should be stored in a safe location away from children.**

Mobile phones must not be left in sight of the pupils and should be stored in a safe location such as a drawer or bag.

They may be used during a break and lunchtime and non-contact time. This usage must not be in public areas such as the dining room unless it is being used to register children on iSams.

Staff using their mobile phones for personal use during breaks or lunch time, must do so away from children and taking into consideration the location in which they are making the phone call, whether or not it will distract colleagues and whether or not the nature of the telephone conversation is appropriate in front of colleagues. It is common courtesy to consider the fact that colleagues may not wish to have the intrusion of your telephone conversations.

Staff should not make or receive calls or text messages or be on social media during lesson times or boarding duties.

Teaching staff may be in possession of a mobile device in classrooms, or when remote working, to assist with the virtual learning programme for children, for example, during the Covid pandemic. Any such mobile devices must only be used for the purposes of the virtual learning programme, using the School's approved systems. Under no circumstances should the mobile device be used for (i) any other purpose; or (ii) to take photographs or videos of children.

No photographs or videos of children must ever be made using personal mobile phones.

Photographs and videos may only be taken of children with a school device and for legitimate school purposes.

For those members of staff who use a school mobile phone or device, the school reserves the right to search the phone/device at all times. The school reserves the right to search any member of staff's personal phone and/or device in the event that it has reason to believe that that phone and/or device has been used in breach of this policy and/or in a manner that could cause harm to one of our children and/or in a manner that could cause distress to a parent of one of our children.

School Trips and Fixtures

Common sense is required. Phones should be kept out of sight and should only be used when:

1. Contacting the school with regard to POPEMP changes.
2. Chasing consent status.
3. In the case of an emergency.

Parents

In recognition of the need to protect the privacy of the children, parents and visitors are requested not to use their mobile phone/device cameras around the school. This also includes school events where parents could be taking photos of other children.

Parents should also be reminded about the sharing of images on social media sites. This is in the parent handbook.

Social Media

Social networking activities conducted online outside work, such as blogging (writing personal journals to publicly accessible internet pages), involvement in social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram or X (formally Twitter) and posting material, images or comments on sites such as You Tube can have a negative effect on an organisation's reputation or image. In addition, Port Regis has a firm commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work. This policy has been written to set out the key principles and code of conduct that we expect of all members of staff with respect to their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking sites.

Key Principles

Every member of staff has a responsibility to ensure that they protect the reputation of the school, and to treat colleagues and members of the school with professionalism and respect. It is important to protect everyone at Port Regis from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social networking sites.

Safeguarding children is a key responsibility of all members of staff and it is essential that every member of staff at Port Regis considers this and acts responsibly if they are using social networking sites out of school. Anyone working in the school either as a paid employee, contractor or volunteer must not communicate with children via social networking.

This policy is not covered by the Chatham House rule and therefore no communications irrespective of their anonymity should be shared that relate to any specific event, protocol, pupil or person at Port Regis School.

Code of Conduct for every member of staff at Port Regis – Social Networking

The following are not considered acceptable at Port Regis:

- The use of the school's name, logo, or any other published material without written prior permission from the Director of Marketing. This applies to any published material including the internet or written documentation. This includes the use of @portregis.com or #portregis in any non-related school posts.
- The posting of any communication or images which links the school to any form of illegal conduct or which may damage the reputation of the school. This includes defamatory comments.
- The disclosure of confidential or business-sensitive information; or the disclosure of information or images that could compromise the security of the school.

In addition to the above all members of staff at Port Regis must ensure that they:

- Do not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening or inappropriate comments about the school, or anyone at or connected with the school.
- Use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither their personal/professional reputation, or the school's reputation is compromised by inappropriate postings.
- Are aware of the potential of on-line identity fraud and to be cautious when giving out personal information about themselves which may compromise their personal safety and security.
- Never share or transmit personal information of students, parents and staff online.

Personal use of social media and other online networking sites

School staff will not invite, accept or engage in communications with pupils from the school community in any personal social media whilst in employment at Port Regis.

- Any communication received from children on any personal social media sites must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- If any member of staff is aware of any inappropriate communications involving any child in any social media, these must immediately be report as above.
- Staff should not accept any current pupil of any age or any ex-pupil of the school under the age of 18 as a friend, follower, subscriber or similar on any personal social media account.

Personal accounts

- **Members of the school staff are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts.**
- **Consider the professionalism of any profile photographs and how these might be perceived.**
- Staff should not highlight any links to Port Regis on personal social media accounts to reduce any risk of deliberately or inadvertently contravening policies.
- Staff are advised to consider the reputation of the school and their position therein, in any personal posts or comments.

Professional networking sites

- On sites such as LinkedIn where staff members are likely to promote their position at Port Regis, staff are advised to apply the same caution in their public persona.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns to the Headmaster or Deputy Head(s).