Protocol for the use of Mobile Phones

**For Schools Managed staff and
Centrally Employed Teachers**

May 2012

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this protocol is to inform employees of the expectations of mobile phone use during their working hours. It is intended to give staff some broad guidelines regarding the appropriate use of mobile phones, in the workplace or in the course of carrying out your duties.

1.2 Schools are legally responsible for their own data and therefore have a duty to protect employees in relation to the use of mobile phones provided for the purposes of work.

2.0 Principles

2.1 This protocol has been written in consultation with the Local Consultative Group (LCG) and applies to all school managed employees and centrally employed Teachers.

2.2 This protocol should be used in conjunction where necessary with the

- Social Networking Protocol
- Guidance for Safer working practices for adults who work with children and young people
- School staff handbook
- Disciplinary Policy
- Lone working policy

2.4 Where the Headteacher discusses mobile phone use with an employee, a record of the discussion should be kept.

3.0 Use of Mobile Phones during the working day

3.1 The use of mobile phones by employees to make/receive personal calls and/or texts during the working day is discouraged for the following reasons (this list is not exhaustive):

- It does not set a professional and positive example to pupils, it is disruptive and interrupts lessons

- It is a nuisance/discourteous to colleagues (eg during meetings)

- It is a misuse of the school/authority's time and has the potential to impact on children's learning

In some circumstances Trade Union stewards and staff who are carers may need to be given expressed permission to make or receive such calls

3.2 Any personal calls should be directed to the school's landline number so that a message can be relayed to the member of staff, when the member of staff is available, unless there is an emergency situation, where the message must be relayed to the employee immediately

3.3 Mobile phones should be switched off whilst on the School premises, unless it is during a break or at lunchtime. Employees using personal mobile phones during their breaks should be respectful of their colleagues and mobile phones should not be used in front of pupils.

3.4 An increasing number of mobile phones now have built-in cameras and have the capability to capture copy and transmit images through a range of technologies and formats. Employees should not take or transmit images of pupils and colleagues on their personal mobile phone.

4.0 Business use

4.1 Any employees who have been provided with a mobile phone for business use, must ensure the mobile used is solely for this reasons, unless express permission has been given that the phone can also be used for personal use.

4.2 Schools have the authority in place to ensure that mobile phones and associated phone bills are checked on a regular basis.

5.0 Security

5.1 Employees accessing emails using either their personal or business mobile phones should have the appropriate secure systems in place to ensure should their phone be lost or stolen the data cannot be accessed. Employees should be requested to sign a declaration to ensure their phone is password or pin protected. (See appendix 1) This should be signed and kept on an employee's personal file.

6.0 Text Messages

6.1 Text messages are not an appropriate formal means of communicating with colleagues within a school/workplace setting as they are:

- Not a formal means of communication
- Can be misinterpreted
- Inappropriate for the purposes of audit

6.2.1 Some examples of inappropriate texting are (this list is not exhaustive):

- Notifying a manager/Headteacher of sickness absence (this should always be by direct personal telephone contact, in accordance with the contract of employment and agreed school procedures)
- Informing of changes to working arrangements

7.0 Social Networking

Employees should not access social networking sites via their mobile phones (business or personal phones) during working hours.

8.0 Protection of Employees

8.1 Employees should not provide parents or pupils with their personal mobile phone number.

8.3 Employees should refer to the Schools protocol for the use of texting/phoning parents where one exists

9.0 Health and safety considerations

9.1 In circumstances where employees are lone-working in remote areas of the school, or out of hours, a work mobile or two-way radio should be provided if there is no land-line in the room.

9.2 Employees are reminded that it using hand held mobile phones whilst driving is a criminal offence

10.0 Mobile phones and pupils

10.1 Schools should have a separate policy which specifically covers the use of mobile phones by pupils

10.1 Employees should be aware that there may be occasions where pupils could provoke staff to gain a particular reaction which may then be recorded.

10.2   If an employee receives material deemed to be inappropriate or offensive, the images/text messages should be retained as evidence and referred immediately to the Headteacher/designated Manager.

Appendix 1

I confirm that my mobile phone is securely protected for the purposes of accessing my SGFL account. This security is in the form of:

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………… (for example:- password protected, encryption etc)

Signed …………………………………….

Dated ……………………………………