

# Springbank Academy



Where dreams are realised, and success is celebrated

Our whole school vision is:

Springbank Academy is a place where all of our children and staff will have the opportunity to excel. Everyone will be safe, happy and cared for. Our curriculum and values will inspire everyone in the school family to be motivated and curious learners and offer core skills, knowledge and enrichment to enable all to gain the foundations for a quality future and a love for life-long learning.

## Use of Cameras and Mobile Phones Policy

October 2025



Policy Lead: Sara Dunn

Springbank Academy is committed to equal opportunities for all. It is our aim that every policy is written to have a positive impact on every child/all children irrespective of race; religion; gender; sexual orientation or age.

Springbank = success for all

There is a key that unlocks every child's learning, our job is to find that key.

Every staff member and governor must take the responsibility and accountability to ensure the procedures within this policy are delivered and implemented as per Springbank Academy Policy.

This policy applies to all pupils in the school, including in the EYFS and Seedlings provision.

## **1. 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 Springbank Academy we recognise that the appropriate use of photography enhances many aspects of school life and the pupils' education. Mobile phone technology has become more sophisticated over recent years and will continue to evolve. Wireless connections in particular, extend the capabilities of mobile phones further, which allow access to new content and services, such as the internet, social networking sites and instant messaging. Many mobile phones offer camera, video and audio recording as standard. Mobile phones, alongside other technologies aim to change the way we communicate. This speed of communication often provides security and reassurance; however, as with any other form of technology, there are associated 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
- the staff team are not distracted from their work with children.

The policy also recognises that learning to use digital technology is an important part of the Computing curriculum and ensuring the wider curriculum is delivered. 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's learning stories.
- Providing evidence to support pupils' application for entrance to future schools.
- Recording school events and providing material for learning environment 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 display information on their children's learning activities on residential trips (use of Tapestry.)
- For publicity purposes (brochures, media articles, website etc.)
- To support work undertaken by members of staff or students on placements for training and gaining further qualifications.

On their child's admission to the school, parents are asked to sign the GDPR consent form in relation to their child being photographed at school or during school events. Parents refresh this consent annually in the autumn term.

Responses to the photography consent form are collated, all staff will be made aware of the results and can gain information about which children cannot be photographed from the list available from Heather Roper and this is also stored confidentially on Google Drive for all staff to access if required.

It is important that staff familiarise themselves with this information. If parents withhold consent for certain aspects of photography in relation to their child, this must be respected. Staff members should check images 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 formal pictures of sports teams etc. Care should be taken that parental consent is respected and also that parents have not unintentionally withheld consent regarding such photographs. Any areas of doubt should be discussed with the Head teacher, who will arrange for parents to be contacted as appropriate. 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 will be respected. Case studies will only be undertaken following prior written consent from the parent or carer and, except by prior arrangement between the Head teacher 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 which inadvertently catches a pupil in an unfortunate, embarrassing or compromising position. If this is the case, the image and any copies of it will be destroyed immediately and the Head teacher informed.

It is very difficult to police the use of cameras by parents, for example at prize giving or on the touchline at sports fixtures. However, if members of staff have concerns about the suitability of photography by parents, they should consult the Head teacher, 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. At all events parents are reminded that any photographs taken can be used only for personal use.

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.

If parents wish to make a video recording of a school event (nativity, concert, drama production etc), the Head teacher, will consider the situation with respect to this policy and the levels of consent given by parents of other children involved. It is recognised that it is difficult to ensure that parental consent is respected in these situations, and all staff must realise that it is not appropriate to share the details of consent given for particular children with other parents. The Head teacher has the right to refuse permission for a video recording of the event to be made. As an alternative, the school may make an official film recording, the editing of which, before it is made available to

parents, will ensure that parental consent is respected. Videos made by others should not be put on social media websites without prior consent from the school and the parents/carers considered.

### **Use of equipment**

Except with permission from the Head teacher, 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. The majority of staff have a school camera or use of a camera on a school iPad and are aware that it is for school use only. School cameras are only to be used by the person who is the named user or when permission has been gained by the user before use. School cameras must always be returned to the official named user.

Users bringing personal devices into 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 retains the right to delete or edit images 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. Peer-on-peer abuse will not be tolerated.

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. Any images must be uploaded directly to google drive for safe storage and accessed by authorised school staff only.

Final responsibility for the appropriate use of photography at school and in connection with school events rests with the Head teacher and the Child Protection Designated Officer. They monitor school images and may require an image to be deleted, edited or removed from a particular document, website etc in accordance with the requirements of this policy.

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.

## **2. Use of mobile phones by members of staff and by volunteers in school**

Mobile phones provide many benefits to school life, notably in improving health and safety through better communication with staff in more remote parts of the school grounds and on off-site visits. However, mobile phones, particularly those capable of taking pictures, also present a challenge to the school community to ensure that pupils are safeguarded in relation to the potential for improper use and also that their education is not impeded by the use of mobile phones at inappropriate times.

Pupils are not allowed mobile phones in school unless their personal safety is deemed at risk during school/home journeys. These are signed in and out of the school admin office.

Staff must be vigilant to ensure non-use of mobile phones in the school environment, including use by parents, carers, volunteers and visitors. By doing this that this we ensure that the safeguarding needs of all pupils are met.

Any concerns should be reported immediately to the Head teacher or Safeguarding Officer. Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately. A notice will be prominently displayed to alert all parents to not use their mobile phones whilst walking around school. Staff will also ensure that they state to parents that they do not agree to digital recording of conversations. All staff will ask parents to use a side room where children are not present if they wish to take a phone call or emergency text.

On arrival at school all staff will ensure that mobile phones are kept secure in an area away from the children. Lockers are provided in the staffroom and these are allocated to given members of staff. Mobile phones should not be carried in pockets. With prior permission from the Head Teacher, staff are using their phones (with camera being made inoperative) to help with end of day collection as a form of communication and for children with high additional needs for safety. Staff may use their phone at break times and lunch time provided that (i) pupils are not present, (ii) they are not on duty and (iii) this does not prevent them from responding to a request for assistance from another member of staff or other aspects of their professional duties. School mobile phones are available for all staff to sign out for trips etc. Personal mobiles may be used by SLT, with inoperable cameras, in emergencies and as part of implementing the communication tree from the emergency plan.

When taking children out of school to sporting activities or a school trip, a school mobile phone will in most cases be used. On rare occasions teachers will use their own mobile phones e.g. for a SATNAV but will ensure their camera is made inoperable and it is authorised by a member of the SLT. 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 unless on an 'in car' no hands system and should be switched to silent at events and venues where this is expected.

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 website and other approved sites is carefully monitored to ensure that it is in line with this policy and parental consent. Posting images/comments about the school on social media will be dealt with under disciplinary measures.

All emails with sensitive data are now password protected. Any images must be uploaded directly to google drive for safe storage and accessed by authorised school staff only. Staff are reminded that when working at home all images and data should be kept confidential as they have responsibility and accountability to ensure no unauthorised person gains access to their school laptops or memory sticks. 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 Safeguarding Officer.