



## **St Ann's School: Use of Personal Alarms Policy**

St Ann's is proud to be a Unicef Rights Respecting School Level One. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child guides all aspects of our daily practice. Articles 3 and 6 are actively promoted through adherence to this Policy.

St Ann's is a secondary special school for young people aged 11 to 19 years with complex profound to severe learning difficulties including Autistic Spectrum Disorder conditions. A high percentage of students therefore present with significant medical issues and many young people experience episodes of very challenging behaviour. These additional factors are potential barriers to the students' ability to learn and to their well-being.

One of the tools the school has used for many years, to help mitigate against these factors, and to promote the health and safety of all students and staff, is a Gemini Radio Nurse Call system. This consists of 50 individual hand held alarms, four fixed alarms, 10 receivers and a central console. The Nurse Call System provides valuable assistance in responding to student and staff needs throughout the school day, by providing a means to activate an alarm and immediately alert colleagues that an incident is in progress and immediate help is required.

### **Use of alarms**

Staff are always advised to err on the side of caution, in that there is no inappropriate time to use an alarm and if help is required the alarm should be immediately used. Alarms should always be used in a medical emergency eg an epileptic seizure, or if a challenging behaviour incident is in progress or about to be initiated. The large red button on the hand held (or fixed) alarm needs to be depressed for about three seconds in order to activate the alarm. Medical and senior staff will immediately respond to each alarm call.

### **Hand held alarms**

Each teaching area and some individual students are allocated a numbered or named hand held alarm. In classrooms the alarm (or buzzer as it is sometimes known) should be located near the exit door, preferably out of reach of students. If an alarm has been allocated to an individual student, then the alarm is held by the member of

staff supporting the student at that time, and passed on to subsequent staff. Hand held alarms are also allocated for playground areas (to be held by staff on duty).

### **Fixed Alarms**

These are distinctive orange units fixed to the wall. These are currently located in the

- Nurse's room (East Building)
- Canteen (near canteen hatch West Building)
- PMLD classroom, Ariel, next to the conservatory (West Building)
- Life Skill Room (East Building)

### **Receivers**

These are held by staff in the medical room, members of the senior leadership team and from time to time Team Teach instructors and other key staff. When an alarm is sounded the receivers held by medical and senior staff will be activated and the location of the problem will be identified. Senior staff will respond by quickly arriving at the scene of the incident and offering assistance.

### **Central Console**

This is located in the office. When an alarm is sounded, it is also heard in the office and the console indicates the location of the incident. Office staff will also ring through to the class identified, to ascertain the nature of the problem and to reassure the staff that help is on the way.

### **Responsibilities of the class teacher**

The class teacher should ensure that:

- The class hand held alarm has been returned to the office charging station each afternoon at the end of the school day
- The class hand held alarm has been collected from the office each morning before the students arrive
- Alarms allocated for individual students in the class group have been collected and later returned to the charging station
- Any damage to hand held or fixed alarms has been immediately reported to the school office
- As far as possible students do not gain access to hand held or fixed alarms
- Cover staff and volunteers/ work experience students are aware of the location of alarms within the class and are shown how to use them

### **Responsibilities of the school**

- Regular servicing of the Gemini Nurse Call system
- Regular replacement of malfunctioning units and insertion of new batteries
- Regular random testing of individual alarms when the students are not on site
- Regular review of the system to ensure that it remains 'fit for purpose'
- Regular reporting and analysis of data to the Governing Body regarding number of alarms each month and reasons for alarms

- Training on use of alarms during induction sessions for new staff, volunteers and work experience students.

Reviewed: February 2017

Date of next review: February 2018