

Online Safety

Mobile Phone/Mobile Technology Device Policy



1 Introduction

- 1.1 Mobile phone/device technology has become more sophisticated over recent years and will continue to evolve. Wireless connections in particular are to extend the capabilities of mobile phones further; which will allow access to new content and services, such as the internet, social networking sites and instant messaging. Many mobile phones/devices offer camera, video and audio recording as standard.
- 1.2 Mobile phones, alongside other technologies aim to change the way we communicate. This speed of communication will often provide security and reassurance; however, as with any other form of technology there are to be associated risks. Children and young people must be encouraged to understand such risks to enable them to develop the appropriate strategies which will keep them safe.
- 1.3 As with online safety issues generally, risks to children and young people should be broadly categorised under the headings of:
 - content
 - contact
 - conduct
 - commerce

These issues are to be managed by reducing availability, restricting access and increasing resilience.

- 1.4 This philosophy is to be applied to the use of mobile phones through the Mobile Phone/Mobile Technology Device Policy. Acceptable use and management of mobile phones/devices is therefore to be agreed by all service users. There is to be a clear expectation that the personal use of mobile phones/devices is to be limited to specific times and uses as to be agreed with the Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding. Any authorised use of mobile phones/devices is to be monitored and recorded. Safe and secure storage facilities are to be made available to store personal belongings as necessary.
- 1.5 Under no circumstances are images, video or audio recordings to be made without prior explicit written consent by the Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding.

2 Aim

- 2.1 The aim of the Mobile Phone/Devices Policy is to protect children and young people from harm, by ensuring the appropriate management and use of mobile phones/devices by all individuals who are to come into contact with the early years setting.
- 2.2 Children and young people are also to be empowered with the skills to manage the changes in technology in a safe and appropriate way; and to be alert to the potential risks of such use.
- 2.3 This is to be achieved through balancing protection and potential misuse. It is therefore to be recognised that alongside the potential risks, mobile phones/devices continue to be effective communication tools. This in turn is to contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

3 Scope

- 3.1 The Mobile Phone/Device Policy will apply to all individuals who are to have access to and/ or be users of personal and/ or work-related mobile phones/devices within the broadest context of the setting environment. This will include children and young people, parents and carers, early years practitioners and their managers, volunteers, students, committee members, visitors, contractors and community users. This list is not to be considered exhaustive.

4 Policy statement

- 4.1 It is to be recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phones/devices that will give the most cause for concern; and which should be considered the most susceptible to potential misuse. Examples of misuse are to include the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying.
- 4.2 It must be understood that should mobile phones/devices be misused, there will be negative impact on an individual's safety, dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. Such concerns are

- not to be considered exclusive to children and young people, so the needs and vulnerabilities of all must be respected and protected.
- 4.3 Mobile phones/devices will also cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and are often to be considered intrusive when used in the company of others.
- 4.4 It will often be very difficult to detect when mobile phones/devices are present or being used. The use of all mobile phones/devices needs to be effectively managed to ensure the potential for misuse is to be minimised.
- 4.5 Designated 'mobile use free' areas are to be situated within the early years setting, and signs to this effect are to be displayed throughout. The areas which should be considered most vulnerable include:
- Sleep areas
 - changing areas
 - toilets
 - bathrooms

5 Code of conduct

A code of conduct is to be promoted with the aim of creating an informed workforce, who will work together to safeguard and promote positive outcomes for the children and young people in their care.

- 5.2 It is to be ensured that all practitioners and their managers will:
- be aware of the need to protect children from harm.
 - Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
 - Know how to minimise risk.
 - Be vigilant and alert to potential warning signs of misuse.
 - Avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to potential allegations.
 - Understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use.
 - Be responsible for the self-moderation of their own behaviours.
 - Be aware of the importance of reporting concerns immediately.

6 Procedures

- 6.1 Clearly defined policies and procedures will aim to ensure effective safeguarding practices are in place to protect children from harm and exposure to behaviours associated with misuse. The need to ensure mobile phones/devices will not cause unnecessary and/or unsafe disruptions and distractions in the workplace are also to be considered.
- 6.2 Acceptable use and management of mobile phones is to be agreed by all service users. There is to be a clear expectation, for example, that all personal use of mobile phones/devices is to be limited to allocated lunch and/or tea breaks, unless it is to be otherwise agreed by the Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding. Such authorised use is to be monitored and recorded. Safe and secure storage facilities are to be made available to store personal belongings as necessary.
- 6.3 The recording, taking and sharing of images, video and audio on any mobile phone/device is not permitted; except where it is to be explicitly agreed otherwise by the Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding. Such authorised use is to be monitored and recorded. All mobile phone/device use is to be open to scrutiny and the Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding is to be able to withdraw or restrict authorisation for use at any time if it is to be deemed necessary.
- 6.4 Practitioners and their managers are to be encouraged not to use their own personal mobile phones/devices for contacting children and young people, parents and carers. If it is to be deemed necessary, it must be with the explicit written consent of both the Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding and the parent or carer; unless it is to be considered an emergency. Care is to be taken to ensure that work mobiles are not to be exploited in a similar way.
- 6.5 All service users, including parents, carers, visitors and contractors should be respectfully advised that their mobile phones/devices are not to be used in designated mobile use free areas. Should it be considered necessary for mobile phone calls and/ or texts to be taken or made, efforts should be made to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to children and young people. No images, video or audio recordings are to be made without prior explicit written consent by the Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding.

- 6.6 All individuals who are to bring personal devices into the early years setting must ensure that they hold no inappropriate or illegal content.

7 Acceptable use of Mobile technologies and devices

Mobile phones/Devices – children

Children do not bring mobile phones or other ICT devices with them to the setting. If a child is found to have a mobile phone or ICT device with them, this is removed and stored in a locked filing cabinet drawer until the parent collects them at the end of the session.

Mobile phones/Mobile Technology Devices

- Emerging technologies will be examined for educational benefit and a risk assessment will be carried out before its use Wroughton Preschool is allowed, e.g. wifi enabled notebooks or smart watches.
- Parents/carers, committee members, volunteers or visitors are not permitted to use personal mobiles/devices for calls or photographs whilst on the premises and provision will be made to safely store personal phones.
- Staff must ensure there is no inappropriate or illegal content on the device.
- Staff and volunteers should ensure that their mobile phones/devices are left in a red metal box in the kitchen area, so that they are visible to all staff. The personal mobile phones may be switched on but must remain unobtrusive.
- Staff's personal mobile phones/devices may be used in the kitchen where there are no children present, with permission from the manager. Personal mobile phone calls may only be taken or made with the agreement of the setting Manager.
- On outings staff mobile phones/devices are kept in the Preschool bag and left with another member of staff when on toilet duty.
- Members of staff will not use their personal mobile phone/devices for taking photographs of children on outings, or in the setting.
- Visitors will be advised of a quiet space where they can use their mobile phone/device and there are no children present.
- These rules also apply to the use of work-issued mobiles/devices, and when visiting or supporting staff in other settings.

Use and/or distribution of inappropriate images

- Staff are aware that it is an offence to distribute indecent images. In the event of a concern that a colleague or other person is behaving inappropriately, the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy, in relation to allegations against staff and/or responding to suspicions of abuse, is followed.
- Staff are aware that grooming children and young people on line is an offence. Any concerns about a colleague's or others' behaviour are reported (as above).
- It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns (or non-compliance) to the supervisor/manager.
- Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately (see "Allegations against staff" in Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy)
- The Supervisor reserves the right to check the image contents of a member of staff's or volunteer's mobile phone should there be any cause for concern over the appropriate use of it.
- Should inappropriate material be found then our Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted immediately. We will follow the guidance of the LADO as to the appropriate measures for the staff member's dismissal. The Committee Chair will also be informed.
- If there are any concerns about the Preschool Supervisor, the member of staff with those concerns will contact LADO directly.

8 Driving

- 8.1 Practitioners and their managers who will be required to drive on behalf of the early years setting must ensure that personal mobile phones/devices are to be switched off whilst driving.
- 8.2 Under no circumstances, when driving on behalf of the organisation, should practitioners and their managers make or take a phone call, text or use the enhanced functions of a mobile phone/device. This is also to apply to the use of handsfree and wireless connections, which are to be considered a distraction rather than a safer alternative.

9 Safe storage

- 9.1 A designated safe and secure area is to be made available to practitioners and their managers for the storage of personal belongings during the working day.
- 9.2 Practitioners and their managers should recognise that they are to leave any belongings in such storage areas (kitchen) at their own risk. It is recommended that should mobile phones be stored, they are to be security marked, password protected and insured. No liability for loss and/or damage is to be accepted.

10 Emergency contact

- 10.1 It is to be recognised that mobile phones/device provide direct contact to others, and will often provide necessary reassurances due to their ease of access, particularly at difficult times. Agreed acceptable use of mobile phones/device is to therefore be promoted. This is to afford practitioners and their managers peace of mind, by reducing stress and worry and is therefore to allow them to concentrate more fully on their work. Such use must be subject to management, monitoring and review.
- 10.2 It is to be ensured that the landline telephone remains connected and operational at all times, except in circumstances beyond reasonable control. This means that the landline is to be available for emergency/ urgent contact at all times.
- 10.3 The reliance on an answer phone is to be avoided unless the early years setting should be closed or where children are to be taken off the premises for a trip or outing. It must always be ensured that the answer phone is to be checked promptly on opening or return.

11 Links to other policies

11.1 Safeguarding Policy and ICT Misuse Policy

- 11.1.1 The Safeguarding Policy and the ICT Misuse Policy should be referred to when dealing with any incidents that occur as a result of the intentional or unintentional misuse of ICT. Any allegations of abuse or other unlawful activity should be reported immediately to the Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding who will ensure procedures outlined in the Safeguarding Policy are followed with immediate effect.

11.2 Other online policies

- 11.2.1 The Mobile Phone & Mobile Technology Policy should be clearly linked to:
- Internet Policy
 - Camera and Image Policy
 - Acceptable Use Policy
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11.3 Health and Safety Policy

- 11.3.1 The safe use of ICT should be included within the Health and Safety Policy, and should also include guidelines for the use of display screen equipment.

12 Authorisation and review

This policy was adopted at a
meeting of

Wroughton Preschool

Held on

Date to be reviewed

Yearly at AGM

Signed on behalf of the management
committee

Name of signatory

Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)

Chairperson

**"A child miseducated is a child lost." John F
Kennedy, 1963**