

Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices Policy



Policy

Sunflower Children's Centre strives to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect, children, young people and everyone accessing our settings from the risks associated with using mobile phones and other devices.

It is recognised that mobile phones can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

We balance this risk with the benefits that mobile devices and photographs of children can offer and through observing this policy, all staff and visitors to our setting are contributing to a safe and effective environment.

Where this policy refers to mobile phones, this is also intended to cover any device which may be used to take images, including but not restricted to tablets, smart watches, cameras and recording equipment. We aim to completely avoid the use of staff using any personal equipment or devices to take photos or recordings of children, and to always use nursery provided equipment or communication channels. Use of personal devices can undermine the wider safeguarding culture within our setting.

Only ICT equipment belonging to the setting is used by staff and children. The designated person is responsible for ensuring all ICT equipment is safe and fit for purpose.

All computers have virus protection installed.

The designated person ensures that safety settings are set to ensure that inappropriate material cannot be accessed.

The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make any covert images or misuse functions in any other way and to prevent any expose to risk of the children and staff within our setting.

Procedure

Staff are permitted to use their mobile phone and electronic devices in designated areas providing no children are present. All nurseries operate guidelines of storage of personal mobile phones which are expected to be followed. A suitable storage facility will be provided by the management team to store mobile phones and devices. These need to be signed in and out on each occasion. Practitioners leave their belongings in safe storage at their own risk. It is therefore recommended that phones are password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damages is accepted.

Each setting has a specific risk assessment to assist staff with the safe and proper use and storage of mobile phones. The nursery understands that emergencies may arise from time to time and staff need to be contacted. Staff may provide the nursery phone number for use in an emergency.

All staff are responsible for the safe and proper implementation of this policy and are expected to challenge any person who is seen using their mobile phone in such a way that breaches this policy. Failure to report a breach of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

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Devices include mobiles phones, personal electronic tablets, computers, smart watches which are enabled to send and receive communications, video and photographic devices.

Visitors

Visitors to the nursery includes but is not limited to parents, prospective parents, contractors, early years' partners such as football and music consultants, students, local authority staff and inspectors.

Upon arriving at the nursery, all visitors will be informed of the nursery Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy and will be asked to observe the restrictions in place. Visitors will be asked to leave their mobile phones in the office where possible and informed that they are not permitted to use their mobile phone while in a restricted area.

Visitors are permitted to use their mobile phone in 'mobile friendly' areas only, providing that no children are present. If in doubt, visitors should seek permission from the Nursery Management Team. This is not only to safeguard children against the misuse of digital images, but to ensure that visitors are not distracted by using their device and potentially placing children at risk.

The nursery reserves the right to view any images that have been taken while on the premises and request that images are deleted if they are deemed inappropriate or unnecessary.

Some team members are supplied with a Company digital device. These are regarded as 'authorised' devices for the purposes of taking images for EYFS purposes/Company social media if expressed permission is issued and the use is witnessed by the appointed manager. The employee who has been supplied with the mobile phone accepts ultimate responsibility for the use of the mobile phone. These devices must be password protected.

The nursery recognises the positive role that social media can play and where we have authorisation from parents, appropriate and relevant images of children may be shared on social media.

Images of children will not be retained outside of their intended use, once they have been used for the purpose of learning and development or social media they will be deleted. The taking of images on any unauthorised device is strictly prohibited.

Outings

Each nursery has a mobile phone specifically for the use of outings with children. Where possible this mobile phone has no enhanced functionality or camera and is to be used solely for contacting the relevant person/emergency services in the event of an emergency whilst on an outing. The use of a mobile phone for the purpose of outings will be included in the outings risk assessment.

Cameras and recording devices

Throughout the nursery, staff members and children are encouraged to take photographs and record videos for a variety of purposes such as:

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- To record children's development and learning
- To celebrate children's achievements
- To capture activities/information to share with parents
- To record events and activities
- To use for display purposes across the nursery

In addition, photographs and videos may from time to time be used for promotional material which includes our website and brochures and to use in the local press. In order to safeguard children, for confidentiality reasons and to ensure that photographs and videos are used only for the purposes intended with the full and informed consent of parents, the following policy and procedure will be used for the taking, use and storage of photographs and videos of children:

- Written parental consent will be obtained to take photographs/videos of children. This is obtained when each child is registered. Parents will, of course, have the right to refuse permission
- Staff members, parents and visitors are not permitted to take photographs or video children for their personal use.
- Staff members and visitors are not permitted to use personal cameras or video recorders in the nursery. Nor access digital platforms such as FAMILY on their on personal devices.
- Staff member's mobile phones will be stored in a centralised secure place whilst they are in work. Mobile phones must be signed in and out.
- Photographs and videos of children will only be taken on equipment supplied by the nursery
- Where photos/videos are captured on devices supplied by the nursery, staff are prohibited from attempting to share any photos/videos or personal information with external sources/devices via email, Internet or any other data storage formats
- Placement students capturing photos for evidence of work must gain permission from the Nursery Manager before using any photos or videos. The student must obtain specific permission from parents to use photos of children for educational works
- Nursery cameras/recording devices and memory cards that may contain images/videos of children will be locked away when not in use and removed as soon as no longer in use
- Permission will be sought for photography at nursery events such as plays and performances or prohibited if the risk to a child/children or a parents wishes can not be accommodated
- During special events e.g. Christmas/parties etc., staff may produce group photographs to distribute to parents on request. In this case, individual permission will be sought from each parent prior to the event. This will ensure that all photographs are taken in accordance with parental choice

Internet access

Children never have unsupervised internet access. The internet is not to be used to watch television programmes but can be used for educational purposes. All content shown to children must be screened. If staff access the internet with children for the purposes of promoting their learning, appropriate online safety measures must be taken, including adequate parental controls and supervision.

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Electronic Tablets

iPads/tablets are a fantastic resource in the nursery setting, increasing productivity and providing endless possibilities for educational effectiveness for children and practitioners. iPads/tablets are used for the effective delivery of the EYFS educational curriculum, and for capturing care information about the children. The use of iPads/tablets significantly reduces admin time and increases productivity across all areas of nursery operations, which is a huge benefit in providing more quality time for practitioners to interact with and observe children's learning.

- iPad/Tablets must only be used for delivery of the EYFS curriculum, completing observations/assessments and/or daily reporting, unless otherwise discussed with Nursery Management.
- It is strictly prohibited to attempt to use nursery iPads/tablets for personal use, particularly social networking sites or email. Where possible these functions will be disabled.
- Nursery iPads/tablets must not leave the premises under any circumstances
- Any iPads/tablets owned by staff must be locked away whilst at work, just as a mobile phone or other recording device would be.
- It is also strictly prohibited to attempt to share any personal information, photos or videos via the Internet to a personal device, email or cloud account
- Secure Wi-Fi will be enabled on the iPads/tablets to allow access to online Learning Journals for child observational purposes and enhance educational provision
- Nursery Management must approve any other educational websites or learning resources accessed via an iPad/tablet before use in the setting
- Any media content being played in the nursery must meet the approval of the Nursery Management before being exposed to the children or parents in the setting
- No system settings are to be adjusted on any iPad/tablet device without the permission of Nursery Management.
- Staff members are strictly prohibited from downloading any apps or online content to any device without permission of the Nursery Management.
- Devices must not be used to search any content other than what is approved.

Linked Policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Online Safety Policy