Camera, Mobile Phone and Recording Device Use

This policy refers to all electronic devices able to take pictures, record videos, send or receive calls and messages. This includes cameras, mobile telephones, tablets and any recording devices including smart watches. More and more devices are technically capable of connecting us to the outside world. We will adapt the policy to include all devices we deem required to safeguard children.

Mobile phones and other devices that accept calls, messages and video calling
At the Children’s Workshop we promote the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We believe our staff should be completely attentive during their hours of working to ensure all children in the pre-school receive good quality care and education.

To ensure the safety and well-being of children we do not allow staff to use personal mobile phones, smart watches and/or fitbits* during working hours.
* Fit bits that receive calls and messages are not allowed but ones that only count steps are.

This policy should be used in conjunction with our online safety policy to ensure children are kept safe when using the pre-school devices.

Staff must adhere to the following:
- Mobile phones/smartwatches/fitbits are kept in a locked cabinet kept in the kitchen and are not accessed during your working hours.
- Mobile phones/smartwatches/fitbits can only be used on a designated break and then this must be away from the children
- No personal device is allowed to be connected to the pre-school wifi at any time
- The use of pre-school devices, such as tablets, must only be used for pre-school purposes
- The pre-school devices will not have any social media or messaging apps on them
- Any apps downloaded onto pre-school devices must be done only by management. This will ensure only age appropriate and safe apps will be accessible to staff or children using them
- Passwords / passcodes for pre-school devices must not be shared or written down
- During outings, staff will use the mobile phone belonging to the pre-school wherever possible. Photographs must not be taken of the children on any personal phones or any other personal information storage device. Only pre-school owned devices will be used to take photographs or film videos
- Pre-school devices will not be taken home with staff and will remain secure at the setting when not in use. If a device is needed to be taken home due to unforeseen circumstances then the person taking this device home must ensure it is securely stored and not accessed by another other individual and returned to pre-school as soon as practically possible
Parents’ and visitors’ use of mobile phones and smart watches
Whilst we recognise that there may be emergency situations which necessitate the use of a mobile telephone, in order to ensure the safety and welfare of children in our care and share information about the child’s day. However parents and visitors are kindly asked to refrain from using their mobile telephones whilst in the pre-school or when collecting or dropping off their children.
If you are found to be using your phone inside the pre-school premises you will be asked to finish the call or take the call outside.
We do this to ensure all children are safeguarded and the time for dropping off and picking up is a quality handover opportunity where we can share details about your child.
Visitors are requested to leave their mobile phones or smart watches in the safety of the office/kitchen where they will be stored safely.

Photographs and videos
At the Children’s Workshop we recognise that photographs and video recordings play a part in the life of the pre-school. We ensure that any photographs or recordings taken of children in our pre-school are only done with prior written permission from each child’s parent and only share photos with parents in a secure manner. We obtain this when each child is registered and we update it on a regular basis to ensure that this permission still stands.

We ask for individual permissions for photographs and video recordings for a range of purposes including: use in the child’s learning journey; for display purposes; for promotion materials including our pre-school website, brochure and the local press; and the different social media platforms we use. We ensure that parents understand that where their child is also on another child’s photograph, but not as the primary person, that may be used in another child’s learning journey.

If a parent is not happy about one or more of these uses, we will respect their wishes and find alternative ways of recording their child’s play or learning.

Staff are not permitted to take any photographs or recordings of a child on their own information storage devices e.g. cameras, mobiles, tablets or smart watches and may only use those provided by the pre-school. The pre-school manager will monitor all photographs and recordings to ensure that the parents’ wishes are met and children are safeguarded.

Photographs or videos recorded on pre-school mobile devices will be transferred to the correct storage device to ensure no images are left on these mobile devices.

Parents are not permitted to use any recording device or camera (including those on mobile phones or smart watches) on the pre-school premises without the prior consent of the manager.

During special events, e.g. Christmas or leaving parties, staff may produce group photographs to distribute to parents on request. In this case we will gain individual
The Children’s Workshop

permission for each child before the event. This will ensure all photographs taken are in line with parental choice. We ask that photos of events such as Christmas parties are not posted on any social media websites/areas without permission from parents of all the children included in the picture.

At the Children’s Workshop we use tablets in the rooms to take photos of the children and record these directly on to their electronic learning journeys. We ensure that these devices are used for this purpose only and do not install applications such as social media or messaging sites on to these devices. We also do routine checks to ensure that emails and text messages (where applicable) have not been sent from these devices and remind staff of the whistleblowing policy if they observe staff not following these safeguarding procedures.

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