

Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy

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Intention

This policy ensures a safe, focused and nurturing environment by setting clear expectations for the use of mobile phones and electronic devices by staff, parents/carers, children and visitors. It aims to minimise distractions, safeguard privacy and wellbeing, and promote full engagement in nursery activities, while allowing appropriate use for essential communication, including emergencies.

Legislative context

Legal guidelines and frameworks

- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, 2025 (EYFS)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2025
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025 (KCSiE)
- Data Protection Act, 2018

Legal duties

In line with privacy and safeguarding guidance, nurseries have a legal duty to ensure the confidentiality and security of the personal data of children, families, staff and visitors. This means implementing clear policies that restrict the use of mobile phones and electronic devices in nursery areas to mitigate the risk of privacy breaches and unauthorised data capture.

Definition of terms used in this policy

Electronic devices

The term electronic devices refers to all electronic devices with recording, imaging and sharing capabilities, such as smartphones, tablets, laptops, audio recorders, smartwatches and cameras.

Guiding principles

The nursery recognises the benefits of technology for learning and communication; however, children's exposure to screens is kept to a minimum.

Electronic devices must be used purposefully, proportionately, and strictly for professional responsibilities. Nursery-issued devices are provided to remove the need for personal equipment.

Safeguarding, confidentiality, and children's wellbeing always remain paramount.

Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use only nursery-authorized devices for professional purposes aligning with the role requirements and expectations• Maintain confidentiality and ensure that no images or information are shared outside approved systems• Report all misuse of devices or safeguarding concerns immediately to management

Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage and maintain nursery-owned devices for professional use within the nursery • Monitor the use of mobile phones and electronic devices within the nursery, immediately addressing any breaches to policy • Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding, confidentiality, and appropriate device use • Ensure that the nursery mobile phone and electronic devices policy is available to parents/carers and visitors and reiterated when required
Parents/carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refrain from using mobile phones or electronic devices within the nursery, unless explicit permission has been granted • Follow nursery guidance regarding device use during events or special occasions
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not use mobile phones or electronic devices within child-accessed areas unless authorised by management • Comply with all nursery safeguarding, privacy, and confidentiality expectations while on site

Updates to this policy

This policy may be unilaterally updated at any time with immediate effect to ensure clarity, reflect the nursery's current operational practices, and maintain compliance with the latest government legislation and guidance. Please refer to the 'More Information' section on the website.

Use of mobile phones and electronic devices

Parents/carers

Parents/carers must not use mobile phones or electronic devices while inside the nursery. If parents/carers need to use their device, they must step outside the nursery premises to do so and re-enter once the device has been put away.

Parents/carers must not allow their child to wear or bring in electronic devices. Any such devices brought into the nursery will be switched off and stored by the manager in a secure location until the end of the child's session where they will be returned. If an electronic device is brought into the nursery, the nursery accepts no responsibility for any loss, damage, or theft.

Visitors

Visitors, including contractors and delivery personnel, are not permitted to use mobile phones or other electronic devices while on the nursery premises. Where devices are brought on site, they must be switched off or set to silent and stored securely in a location designated by management for the duration of the visit.

Where a contractor or professional requires the use of an electronic device to carry out their role (e.g., for work-related documentation), prior approval must be obtained from management, and usage must be supervised (where appropriate) to ensure safeguarding and confidentiality are maintained at all times.

External professionals

External professionals, e.g., occupational therapists or social workers, wishing to take photographs or videos must:

- Obtain permission from the nursery manager in advance
- Be supervised by nursery staff at all times
- Have their device reviewed by management before leaving to confirm that no images or recordings breach nursery privacy or safeguarding protocols

Staff

To maintain a safe, focused, and professional environment that prioritises the children's well-being, staff must:

- Only use personal electronic devices on designated breaks and in designated areas away from the children, unless express permission has been granted otherwise by management¹.
- Store personal devices in the locked phone box located within the nursery office during working hours. Devices must be turned off, have connectivity disabled, or be set to silent to avoid disruptions. If expecting an urgent call, the device must be given to the nursery manager, who will notify the staff member when the call comes through
- Not wear smartwatches during working hours unless given express permission by the nursery manager. If permission is granted, all connectivity (Wi-Fi and cellular) must be disabled. Smartwatches with built-in cameras are strictly prohibited. The nursery manager reserves the right to revoke permission to wear these devices at any time

Children attending the nursery

Children attending the nursery are not permitted to use mobile phones or personal electronic devices while on the premises. Where older children arrive at the setting with a mobile phone (for example, prior to or following school attendance), devices must be handed to a member of staff upon arrival and stored securely for the duration of the session. Devices will be returned at the end of the day in line with agreed collection procedures.

The nursery recognises the importance of educating children about safe and responsible technology use. Age-appropriate guidance will be provided to help children understand:

- The importance of keeping personal information private
- Why photographs or recordings must not be taken without permission
- The risks associated with sharing images or messages online
- How to speak to a trusted adult if something online makes them feel worried or unsafe²

These measures support safeguarding, promote digital awareness, and help children develop a responsible understanding of mobile phone and electronic device use.

¹ For more information please see the requirements for using personal devices for [coursework or training purposes](#) section of this policy.

² Please see the [Further Reading](#) section of this policy for more information and signposting supports.

For more information on how the nursery supports children develop an understanding of safe technological use please see the Technology and E-safety Policy.

Guidance for staff on using personal electronic devices for coursework and training purposes

While the use of personal electronic devices (e.g., smartphones, laptops, tablets) is generally not permitted inside working hours, staff may occasionally need to use personal devices for work-related tasks, such as completing coursework or training modules. This is only permitted with prior management approval and strictly under the following conditions:

- Devices must only be used in staff-only areas (e.g., staff room or office), away from children
- Staff must only use their personal devices for their approved purpose. Any changes to the task, timing, or type of device needed to complete the task requires renewed approval from the management team
- The nursery reserves the right to monitor, intercept, and remove any work-related content on the device
- Work-related data stored on the device must be deleted as soon as it is no longer required
- Staff members are responsible for all costs associated with their personal device and its use, including technical support
- Staff must cooperate with the nursery and allow inspection of their device at any time upon request, providing necessary passwords or login details for full access
- Any loss of the device must be reported to management immediately
- If a staff member leaves the nursery or plans to sell or transfer their device, they must present it to the nursery for removal of all work-related software and data before the transfer or termination of employment
- Staff members must never save or store images, recordings or other forms of sensitive information onto a personal device or access copies of these documents when outside of the nursery premises

Using external or personal devices for photography and recording purposes within the nursery

The use of personal electronic devices³ to photograph, record, or access potentially sensitive information is strictly prohibited unless explicitly authorised by management for a specific and legitimate purpose. Any use of external or personal devices for capturing images or other digital information must be supervised by a member of the management team at all times.

All content captured under such authorisation must be reviewed before the device leaves the nursery to ensure that no safeguarding or privacy breaches have occurred. If there are concerns that unauthorised photographs or recordings have been taken, the nursery reserves the right to inspect any electronic device immediately to verify compliance with safeguarding and privacy policies. Verified concerns will be addressed in accordance with the nursery's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

³ This includes devices used by external professionals or visitors for work-based purposes.

The table below outlines the exclusive list of circumstances whereby a personal device may be used to capture images within the nursery.

Permitted circumstance	Example purpose	Conditions for capturing images
Coursework or qualification Evidence	Capturing evidence for assignments, reflective practice, or activity planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Images or recordings must only be taken for the specific approved purpose and must not be used for any other reason • Images must only capture what is strictly necessary. Photographs must focus solely on the relevant area, equipment, or activity • Children and staff must not be captured in images unless prior written parental or individual consent is in place and management has approved this. Wherever possible, images should still avoid capturing faces or identifying features • Images must not include children’s names, personal records, displays with identifying details, safeguarding documentation, or any sensitive information • Images or recordings must never be used for personal purposes or shared on social media or external platforms • If a child or confidential information is accidentally captured, the image must be deleted immediately in the presence of nursery management and reported • The nursery reserves the right to inspect devices used for authorised nursery purposes to ensure compliance with safeguarding and data protection requirements
Training Observations (Non-Identifiable)	Recording a practice demonstration for assessment	
Site assessments conducted by external contractors	Photographing an area requiring repair, renovation, or installation	
Evidence of completed work by external contractors	Recording completed repairs or installations for invoicing or completion records	
Specialist compliance or audit documentation	Evidence required for safety, insurance, or regulatory compliance audits or reports	

For further details on procedures and regulations regarding photography, please refer to the nursery’s Photography Policy.

Guidance for staff using nursery-issued mobile phones

Nursery-issued mobile phones are provided exclusively to the senior management team to support leadership responsibilities, operational oversight, safeguarding coordination, and communication with staff, parents/carers, and external agencies. These devices form part of the nursery’s safeguarding and data protection framework and must be used with the highest level of professionalism and discretion.

Staff members with a nursery-issued mobile phone must adhere to the following rules:

- Devices must be used strictly for professional and operational purposes. Personal use is not permitted

- Photographs, videos, or recordings may only be taken in accordance with the nursery’s Safeguarding and Photography Policies, and only where appropriate permissions are in place
- Images and sensitive information must be uploaded promptly to the approved nursery system and must not remain stored on the device longer than necessary
- Devices must be password protected, encrypted where applicable, and kept secure at all times
- Phones must not be shared with unauthorised individuals, including staff, parents/carers, or visitors
- When taken off-site for legitimate business purposes, devices must remain secure and not be used in public areas where confidential information may be visible or overheard
- Social media, personal email, and non-work-related applications must not be accessed using nursery-issued devices
- Any loss, theft, damage, or suspected data breach must be reported immediately to the appropriate authority within the nursery and managed in line with data protection and safeguarding procedures

Visual reminders throughout the building

Clear visual reminders to not use mobile phones, smart devices and other digital devices equipped with capturing images or recordings must be displayed throughout the nursery, including at all entrance and exit points, to reinforce and support compliance with this policy. A reminder of this rule is also stipulated in the nursery Code of Conduct shared with all visitors entering the premises.⁴

How the nursery responds to breaches of this policy

Any failure to comply with this Policy constitutes a breach of the nursery’s safeguarding procedures and will be addressed promptly and proportionately in line with the disciplinary and safeguarding processes.

Actions may include formal reminders, written warnings, disciplinary action, suspension or termination of employment, or the withdrawal or termination of a child’s place, depending on the individual involved and the seriousness or repetition of the breach. Visitors may be asked to leave the premises or be banned from future visits.

The nursery reserves the right to bypass staged responses and take immediate action where the severity of the incident, or the level of safeguarding, privacy, or security risk, requires it.

Essential knowledge for staff from this policy

Key learning	Level
Explain staff responsibilities in regards to mobile phone and device use within the nursery	L1

⁴ For more information, please see the Visitors Policy.

Key learning	Level
Explain the rules staff must follow when using or bringing mobile phones or devices into the nursery, including where and when these may be used and disabling connectivity	L1
Explain the rules for using smart watches within the nursery	L1
Explain what steps may be taken if staff are expecting an emergency call on site	L1
Explain the standard rule of no mobiles or electronic devices for parents, children, external professionals and visitors	L1
Explain where staff may store their devices within the nursery	L1
Explain the conditions of use if a staff member needed to use their personal device for work purposes	L1
Explain the exceptions when personal devices may be used by visitors, staff and parents and the conditions of this usage including how devices must be checked prior to leaving the setting	L2
Explain how breaches to this policy must be addressed	L2
Explain the conditions of using a nursery-issued mobile phone	L2

Training requirements

There are no additional training modules that need to be completed relating to this policy.

Monitoring and review

Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review any breaches in policy and action these accordingly
Confirm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm the nursery has visual reminders relating to the use of mobile phones and electronic devices displayed for staff and visitors Confirm that the Visitors Code of Conduct is present and displayed in entranceways Confirm that staff are leaving devices in the designated areas as required Confirm that staff phones or electronic devices are switched off, silenced, or have had connectivity disabled whilst in the designated storage area

Further reading

Name	Summary of content	Source	Link
Children and Technology: Age-appropriate use	Guidance on age appropriate ways to support children using technology safely	NSPCC	Link
Children, phones and online safety	Guidance on how to support children navigate phones usage safely	NPSCC	Link
Internet safety	Guidance on how screen use impacts young children and how this can benefit young children's development in early years settings.	GOV.UK	Link