

Mobile phone and device policy

Policy statement

Mobile phone and camera technology has become more sophisticated over recent years and will continue to evolve. Wireless connections extend the capabilities of mobile phones further and allow access to new content and services such as the internet, social networking sites and instant messaging. Most mobile phones offer camera, video and audio recording as standard. Mobile phones/cameras alongside other technologies aim to change the way we communicate. The speed of communication will often provide security and reassurance. However, as with any other form of technology there are 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.

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.

A breach in this policy may lead to disciplinary action; depending on the nature of the breach it may be considered as gross misconduct and result in summary dismissal.

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 come into contact with the setting.

The Mobile Phone/Devices Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools - which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

- All staff and visitors are aware of and adhere to their responsibilities under this policy.
- Children are safeguarded against potential misuse of digital images.
- Staff and Line Managers are aware of the consequences of breaching this policy.

Safe and authorised use of digital images can contribute effectively to the experience of families and potential families from Tiny Oaks Day Nursery.

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Procedure

Staff (including agency workers)

It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions such as cameras. The use of all mobile phones is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. 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.

Designated 'mobile free' areas are situated within the setting and signs to this effect are displayed throughout. These areas include any playrooms or play areas used by children, regardless of whether children are present as the areas may contain photos of or personal information relating to children. A zero-tolerance policy is in place with regards to the use of personal or work-related mobiles by any individual in these areas.

Staff are permitted to use their mobile phone in designated areas providing no children are present. The nursery operates guidelines of storage of personal mobile phones which are expected to be followed. Personal mobile phones are stored in the lockers situated and labelled in the reception area. These need to be signed in and out on each occasion. It is therefore recommended that phones are password protected and insured. Practitioners leave their belongings in safe storage (lockers in the staff room) at their own risk. No liability for loss and damages is accepted.

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.

Visitors

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

Upon arriving at the nursery, all visitors will be informed by a member of staff of the nursery Mobile Phone Policy and will be asked to observe the restrictions in place. Visitors will be asked to leave their mobile phones in the office and informed that they are not permitted to have their mobile phone on their person 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

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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.

Company Mobile Phones

Where applicable and if deemed as necessary some members of senior staff are supplied with a Company mobile phone. These are regarded as 'authorised' mobile phones for the purposes of taking images for EYFS purposes/Company social media. The nursery will also have digital cameras / iPad for taking appropriate images - no other cameras are permitted to be used unless express authorisation from the nursery manager has been given.

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.

The employee who has been supplied with the mobile phone accepts ultimate responsibility for the use of the mobile phone.

Images of children will be deleted from the device once they have been used for the intended purpose. The taking of images on any unauthorised device is strictly prohibited. This will be checked by a senior member of staff.

Outings

The nursery has a mobile phone specifically for the use of outings with children. 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.

Staff are reminded of their duty to represent the nursery in a positive manner and any improper mobile phone use whilst identifiable as a Tiny Oaks Day Nursery employee may damage the nursery's reputation.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
16/1/2023	<i>m khaira</i>	16/01/2024