

Barton St David Pre-School

Safeguarding Policy



Mobile phone / camera policy

This policy applies to everyone who enters our setting whilst children are present.

Rationale

The welfare, safety and protection of every child in our care is of paramount importance. We take our duty of safeguarding our children seriously. We expect everyone who is connected to our setting to respect and help promote the safety of our children. It is our intention to provide an environment which children, parents, staff, committee members, visitors are safe from images or audio recordings being inappropriately used or shared.

Background

Mobile phones are now used extensively and considered by many as essential to their daily life not only by adults but by many young people as well. Mobile phones are highly sophisticated, the technology ever evolving. Faster wireless connections enable ready access for users to a constantly increasing range of services and context. Mobile phones enable the user to record images, to make audio recordings and videos. It is possible for this to happen without the knowledge or permission of the person(s) being recorded.

Mobile phones change the way we communicate. However there are associated risks which can have serious consequences. Broadly the risks are:

- *Content – inappropriate or altered images / messages / radicalisation /extremist views
- *Contact – grooming /exploitation
- *Conduct – trolling / cyberbullying / spreading false information
- *Commerce – persuasive techniques to purchase items / services

We can minimise risks to the children at our setting by reducing availability, restricting access, increasing resilience.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to protect the children in our care from harm by ensuring the appropriate management and use of mobile phones/ cameras by all individuals who come into contact with Pre-School.

This mobile phone/camera policy will apply to all individuals, regardless of age, who may have access to a mobile phone within the broadest context of our Pre-School setting. This list includes, but is not exclusive to staff, parents/carers, committee members, visiting professionals, contractors, village hall users and older siblings of children attending Pre-School.

There is a clear expectation that all services users, including the above, will be informed of this policy and agree to abide by it.

We aim to empower our children with the skills to use technology in a safe and appropriate way and to understand the risks at an age-appropriate level. We recognise that mobile phones /cameras can be useful and effective tools and means of communication. By balancing protection against possible mis-use we are putting our safeguarding guidelines into effective practice.

The use of mobile phones in our setting will be limited and must follow the guidelines of this policy.

It should be understood that “smart phone” also includes smart watch technology.

Safeguarding:

It is to be recognised and understood that if mobile phones/ cameras/ smart watches are mis-used they present a safeguarding concern and will have a negative impact on an individual’s safety, dignity, privacy and right to confidentiality. These concerns are not limited to the children in our care but also extend to the adults connected to Pre-School. The needs and vulnerabilities of all must be respected and protected.

Use of mobile phones/ cameras/ smart watches will cause unnecessary distraction by the user and are also intrusive which can cause of safeguarding concern and possibly a health and safety issue for a child or children. It is important that staff are attentive to the children in our care and their needs.

Mobile phones /cameras / smart watches can be used without being detected by others present. The use of such technology needs to be effectively managed and potential for mis-use minimised.

There must be designated mobile phone / camera /smart watch free areas – this MUST include the toilet area and changing area. No one must be allowed to enter this area with a mobile phone/camera with a child present. Any person wearing a smart phone should be asked to remove it before entering this area. (Staff will need to store such technology safely for the person concerned.)

Code of Conduct.

This code is promoted as an informed working together to promote safeguarding and positive outcomes for the children in our care and to protect the staff who work with our children from any cyberbullying through social media.

All members of staff will know:

- *about the need to protect children from harm
- *have a clear understanding of what constitutes mis-use
- *how to minimise risk
- *avoid putting themselves in compromising situations which could be mis-interpreted
- *understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding the acceptable use of such technology
- *be responsible for the self- moderation of their own behaviours
- *be aware of reporting any concerns immediately

Concerns must in the first instance be reported to:

Designated Lead Safeguarding – Laura Worth – then immediately to

Chair of the committee – Martin Lister

There will be a need to comply with data protection regulations so the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Pre-School must exercise professional judgement as to whether the child is identified when the concern is first raised with the Chair of the committee. If this needs to happen then the parent /carer should be informed first.

Procedures

*Our policy clearly defines the correct “place” for mobile phones / cameras / smart watches within our setting. It is designed to protect our children from harm and the effects of mis-use. It is also to ensure that this technology does not cause unnecessary, or unsafe, disruptions during the working day.

*It needs to be agreed that the use of mobile phones, **for personal use**, within Pre-School is limited and must not be used in any circumstances when a child is present. Staff mobile phones must be password protected.

*The recording, taking and sharing of images, video and audio on **any** mobile phone should be avoided and should **not** be made using a personal mobile phone. The Pre-School camera and iPad should be used instead.

*Staff should not use their personal mobile phone to contact parents/ carers or children.

If there is an emergency or unavoidable event where parent must be contacted using the personal phone of a member of staff then the Safeguarding Lead must consent to this.

If a parent contacts a member of staff using their personal phone details, then again there should be a very specific reason for this and the member of staff should give permission for this.

There should be written evidence to show when staff personal phones are used to contact a parent /carer.

*All parents /carers, visiting professionals, contractors, committee members, older siblings should be respectfully advised that their mobile phones/ cameras / smart watches are not to be used within Pre-School. Should there be the need for someone to use a personal mobile phone to take or make a call then they must be asked to leave Pre-School premises and return when the call is finished. Phones should be switched off and be stored in a bag, pocket or other safe place whilst the person is on the Pre-School premises. At no time should a child be able to access the phone.

*Pre-School mobile phone / camera / iPad should be used in preference to personal phones. These are considered the safest choice as their usage can be strictly limited to Pre-School needs.

Material held on these devices must never be downloaded onto a personal device.

It is standard procedure to ask for parent /carer consent to take photographs of their children as these form an integral part of the Learning Journey profile.

*Pre-School equipment is securely stored when not in use. All images are downloaded as soon as is possible and stored / used appropriately. Photographs are deleted from the camera as soon as they have been downloaded.

We recognise that mobile phones are a direct, and instant contact with others. We acknowledge that there are times when a member of staff may need ease of access to their phone. This can afford a member of staff peace of mind by reducing stress and worry and enable them to concentrate more fully on their work. There should be an agreed acceptable use of mobile phones

for staff authorised by the Designated safeguarding Lead. There needs to be a written record of this agreement and the committee informed.

*Pre-School mobile phone should be used for off-site visits. Photographs should be taken on the Pre-School iPad.

*Any image taken of a child must be deemed suitable without putting the child / children in a compromising situation which could cause distress or embarrassment. Images must be taken for a legitimate, educational purpose. Parents put their trust in us to protect their child and one way of maintaining trust is to only take images which are pertinent to show the progress / achievements of the child. Early Learning Journals are an essential part of assessment in Early Years settings and from necessity contain photographs of children. Written parental permission is given before photographs are added to the Journal.

*Once children have left our setting their image will be erased from any technology device used at Pre-School.

Conclusion

At Barton St David Pre-School we are informed about our Safeguarding duty to the children in our care. We are aware of the advantages of modern technology such as mobile phones /cameras and smart watches. We understand how they can be used effectively but are also very clear what constitutes mis-use of these items and the impact on others.

Our policy gives guidelines which will enable us to keep the children and staff safe and maintain the reputation of our Pre-School. We fully understand that the guidelines are applicable to every visitor to our setting whenever there are children present.

CC May 2021

References made to the document on mobile phone/camera policy produced by Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

Keeping Children Safe in Education: 2019

*Disrespectnobody – Home Office advice

*Education for a connected world framework - UK Council for internet safety

*PHSE within the revised Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

*Teaching online safety in school

*Thinkuknow – National Crime Agency education programme

*UK safer internet centre

The government guidance document Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020 lists a wide range of websites / organisations where staff and parents can find further advice about online safety (including the use of mobile phones)