

Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Use

Introduction

There is a concern that mobile phones with integrated cameras enable anyone to take photographs or video footage without the knowledge of those being targeted. The dangers to children are clear. This policy ensures our children are fully protected, prevents accusations against staff and reassures parents.

At Wingate Childcare 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 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, smartwatches during working hours. We use mobile phones supplied by the company to provide a means of contact in certain circumstances, such as outings.

Staff must adhere to the following:

- Mobile phones/smartwatches should be stored safely in a draw in the Managers office – on silent
- Mobile phones/smartwatches are either turned off or on silent and not accessed during your working hours
- Mobile phones/smartwatches can only be used on a designated break and then this must be away from the children
- The use of the settings devices, such as tablets, must only be used for work purposes
- Any apps downloaded onto Childcare 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 Childcare devices must not be shared or written down
- During outings, staff will use mobile phones belonging to the Childcare, these phones do not have cameras.
- Childcare 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 speak to a member of Management before doing so.
 - Staff do not contact parents/families on their own personal mobile phones
 - Staff do not take images/footage of nursery children on their personal mobile phones

If staff have a personal emergency, they are free to use the school phone or make a personal call from their mobile in the admin/Headteacher's office.

Staff (will need to) ensure that the Headteacher has up to date contact information and that staff make their own families aware of emergency work telephone numbers. This is the responsibility of the individual staff member.

Parents' and visitors' use of mobile phones and smartwatches

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 Childcare or when collecting or dropping off their children.

If you are found to be using your phone inside the Childcare rooms, 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 office where they will be locked away safely.

Any parent/carer/visitor found using their mobile phone and/or taking images/footage of children via their phone will be immediately asked to put the phone away or leave the setting.

Any contractors needing to use their phone to undertake work in the setting should go to the office to use them.

(This policy is in conjunction with our Policy on Parental Use of Social Networking and Internet Sites)

Any employee found taking images /footage of children via their mobile phones will face immediate disciplinary action.

Last Reviewed: October 2021