



Use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) & Social Media Policy

Statement of Purpose

Technology is an integral part of society both within and out with the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) setting. It enables children to understand the role and impact technology has in the wider world and helps develop skills and confidence that can be used in different contexts. The use of ICT is fundamental in all aspects of children's learning.

Throughout the guidance the term parents is used to include all main caregivers.

Equality of Opportunity

As an ELC setting we aim to be inclusive at all times. All children will have the opportunity to access relevant ICT resources to help develop their own individual skills. Resources should be appropriate to the child's age and stage of development and reflect the wider society. Opportunities for staff to develop their skills should be available in order to enhance the learning experience for the children and the setting.

We will provide support in relation to the appropriate use of social media, using plain English and parent-friendly-language.

Children

Children should participate in a wide range of activities that use ICT whilst attending the setting. The use of ICT includes the use of ANY equipment which allows users (both children and adults) to communicate and manipulate information electronically. Children may use a wide range of equipment including, but not limited to, tablets, smart board, programmable robots, laptops, digital cameras and listening centres depending on current availability. By experiencing and using different types of ICT, in different contexts, children will be developing a variety of skills across the curriculum at a pace that provides individual challenge and enjoyment.

All early years settings have a duty to ensure that children are protected from potential harm, both within and beyond the learning environment and therefore e-safety is a priority for managers. Staff are responsible for ensuring children access only appropriate material and for ensuring that use of materials appropriated from internet sites complies with Copyright Law and GDPR. Appropriate filters will be applied to ICT equipment and monitored by staff, and children will not have access to social networking sites or chatrooms.

Staff

Staff should possess the relevant skills and knowledge to support children and the setting in the use of ICT. A range of teaching strategies will be used to help develop these skills. Staff will ensure all equipment is in good working order and any faults should be reported to the head of setting. Resources and software will be reviewed regularly to ensure their effectiveness for the children using them. Children will be shown how to use the equipment and resources safely and staff will monitor time spent by children using ICT.

Staff may use ICT and online journals to gather evidence of children's development and progress to share with parents, and strategies should be in place to ensure confidentiality. Internet access will be planned to extend the learning experience and staff will ensure that the internet is accessed responsibly and safely. All registered workers must work to the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers (the Code) and follow the same standards with your online presence as you would in any aspect of your life. (SSSC, Social media guidance for social service workers)

Usage and Storage of Photographs and Personal Data

Specific permission will be sought individually from parents for any photographs or recordings of their child within the setting. This will be sought when the child starts the setting. As a setting we are aware of the General Data Protection Act 2018, and the use and storage of materials with people's images and names included on them. Photographs will only be taken on devices provided by the setting and staff are not permitted to use their own personal devices.

We will follow best practice by ensuring that:

- Written permission for usage will always specify what the photographs may be used for
- Written permission and usage of the photographs will be deemed as being valid for a specific period of time.
- Photographs will only be stored on the setting's computers and other electronic devices. Where photographs are stored electronically all electronic devices will be password secure.
- Paper copies will be used solely for display purposes or as evidence of the child's progress
- All material with photographic evidence will be stored in a secure place and disposed of appropriately when no longer required.

Use of Mobile Phones

Many ELC settings have a mobile phone solely for the use of the setting to ensure effective communication between the setting and users. Only these phones are acceptable in the playroom. All staff, including rota parents, and all others in the playroom should ensure all personal phones are switched off and understand that it is unacceptable to take personal calls whilst working with the children. Information regarding the use of mobile phones within the setting should be made available to staff during the induction process. Parents or volunteers should access this information through the setting's handbook and/or the noticeboard.

Use of Social Networks

We recognise that social networking can help settings to engage with parents and staff and can be beneficial in promoting the setting. Many settings use social media to communicate with parents enabling them to keep up to date with the setting's activities. Staff should be clear about why social media is being used and what the setting is hoping to achieve by using it. Staff members who will

have access to your setting's social media accounts, should all understand the proper and correct use of these social media accounts. Policies and procedures should be in place for the use of social media. These should be read, understood and signed by all staff members.

Staff may actively use social media for personal use but they must recognise that it is not appropriate to discuss ANY matters relating to children, staff or the workplace through these networks. A high security level on social networking sites is required for all staff and this should be reviewed regularly.

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility so it is important to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children at all times and this includes their online safety.

Monitoring of this Policy

It will be the responsibility of Sophie Startin to ensure that all staff, including new or temporary staff, are familiar with this policy and to monitor that it is being implemented. This will be reviewed through both formal and informal observation of staff practice. Staff will be reminded of the importance of data protection and the use of social media through their CPD review.