

Policy for the use of cameras, mobile phones and recording devices.

This policy refers to all electronic devices able to take pictures, record videos, send or receive calls and messages. This includes cameras, mobile telephones, tablets and any recording devices including smartwatches and call enabled / message enabled Fit Bits. More and more devices are technically, capable of connecting us to the outside world. We will adapt the policy to include all devices we deem required to safeguard children.

This policy is linked to:

1St Mary's College Early Years Department- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Staff Code of Conduct
Online Safety Policy

Statement of Intent

At Bright Sparks Nursery, 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 in the nursery 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 and call enabled/ message enabled fit bits during working hours.

We use mobile phones supplied by the nursery only to provide a means of contact in certain circumstances, such as outings or fire evacuations.

We recognise that photographs and video recordings (where applicable) play a part in the life of the nursery. We ensure that any photographs or recordings (including CCTV) taken of children in our nursery are only done with prior written permission from each child's parent and we only share photos with parents in a secure manner.

Procedures to manage this policy

Parents

We will obtain permission when each child is registered and we will update it on a regular basis to ensure that the permission given is still valid.

We will ask for individual permissions for photographs and video recordings for a range of purposes including: use in the child's learning journals; for display purposes; for promotion materials including our nursery website, brochure and the local press; and for security in relation to CCTV and the different social media platforms we use.

We will ensure that parents understand that where their child is also on another child's photograph, but not as the primary person, that may be used in another child's learning journal. Photographs and videos will not be taken in areas where intimate care routines are carried out.

If a parent is not happy about one or more of these uses, we will respect their wishes and find alternative ways of recording their child's play or learning.

Parents and visitors are kindly asked to refrain from using your mobile telephones whilst in the nursery or when collecting or dropping off their children.

If you are found to be using your mobile phone inside the nursery premises, 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.

Parents are requested to not allow their child to wear or bring in devices that may take photographs or record videos or voices. This includes smart watches with these capabilities, such as Vtech. This ensures all children are safeguarded and also protects their property as it may get damaged or misplaced at nursery.

During special events, e.g. Christmas concerts, parties, outings, staff may produce group photographs to distribute to parents on request. In this case, we will gain individual permission for each child before the event. This will ensure all photographs taken are in line with parental choice. We ask that photos of events such as Christmas concerts, parties etc are not posted on any social media websites/areas without permission from parents of all the children included in the picture.

Staff

Staff are not permitted to take photographs or recordings of a child on their own cameras, mobile phones, smartwatches or other devices and may only use those provided by the nursery. The nursery Head of Early Years will monitor all photographs and recordings to ensure that the parent's wishes are met and children are safeguarded.

The use of nursery devices, such as tablets, must only be used for nursery purposes. Nursery devices will not be taken home by staff and will remain secure at the setting when not in use. If a device is needed by a member of staff to take home due to unforeseen circumstances then the person taking the device home must ensure it is securely stored and not accessed by any other individual and returned to nursery as soon as practicable.

Passwords/ passcodes for any nursery devices must not be shared or written down. This includes staff's own log in details for computer and Connect Childcare access. These are changed regularly.

Any apps downloaded onto nursery devices must be done only by management. This will ensure only age and content appropriate apps are accessible to staff or children using them. All software and apps are monitored by the IT Network Manager.

Staff may bring their mobile phone on site but it must be locked away in their staff locker whilst on site.

At no time will staff use or check their mobile during any contact time with the children, this includes when children are sleeping.

Staff may only use their mobile phones in their lunch times in adult only locations on site where children are not present.

Staff should inform their personal contacts that they may be contacted via the nursery number but this should only be for important urgent reasons. All contacts whilst at work should be via the office on the school phone number.

If an urgent/ emergency call is expected, then the member of staff should inform the office so that they may be released from duty in order to take the call.

If staff are going out with their key children, they must take a nursery mobile phone. These are kept on the office filing cabinet. Photographs must not be taken of the children on any personal phones or any other personal storage device. Only nursery owned devices will be used to take photographs or film videos.

Photographs or videos recorded on nursery devices will be transferred to the correct storage device to ensure no images are left on these mobile devices,

Staff ensure they let the Nursery Administrator or Head of Early Years know which phone they have with them.

Staff will charge the mobile phones up on their return and ensure there is credit on them before use. Credit can be placed on the mobile phones by the Head of Early Years.

Staff USB pen drives are all encrypted by the Head of Early Years on purchase and a record of these is stored electronically by the Head of Early Years. When a member of staff leaves St Mary's College, their USB will be wiped clean and their individual log in details and storage on main server will be deleted. Wherever possible we encourage staff to use remote access on their home computer or to take a work laptop home, both of these can be monitored.

All electronic communications between staff and parents should be professional and take place via the official nursery communication channels, e.g. the setting's email addresses and telephone numbers. This is to protect staff, children and parents.

Parents and visitors' use of mobile phones, smartwatches and social networking

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, parents and visitors are kindly asked to refrain from using their mobile telephones whilst in the nursery or when collecting or dropping off their children.

We promote the safety and welfare of all staff and children and therefore ask parents and visitors not to post, publically or privately, information about any child on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. We ask all parents and visitors to follow this policy to ensure that information about children, images and information do not fall into the wrong hands.

Parents/visitors are invited to share any concerns regarding inappropriate use of social media through the official procedures:

- Reported to the EY office via email, telephone call, written letter or in person
- Reported over a weekend via the nursery website enquiries portal
- Complaints Procedure (detailed on website)
- If confidential or of a sensitive nature an appointment to see the Head of Early Year. In her absence one of the named Deputies. If your concern is with the Head of Early Years then you should report this to Mr Michael Kennedy, College Principal.

We ask parents **not to**:

- Send friend requests to any member of nursery staff
- Screen shot or share any posts or pictures from the nursery on social media platforms (these may contain other children in the pictures)
- Post any photographs to social media that have been supplied by the nursery with other children in them (e.g. Christmas concert photographs or photographs from an activity at nursery)

We ask parents to:

- Share any concerns regarding inappropriate use of social media through the official procedures (refer to our complaints policy).

Online Learning Journals and Connect Childcare Software

At Bright Sparks and Early Years we use tablets in the rooms to take photos of the children and record these directly on to their electronic learning journeys. We ensure that these devices are used for this purpose only and do not install applications such as social media or messaging sites on to these devices.

We also do routine checks to ensure that social media sites and messaging sites have not been sent or used on these devices. Staff are reminded of the whistleblowing policy if they observe staff not following these safeguarding procedures.

Monitoring

At any time and without prior notice, the College maintains the right and ability to examine any systems and inspect, review and if needs be intercept any and all data recorded in those systems. Any information stored on a computer, whether the information is contained on a hard drive, computer disk or in any other manner may be subject to scrutiny by the College. This examination helps to ensure compliance with internal policies, supports the performance of internal investigations, and assists the management of information systems.

Guidance has also been given to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, Setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five (Published 31st March 2021 –Effective 1st September 2021)

Reviewed by AH- March 2021

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AUDITED WEIGHTMANS LLP 10.01.23