



Mobile Phone Use Policy

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St Francis Nursery is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, staff, and visitors. This policy outlines the guidelines and restrictions regarding the use of mobile phones and other personal electronic devices within the nursery premises or during nursery-organised activities, to ensure the safeguarding of children and to maintain a professional and focused environment.

1. Introduction and Purpose

The primary purpose of this policy is to safeguard children and ensure their privacy and well-being. The misuse of mobile phones, particularly those with cameras, can pose risks such as inappropriate photography, distraction of staff, and breaches of confidentiality. This policy aims to:

- Protect children from inappropriate photography or recording.
- Maintain confidentiality and privacy for children, staff, and families.
- Minimise distractions for staff to ensure continuous supervision and engagement with children.
- Promote a professional and focused working environment.
- Comply with safeguarding requirements and data protection (GDPR) regulations.

2. Scope

This policy applies to children attending the nursery, all staff members, visitors, including parents/carers, contractors, and agency staff, while on nursery premises.

3. Principles of Mobile Phone Use

- **Child Safeguarding First:** The safety and well-being of children are paramount.
- **No Photography/Recording:** No personal mobile phones or devices with cameras should be used to photograph or record children unless explicitly authorised and for legitimate nursery business only (e.g., for official nursery communication with parents/carers via secure apps)
- **Confidentiality:** The privacy of children, their families, and staff must be respected at all times.

- **Minimising Distraction:** Mobile phone use should not detract from the supervision or care of children.
- **Professionalism:** Staff are expected to maintain a professional approach to mobile phone use.

4. Policy for Staff Mobile Phones

To ensure safeguarding, professionalism, and minimise distractions, staff must adhere to the following rules regarding personal mobile phones:

- **Storage:** All personal mobile phones must be stored securely in staff lockers or a designated, locked area upon arrival at the nursery. They should not be kept on person or in rooms where children are present.
- **Emergency Use:** In genuine emergencies, staff may access their phone in the staff room or a private area, after notifying a senior staff member.
- **Breaks:** Staff may use their personal mobile phones during their allocated breaks, in the staff room or a designated break area, away from children.
- **Photography/Recording:**
 - **Strictly prohibited:** Under no circumstances are staff to use their personal mobile phones to take photographs or videos of children.
 - **Nursery Devices:** Any photos or videos taken for official nursery purposes (e.g., observations for learning journeys, special events for parents) must be taken using nursery-provided cameras or tablets, and then securely uploaded to the designated platform. These devices will have strict usage guidelines.
- **Confidentiality:** Staff must not share any information about children, families, or staff that has been seen or heard at the nursery via personal mobile phones or social media.
- **Personal Calls/Messages:** Personal calls or messages should be limited to break times. If an urgent personal call needs to be made or received, it must be done away from children's areas and discreetly.

5. Policy for Visitor and Parent Mobile Phones

Parents/guardians and other visitors are requested to adhere to the following:

- **No Photography/Recording:** Visitors are kindly requested **not** to use their mobile phones to take photographs or videos of any children within the nursery, including their own child, to protect the privacy and safety of all children.
- **Discreet Use:** If an urgent call must be taken while in the nursery, please step away from the children's areas or speak quietly to avoid disturbing children or staff.
- **Collection/Drop-off:** We ask that parents/guardians avoid using their mobile phones excessively during drop-off and collection times to ensure full attention is given to their child and to facilitate smooth transitions and communication with staff.
- **On Outings:** For organised nursery outings, parents/carers accompanying the trip will be given specific instructions regarding mobile phone use, including emergency contacts and photography guidelines.

6. Digital Devices (Tablets, Laptops, Smartwatches)

The principles of this policy also extend to other digital devices:

- **Staff:** Personal tablets, laptops, and smartwatches should be stored securely with mobile phones. Smartwatches with recording capabilities should not be worn in child contact areas.
- **Nursery Devices:** Nursery-owned tablets or laptops used for educational or administrative purposes will be secured, monitored, and used only by authorised staff in designated areas.

7. Breach of Policy

Any breach of this policy, particularly regarding inappropriate photography, recording, or sharing of confidential information, will be treated as a serious safeguarding matter and a disciplinary offence. This may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may be reported to relevant authorities where appropriate.