



St. Mary's Playgroup

Use of Mobile Phones, Cameras and Social Networking

Policy Statement

St. Mary's Playgroup recognises that staff, students and volunteers may have personal mobile phones and other technological devices in their possession or within their personal belongings whilst on the premises. However, safeguarding of children within the setting is paramount and it is recognised that personal mobile phones and technological devices have the potential to be used inappropriately or to distract from the safe supervision of the children. We take steps to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

Use of cameras:

- Playgroup has a digital camera for staff to use to take photographs of the children in the setting.
- Members of staff must not bring their own cameras or video recorders into the setting and must only use equipment belonging to the setting
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons, i.e. to record their learning and development for 'Child Learning Profiles' or for wall displays within the setting.
- Photographs are stored appropriately. Any photographs must be deemed suitable without putting any child in a compromising position which could cause stress or embarrassment to the child.
- We never put photographs of children on our Website or Facebook pages without first gaining written consent from their parents when they start playgroup. This also applies to photos that are displayed at playgroup.
- We never display the names of children who appear in photographs that are on display.
- St. Mary's Playgroup has a mobile phone that is solely used for phone calls and texting parents. We do not use the camera facility.
- The camera is not to be taken into the toilet area.

Use of mobile phones

- Staff, visitors, and volunteers can bring mobile phones into playgroup but they must be switched off and kept in either the red locked box or in their bags in the kitchen.
- Staff, visitors, and volunteers are not allowed to use their mobile phone for any personal calls, internet sites or texts. If they need to use their phone they must speak to the manager and must use their phone in the Church room or in view of another member of staff.
- Staff, visitors, and volunteers are not allowed to take photos of playgroup or the children on their phone for any reason.
- Staff can be contacted on the Playgroup mobile phone if necessary and in cases of emergency. They should make this known to immediate family and other people who need to contact them in an emergency.
- The manager reserves to the right to check the contents on a mobile phone if there is any cause for concern over its use.
- Staff should not use their personal phones, e-mail, or social networking sites to contact parents on a professional level.



- If members of staff take their own mobile phones on outings, for use in the case of an emergency they must not make or receive personal calls as this will distract them.
- Parents are not allowed to use their personal mobile phones on playgroup premises.

Social network sites

All staff will be made aware during their induction of the potential risks of using social networking sites e.g. Facebook and the importance of considering the materials they post and how publishing unsuitable materials may affect their professional status. The Internet is an unmanaged, open communications channel. All staff need to protect themselves from legal challenge and ensure they work within the boundaries of professional behaviour.

We respect employee's right to a private life. However, we must ensure that they do not disclose any of the Setting's confidential information, insult or slander Playgroup, its employees or parents; bring the setting into disrepute, or disclose personal data or information about any individual that could breach the Data Protection Act 1998.

We require that if staff use social networking websites that they:

- Ensure that they do not discuss St. Mary's Playgroup or conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to the setting.
- Take care not to allow their interaction on these websites to damage working relationships between employees and parents of the setting.

Cyber bullying

We are committed to ensuring that all staff are treated with dignity and respect at work. Bullying and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in the work place. Cyber bullying methods could include using text messages, mobile phone calls, instant messenger services, or by posting comments on web sites, blogs or in chat rooms.

Failure to adhere to the contents of this policy will lead to disciplinary/safeguarding procedures being followed.

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