

## Mobile and Smart Technology Policy

### Policy statement

This policy has been adopted taking into account the DfE statutory guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)' 2022, [Early Years and Foundation Stage 2021](#), '[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)' 2018, and the local [Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership \(KSCMP\) procedures](#).

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard and promote the welfare of all the members of DMNS when using mobile devices and smart technology. DMNS recognises that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and acknowledges its duty to protect children and staff from harm.

This policy applies to access to and use of all mobile phones and smart technology including phones, tablets, e-readers and wearable technology like 'smart watches', which facilitate communication or have the capability to record sound and/or images.

This policy applies to children, staff and visitors.

### General Policies

- It is recognised that mobile and smart technologies are part of everyday life for many children, staff and parents.
- All devices brought onto the site are the responsibility of the user. They are advised to take steps to protect their item from loss, theft or damage – DMNS accept no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of such items on our premises. It is further advised that passwords etc. are used to ensure that unauthorised access, calls or actions are prohibited.
- Sending of abusive or inappropriate messages via smart devices or mobile phones is forbidden and any breaches will be dealt with in accordance with disciplinary measures. All members of the community are advised to ensure that their mobile phones and personal devices do not contain any content which may be offensive, derogatory or illegal, or that would otherwise contravene our policies. It is reminded that staff must be seen as appropriate to work with children, and this is continually assessed, not just upon hiring.

### Children's Use of Mobile Phones and Smart Devices

- Parents are not permitted to bring the children with smart devices or phones to DMNS. If a child requires access for exceptional reasons, such as medical assistance and monitoring, this will be discussed between the Manager and parent in advance to bringing the device to DMNS.
- Children will be educated in line with their age as to the safe and appropriate use of mobile phones and smart technology.
- Our aim is to make sure children's experience of technology and the internet is safe and happy. In line with KCC's 'acceptable use of technology' we encourage the following belief and knowledge for the children that attend our setting:
  - I only use the internet when an adult is with me.
  - I only use online links and buttons when I know what they do. If I am not sure, I ask an adult first.

- I keep my personal information and passwords safe.
- I only send messages online which are polite and friendly.
- I know I can tell a member of staff if something online makes me feel upset, unhappy, or worried.
- DMNS and staff are a safe space in which I can learn more about the internet and technology.

### **Staff Use of Mobile Phones and Smart Devices**

- Members of staff will ensure that any use of mobile and smart technology is used in accordance with the law, as well as DMNS policy and procedures such as confidentiality, child protection, data protection and acceptable use policies.
- DMNS requires that parents/carers/visitors must not use mobile phones or any other electronic device which has the facility to take photographs or videos, whilst on the premises or in the garden during session times.
- DMNS accepts that employees will bring mobile phones to work. All mobile phones are to be kept in the kitchen and switched off unless necessary to carry out tasks. Devices are kept in a secure place. Staff are asked to make the Manager or Deputy Manager aware that they are wearing an Apple watch or Fitbit or any other 'smart' device capable of connecting to the internet or a mobile device.
- Staff should use the device responsibly and are asked not to use, read or respond to any communication facilities during the session.
- Staff are required to ensure that any content brought onto site via mobile phone and devices is compatible with their professional role and DMNS behaviour expectations. This can include things such as, for example, an inappropriate ring tone on a phone. It is again highlighted that the requirement to be appropriate to work with children is an aspect of staff which is dynamic and under review by Management.
- Staff are not permitted to use their personal phones or devices for contacting parents or carers, unless absolutely necessary in the carrying out of their duties.
- When on outings all staff phones will be held collectively, with the exception of the emergency phone which will be held by the Manager, Deputy or named person in charge of the outing.
- Employees that need to receive or make calls during working hours are permitted to do so only if deemed absolutely necessary. The DMNS Phone should be the first emergency contact number for staff whilst at work.
- Staff are not permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, e.g. to take photographs or videos of pre-school children. Staff will only use setting provided equipment (not personal devices) to take photos or videos, in accordance with our image policy.
- Anyone found storing pictures of pre-school children on their mobile phone will be liable to disciplinary and criminal action. If a member of staff is thought to have illegal content saved or stored on a mobile phone or personal device or have committed a criminal offence using a personal device or mobile phone, the police will be contacted and the Local Authority Designated Officer will be informed in line with our allegations policy.
- Anyone in breach of the policy will have appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Visitor Use of Mobile and Smart Technology**

- Parents/carers and visitors, including volunteers and contractors, are expected to ensure that they understand our policy regarded use of mobile phones and smart devices; that they must not be used on the premises unless absolutely necessary, and they may not be used to take photos of children other than their own children. Please refer to our taking of photographs policy. At specific events, such as Christmas plays, parents and visitors are reminded of the policy specific to that event.

- Visitors, including volunteers and contractors, are informed of our policies and referred to this document. Should they require access to their mobile phone or other devices, this shall be discussed with the Manager prior to use being permitted.
- Members of staff are expected to challenge visitors if they have concerns about their use of mobile and smart technology and will inform the Manager of any breaches of our policy.

### **Policy Monitoring**

- As a setting we understand that technology can develop quickly, and it can be unreasonable to expect policies to be adapted with every new change that comes with technology. With this in mind, the manager is responsible for keeping up-to-date with technological developments and adapt and review policies as necessary on an 'as and when needed' basis. The policy will be reviewed formally at least annually, and as required by any national or local policy updates.
- Monitoring compliance with the policy will be done through the designated persons reviewing on a day-to-day basis, and noting any breaches and dealing with them accordingly, Staff will be reminded of their obligations and any change to policy through training.

### **Responding to Policy Breaches**

- All members of DMNS are informed of the need to report policy breaches or concerns in line with existing setting policies and procedures.
- After any investigations are completed, management will debrief, identify lessons learnt and implement any policy or curriculum changes, as required.
- We require staff, parents and all members of our pre-school to work in partnership with us to resolve any issues.
- All members of DMNS will respect confidentiality and the need to follow the official procedures for reporting concerns.
- Children's parents and staff will be informed of our complaints procedure and staff will be made aware of the whistleblowing procedure.
- If we are unsure how to proceed with an incident or concern, the DSL or Manager will seek advice from the Education People's Education Safeguarding Service or other agency in accordance with our child protection policy.

### **Email and Internet Use**

- DMNS encourages its employees to use the internet and e-mail at work, for work related business only, where this can save time and expense. However, it requires that employees ensure that their communication is well structured and professional. If you are unsure about whether something you propose to do might breach this e-mail and internet guidance then you should seek advice from the Manager.

### **Monitoring and Review**

- This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if national guidance changes. Feedback from staff, parents, and stakeholders will always be welcomed.