Twyford Playgroup

Use of mobile phones, cameras digital equipment, information technology and media policy

Date Reviewed: September 2026
Manager Signature: Rachel Knott
Chair of Committee Signature: Pamela Lawrence
Review Date: September 2027

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.

This policy includes all devices that are capable of mobile communication including but not limited to mobile phones, iPads and other tablets, netbooks, satellite phones etc.

Personal Mobile phones -staff

Staff phones are stored in the locked metal cabinet in the cupboard during the session. They may only be accessed when the staff are on their break, and they must request a supervisor to unlock the cabinet. When they have finished using their phones, they will return them to the cabinet, which in turn will be locked by a supervisor. At breaktime, phones must only be used in the cupboard, away from the children. Staff may also only use their own phones in an emergency, with permission from the manager, and in the cupboard, away from the children. If staff take their own mobile phones on an outing in case of an emergency, they must not make or receive personal calls. They must never take pictures of children.

Playgroup cameras, iPads and digital equipment

Whilst documenting children's progress, staff are only permitted to use the playgroup iPads as cameras or to access google when researching a certain topic for the children in their care. Staff must ensure that they do not have playgroup iPads on their person when they are in the nappy changing area or toilets. Should there be any cause for concern over the inappropriate use of personal or playgroup digital devices, the playgroup Manager reserves the right to check the image contents of the devices in question. If inappropriate material is found, then our Local Authority Designated officer (LADO) will be contacted immediately. We will then take immediate action, following the LADO's guidance.

Mobile phones- Parents/Carers and Visitors

When arriving at the setting, parents/carers and visitors are required to either leave their phones in their car or hand them to the Manager/Lead Practitioner to lock them in the metal cabinet in the cupboard. If a call to or from the mobile is urgent, then the Playgroup has an area outside the front door where the call can be made. Should

inappropriate use of a mobile phone be reported or observed, then the Manager will need to take appropriate action proportionate to the incident.

I Pads and video recording

Photographs or videos may be taken for the purpose of recording a child or group of children participating in activities for the purpose of celebrating their achievements is an effective form of recording their progression in the Early Years Foundation Stage to subsequently share with parents and carers. However, it is essential that photographs are taken and stored appropriately to safeguard the children in our care. Parental or guardian consent must be given before the Playgroup takes photos or videos of your children.

From time to time, it may be possible for parents to take pictures of their children in the Playgroup for special events such as Christmas or Sports day. The Manager will advise on what is appropriate use and taking into account other parent's wishes for their own children. The Manager will write to parents/carers ahead of an event – e.g. Sports Day and ask that anyone concerned about parents/carers taking photos should contact the Manager to discuss. The Manager will advise on the day of the event if photos/videos are possible, and in the event that we agree to allow them we make it clear to all people there that these are for personal use only and not to be shared on social media if they contain a child's image other than their own child.

E-mails and Website

The playgroup's main purpose in providing IT facilities is to aid the playgroup in delivering important messages to parents, as well as allowing parents to pass on confidential and important messages to the Manager. IT facilities provided by Twyford Playgroup should not be abused. Twyford playgroup will not tolerate any material that is deemed abusive or threatening or inappropriate.

Parents/carers and visitors are requested to only send emails to

Manager.twyfordplaygroup@gmail.com FAO Manager Rachel Knott, which is a safe and confidential email address used by management only.

Use of the internet and Wi-fi

Use of the internet in exceptional circumstances by staff or visitors is permitted with the approval of the Manager and where it complies with appropriate use:

- Complies with current legislation
- Uses the internet in an acceptable way
- Does not create unnecessary risk to the Playgroup by misuse.

No material relating to parents/carers, visitors or children will be published on our web site without due consent.

Data Protection

The Playgroup is required to process relevant personal data as part of its operation and shall take all reasonable steps to do so in accordance with this policy. Data processing may include obtaining, recording, holding, disposing, destroying or otherwise using data. The playgroup will endeavour to ensure that all personal data is processed in compliance with this policy and the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998. Any information which falls within the definition of personal data and is not otherwise exempted will remain confidential and will only be disclosed to third parties with the consent of the appropriate individual or under the terms of this policy. The playgroup may from time to time be required to process sensitive personal data regarding a child in our care. We will share this data where there is a legal obligation to do so, such as in a child protection investigation.

The following must be adhered to at all times:

- Children's records must be kept in a locked cupboard or cabinet at all times.
- Staff must only have access to child data that is required to be used for the safety of the child, for example emergency contact numbers, care plan information etc, or for the purposes of fulfilling our obligations under the EYFS learning and development.
- No personal records or children's learning journals must be removed from site unless authorised by the Manager.
- Any electrical devices containing children's information taken off site, must have a secure password and be stored in a lockable cupboard.
- Record sharing can only take place with either the parents' consent or on the authority of the Safeguarding Team or LADO.
- Any document that needs to be destroyed must be shredded.
- Documents that are required to be retained must be stored as per Playgroup guidelines.
- Playgroup cameras and iPads must be stored in the locked cabinet in the cupboard when the session has finished and at weekends.

Social networking and internet blogs

Playgroup realises that social networking has now become an integral part of everyday life and that many people enjoy membership of social network sites. We request that if parents/carers/visitors mention the Playgroup in the context of social media that:

- Please do not invite staff members to be friends via a social network.
- Please do not discuss Playgroup business on any network site. All issues or concerns must be discussed with the Playgroup staff or management.
- Please do not place photos from a playgroup event of any kind onto a social network site.

Images of children

We regularly take individual or group photographs of the children in our care. These images may be used for display inside the Playgroup, in our information leaflet or on our website. We also use the image for teaching, observation and publicity purposes. To comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Playgroup requires permission from parents/carers to take these photos. Twyford Playgroup promises to :

- Seek parental permission for images to be taken or used.
- Use only the Playgroup cameras to take photographs
- Ensure all staff are aware that the use of personal mobile phones to take photos or videos is not permitted-failure to adhere to this will lead to disciplinary action.
- Ensure that visitors are aware that the use of mobile phones to take images or record videos is not permitted.
- Strongly request that parents do not place photos taken at a Playgroup event onto a social network site.
- Delete images regularly when they are not needed (6 months).

Child use of technology

- Children will use only age appropriate software in the setting.
- All internet activity should be deemed appropriate.

This policy lays down clear guidelines which will ensure that everyone connected with the Playgroup adheres to what we would deem as acceptable use of technology and media. In putting together this policy we have been mindful of the key objectives of some of the following legislation:

- The Data Protection Act (1998) and GDPR
- The Protection of Children Act (1978)
- The Criminal Justice Public Order Act (1994)
- The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- The Human Rights Act 1998