

## Online Safety and Acceptable Internet Use Policy

*This policy should be read in conjunction with the Data protection and Confidentiality policy, Whistleblowing Policy, Social Networking Policy, Safeguarding Children Policy and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) privacy notice.*

Our nursery is aware of the growth of internet and the advantages this can bring. However, it is also aware of the dangers it can pose and we strive to support children, staff and families to use the internet safely.

We refer to 'Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations' to support this policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is ultimately responsible for online safety concerns. All concerns need to be raised as soon as possible to **Laura Jones**.

The use of technology has become a significant component of many safeguarding issues such as child sexual exploitation; radicalisation; sexual predation: with technology often providing the platform that facilitates harm.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorized into three areas of risk:

- ✓ **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- ✓ **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children or young adults; and
- ✓ **Conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; for example making, sending and receiving explicit images, or online bullying.

Within the nursery we aim to keep children, staff and parents safe online. Our safety measures include:

- Ensuring we have appropriate antivirus and anti-spyware software on all devices and keep them updated.
- Ensuring content blockers and filters are on all our devices.
- Ensuring all devices are password protected and screen locked.
- Reviewing all apps or games downloaded onto devices ensuring they are age and content appropriate.
- Using only nursery devices to record/photograph children in the setting.
- Ensuring that staff do not use personal electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities, including mobile phones, smart watches and cameras when in the rooms.
- Never emailing personal or financial information.
- Reporting emails with inappropriate content to the internet watch foundation (IWF [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk)).
- Teaching children how to stay safe online and report any concerns they have
- Ensuring children are supervised when using internet connected devices.
- Staff model safe practice when using technology with children; instructing staff to use the work IT equipment for matters relating to the children and their education and care. No personal use will be tolerated.
- Monitoring children's screen time to ensure they remain safe online and have access to material that promotes their development. We ensure that their screen time is within an acceptable level and is integrated within their programme of learning.
- Being aware of the need to manage our digital reputation, including the appropriateness of information and content that we post online, both professionally and personally. This is continually monitored by the setting's management.
- Staff must not friend or communicate with parents on personal devices or social media accounts.
- Staff must not use the internet facilities to visit, bookmark, download material from or upload material to inappropriate, obscene, pornographic or otherwise offensive websites. Such use constitutes misconduct and will lead to disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal in serious cases.
- Ensuring all electronic communications between staff and parents is professional and takes 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

If any concerns arise relating to online safety, then we will follow our safeguarding policy and report all online safety concerns to the DSL.

The DSL will make sure that:

- All staff know how to report a problem and when to escalate a concern, including the process for external referral
- All concerns are logged, assessed and actioned in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding procedures.
- Staff have access to information and guidance for supporting online safety, both personally and professionally.
- Parents are signposted to appropriate sources of support regarding online safety at home and are fully supported to understand how to report an online safety concern.
- Under no circumstances should any member of staff, either at work or in any other place, make, deliberately download, possess, or distribute material they know to be illegal, for example child sexual abuse material.

### Cyber Security

Good cyber security means protecting the personal or sensitive information we hold on children and their families in line with the Data Protection Act. We are aware that Cyber criminals will target any type of business including childcare and ensure all staff are aware of the value of the information we hold in terms of criminal activity e.g. scam emails. All staff are reminded to follow all the procedures above including backing up sensitive data, using strong passwords and protecting devices to ensure we are cyber secure.

To prevent any attempts of a data breach (which is when information held by a business is stolen or accessed without authorisation) that could cause temporary shutdown of our setting and reputational damage with the families we engage with we inform staff not to open any suspicious messages such as official-sounding messages about 'resetting passwords', 'receiving compensation', 'scanning devices' or 'missed deliveries'.

Staff are asked to report these to the manager as soon as possible and these will be reported through the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) Suspicious Email Reporting Service at [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

| <b>This policy was adopted on</b> | <b>Signed on behalf of the nursery</b> | <b>Date for review</b> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>September 2025</i>             | <i>L Jones</i>                         | <i>September 2026</i>  |