

Hythe Bay Children's Centre

Mobile and Smart Technology Policy



Key Details

Designated Safeguarding Lead (s):

Radka Davidova, Vicki Dumont, Danielle Campion

Named Trustee with lead responsibility:

Rebecca Prout

Date written/updated: October 2024

Date agreed and ratified by Trustees: 15th October 2024

This policy will be reviewed **at least** annually. It will also be revised following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures.

1. Policy aims and scope

- This policy has been written by Hythe Bay Children’s Centre building on Kent County Councils LADO and Education Safeguarding Advisory Service mobile and smart technology policy template, with specialist advice and input as required.
- It takes into account the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance ‘[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)’ (KCSIE), [Early Years and Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#), ‘[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)’ (WTSC) 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 members of our community when using mobile devices and smart technology.
 - Hythe Bay Children’s Centre recognises that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and acknowledges its duty to ensure that all children and staff are protected from potential harm when using mobile and smart technology.
 - As outlined in our Child Protection Policy, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Radka Davidova, Deputy Manager is recognised as having overall responsibility for online safety.
- This policy applies to all access to and use of all mobile and smart technology on site; this includes but is not limited to mobile/smart phones and personal devices such as tablets, e-readers, games consoles and wearable technology, such as smart watches and fitness trackers, which facilitate communication or have the capability to record sound and/or images.
- This policy applies to children, parents/carers and all staff, including the governing body, leadership team, teachers, support staff, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for, or provide services on behalf of the setting (collectively referred to as “staff” in this policy).

2. Links with other policies

- This policy links with several other policies, practices and action plans.

3. Safe use of mobile and smart technology expectations

- Hythe Bay Children’s Centre recognises that use of mobile and smart technologies is part of everyday life for many children, staff and parents/carers.
- Electronic devices of any kind that are brought onto site are the responsibility of the user. All members of our community are advised to:
 - take steps to protect their personal mobile phones or other smart devices from loss, theft or damage; we accept no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of such items on our premises.
 - use passwords/PIN numbers to ensure that unauthorised access, calls or actions cannot be made on personal phones or devices.

- Mobile devices and other forms of smart technology are not permitted to be used in specific areas on site; this includes all nursery rooms that children are present.
- The sending of abusive or inappropriate messages or content, including via personal mobile devices and/or smart technology is forbidden by any member of the community; any breaches will be dealt with in line with our policies.
- All members of the Hythe Bay Children's Centre community are advised to ensure that their personal mobile and smart technology devices do not contain any content which may be offensive, derogatory or illegal, or which would otherwise contravene our behaviour or child protection policies.

4. Setting provided mobile phones and devices

- Members of staff may be issued with a work phone number in addition to their work email address, where contact with parents/carers is required.
- Setting mobile phones and/or devices will be suitably protected via a passcode/PIN and must only be accessed or used by members of staff.
- Setting mobile phones and/or devices will always be used in accordance with our code of conduct and relevant policy.
- Where staff and/or children are using setting provided mobile phones and/or devices, they will be informed prior to use via our Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) that activity may be monitored for safeguarding reasons and to ensure policy compliance.

5. Staff use of mobile and smart technology

- Members of staff will ensure that use of any mobile and smart technology, including personal phones, wearable technology and other mobile/smart devices, will take place in accordance with the law, as well as relevant setting policy and procedures, including confidentiality, child protection, data security staff behaviour/code of conduct and Acceptable Use Policies.
 - Staff will be advised to:
 - Keep personal mobile and smart technology devices in a safe and secure place such as in a school locker, the nursery office or in the car away from children.
 - Keep personal mobile phones and devices switched off or set to 'silent' or 'do not disturb' modes during lesson times.
 - Ensure that Bluetooth or other forms of communication, such as 'airdrop', are hidden or disabled during working hours.
 - Not use personal mobile or smart technology devices during working hours, unless written permission has been given by the manager, such as in emergency circumstances.
 - Ensure that any content bought onto site via personal mobile and smart technology devices is compatible with their professional role and our behaviour expectations.
- Members of staff are not permitted to use their own personal mobile and smart technology devices for contacting parents and carers.

- Any pre-existing relationships or circumstance, which could compromise staff's ability to comply with this, will be discussed with the DSL and manager.
- Staff will only use setting provided equipment (not personal devices):
 - to take photos or videos of children in line with our image use policy.
 - to work directly with children during lessons/educational activities.
 - to communicate with parents/carers.
- Where remote learning activities take place, staff will use setting provided equipment
- If a member of staff breaches our policy, action will be taken in line with our staff code of conduct and relevant policy.
- If a member of staff is thought to have illegal content saved or stored on a personal mobile or other device or have committed a criminal offence using a personal device or mobile phone, the police will be contacted, and the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) will be informed in line with our policy.

6. Children/pupils/students use of mobile and smart technology

- Children will be educated regarding the safe and appropriate use of mobile and smart technology, including mobile phones and personal devices, and will be made aware of behaviour expectations and consequences for policy breaches.
- Safe and appropriate use of mobile and smart technology will be taught to children as part of an embedded and progressive safeguarding education approach using age-appropriate sites and resources
 - Personal mobile or smart technology devices are permitted on site for children attending out of school club, with their parent's consent and permission from the manager.
 - Personal mobile or smart devices can be used by children during out of school club, but any use must be in accordance with our policies and the law.
 - If the children needs to contact their parents or carers whilst on site, they will be allowed to use a setting phone.
 - Parents are advised to contact their child via setting office (01303267802 option 2); exceptions may be permitted on a case-by-case basis, as approved by the manager.

6.1 Confiscation of electronic devices

- Electronic devices, including mobile phones, can contain files or data which relate to an offence, or which may cause harm to another person. This includes, but is not limited to, indecent images of children, pornography, abusive messages, images or videos, or evidence relating to suspected criminal behaviour.
- Where there are any concerns regarding children use of mobile or smart technology or policy breaches, they will be dealt with in accordance with our existing policies.
- Staff may confiscate a child's personal mobile or smart technology device if they believe it is being used to contravene our child protection or behaviour policy.

- Personal mobile or smart technology devices that have been confiscated will be held in a secure place and released to parents/carers.
- Where a concern involves a potentially indecent image or video of a child, staff will respond in line with our child protection policy and will confiscate devices, avoid looking at any content, and refer the incident to the DSL (or deputy) urgently as they will be most appropriate person to respond.
- If there is suspicion that data or files on a child's personal mobile or smart technology device may be illegal, or may provide evidence relating to a criminal offence, the device will be handed over to the police for further investigation

7. Visitors' use of mobile and smart technology

- Parents/carers and visitors, including volunteers and contractors, are expected to ensure that: mobile phones and personal devices are not permitted where children are present and are only permitted in the nursery office or staffroom.
- Appropriate signage and information are in place to inform visitors of our expectations for safe and appropriate use of personal mobile or smart technology.
- Visitors, including volunteers and contractors, who are on site for regular or extended periods of time are expected to use mobile and smart technology in accordance with our acceptable use of technology policy and other associated policies, including child protection.
- If visitors require access to mobile and smart technology, for example when working with children as part of multi-agency activity, this will be discussed with the manager prior to use being permitted.
 - Any arrangements regarding agreed visitor access to mobile/smart technology will be documented and recorded by the setting. This may include undertaking appropriate risk assessments if necessary.
- Members of staff are expected to challenge visitors if they have concerns about their use of mobile and smart technology and will inform the DSL or manager of any breaches of our policy.

8. Policy monitoring and review

- Technology evolves and changes rapidly. Hythe Bay Children's Centre will review this policy at least annually. The policy will be revised following any national or local policy updates, any local concerns and/or any changes to our technical infrastructure.
- We monitor internet and technology use taking place via all setting provided devices and systems and regularly evaluate online safety mechanisms to ensure this policy is consistently applied.

9. Responding to policy breaches

- All members of the community are informed of the need to report policy breaches or concerns in line with existing setting policies and procedures.
- Where children breach this policy:
 - appropriate sanctions and/or pastoral/welfare support will be implemented in line with our behaviour policy.
 - concerns will be shared with parents/carers as appropriate.
 - we will respond in line with our child protection policy, if there is a concern that a child is at risk of harm.
- After any investigations are completed, leadership staff will debrief, identify lessons learnt and implement any policy or curriculum changes, as required.
- We require staff, parents/carers and children to work in partnership with us to resolve issues.
- All members of the community 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 a deputy) or manager will seek advice from Kent County Council or other agencies, as appropriate, in accordance with our child protection policy.