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Document.	030	Appropriate Use of ICT (Online Safety) Policy		
Revision	08	Approved By	Katy Taylor	Approval Date 03/02/2026

Scope

This policy applies to all provision for early years aged children, and also – where appropriate – to before and after school provision and walking bus provided by Duchy Pre-school and Playgroup for primary school aged children attending The Duchy School in Bowley Meadow.

Aims

The Duchy Pre-school & Playgroup recognises the value of various forms of ICT both in the education of the children and the smooth running of the setting. However, there are potential risks to safety and of inappropriate use. This policy sets out clearly how the Duchy Preschool will ensure the highest professional levels of use of ICT. Policy

Online Safety

It is important that children and young people receive consistent messages about the safe use of technology and can recognise and manage the risks posed in both the real and the virtual world.

Terms such as ‘e-safety’, ‘online’, ‘communication technologies and digital technologies’ refer to fixed and mobile technologies that adults and children may encounter, now and in the future, which allow them access to content and communications that could raise issues or pose risks; the issues are:

- Content* – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- Contact* – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- Conduct* – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm

Internet access

Children never have unsupervised access to the internet.
 The setting manager ensures that risk assessments in relation to e-safety are completed.
 Only reputable sites with a focus on early learning are used (e.g. CBeebies).
 Video sharing sites such as YouTube are not accessed by children due to the risk of inappropriate content.
 Children are taught the following stay safe principles in an age-appropriate way:

- Only go online with a grown up
- Be kind online **and** keep information about me safely
- Only press buttons on the internet to things I understand
- Tell a grown up if something makes me unhappy on the internet

Staff support children’s resilience in relation to issues they may face online, and address issues such as staying safe, appropriate friendships, asking for help if unsure, not keeping secrets as part of social and emotional development in age-appropriate ways.

All computers for use by children are sited in an area clearly visible to staff.

Staff report any suspicious or offensive material, including material which may incite racism, bullying or discrimination to the Internet Watch Foundation at www.iwf.org.uk.

The setting manager ensures staff have access to age-appropriate resources to enable them to assist children to use the internet safely.

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Strategies to minimise risk include:

- Check apps, websites and search results before using them with children.
- Children in Early Years should always be supervised when accessing the internet.
- Ensure safety modes and filters are applied - default settings tend not to ensure a high level of privacy or security. But remember you still need to supervise children closely.
- Role model safe behaviour and privacy awareness. Talk to children about safe use, for example ask permission before taking a child's picture even if parental consent has been given.

Social Networking Sites etc.

Staff are free to set up their own personal web pages on social networking sites or use weblogs ("blogs") on the internet in their own time, provided it does not break the law or disclose anything to do with the Duchy Preschool & Playgroup, the staff team, trustees, children or families, in line with our Confidentiality Policy 0005. Staff are not to access personal web pages on the settings tablets.

Duchy Preschool operates its own Facebook page for marketing and information purposes. Parents/carers are invited to like the page. Any posts, including photographs will strictly adhere to the contents of this policy. The committee, the Settings Manager and the Business Manager have responsibility for the Facebook page. The Setting Manager can designate another member of staff who will be able to post information on the Preschool's Facebook page. Facebook privacy settings will be reviewed termly or more frequently if users are made aware of changes to privacy settings.

With the exception of authorised access to the Preschool Website and Preschool Social Media websites, staff are not permitted to use Preschool computers to access Social Media Sites for their personal use.

If personal social networking sites/accounts are used by staff, volunteers, parents/carers or visitors away from the Preschool setting, there should be no discussion of, or reference to Preschool, individual children, parents or staff. Confidentiality must always be maintained.

Should staff become aware of anyone mentioning the Preschool in any abusive or inappropriate way online it should be reported to the person responsible for safeguarding who will seek advice on how best to deal with the situation.

Parents/carers using social media are encouraged to discuss anything they may wish to post to a social media site with the Settings Manager or the committee prior to doing so, in order to safeguard individuals and protect the Preschool. Photographs containing children in the Preschool setting should not be posted in the public domain via any kind of social networking site by staff, volunteers, parents/carers or visitors. This is for the protection of all individuals concerned. Staff are referred to the Disciplinary Procedure for actions that may be taken by the Preschool in the event of any breach of this policy.

If a member of staff is discovered to have disclosed confidential information or been inappropriate with information shared on social networking sites, they will face disciplinary action, which may result in dismissal if gross misconduct is reported and proved (Disciplinary Policy 0007).

Staff members are to ignore friend requests from parents and are not to request them as friends unless you have a previous relationship with them or the child has left the setting.

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Other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities;

Use of Cameras

The Duchy Preschool and Playgroup’s staff use the Preschool’s tablets in order to take photographs. Only the tablets owned by The Duchy Preschool and Playgroup and kept on Preschool’s premises are permitted to be used to take images within the setting. Use of personal cameras and other photographs taking devices by Preschool staff within the setting is prohibited at all times that children are on the premises, unless an explicit permission is given by the Manager.

The use of personal cameras/mobile phone cameras by the parents/guardians is only acceptable with explicit permission from Preschool staff at Preschool events. Parents/carers will be advised of our Online Safety policy at all such events and will be asked not to post any images (unless the image only contains their own child) on social networking sites or websites.

Any abuse of the above procedures must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Preschool staff and committee reserve the right to refuse personal camera usage at any time without prior notice. On such an occasion that permission to photograph children is refused, staff or committee members are not required (and in some cases may be unable on the basis of safeguarding) to provide a reason for this decision.

We always seek parental permission to take photographs of individual children and this permission must be in place before the child is left for their first session at the setting. We explain that images are used for observations, training, and preschool's Facebook page.

Images taken are shared with parents through Famly for their child and occasionally used for wall displays, Facebook and advertising.

Tablets

The staff use the Preschool’s tablets to take photographs. The tablets are easily available during the day for staff to use to capture spontaneous moments illustrating the children’s learning and stored safely in the locked filing cabinet at the end of each day.

The manager of the setting will complete and record weekly, spot, checks on the tablets to ensure staff are following policy. The tablets have restricted access and only the manager and Business manager know the passcode to access the internet browsing sites.

Tablets are never to be taken into changing areas or the children’s bathrooms.

All memory sticks and CDs storing past images are kept on the premises and locked away. CDs are protectively marked.

Staff should read this policy in conjunction with Use of Email, the Internet, and Social Media policy recorded in Staff Handbook.

The smart screen is used for educational games, research and occasional watching of programmes and films.

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Mobile Phones

All staff's mobile phone's must be placed in their individual locked box before they start their shift. The key is to be handed to the member of staff in charge that day. The keys are to be worn by that member of staff throughout the day at the end of their shift the keys will then be passed to the next senior member of staff.

Staff are allowed access to their mobile phones in their breaks away from the children. The staff in charge on each shift is the only member of staff with permission to access to the keys and the lock box once phones are locked away.

Staff are allowed access to their phones in the office away from the children. If office staff are leaving the office to work on the floor, they are to lock their phones away and hand the keys to the senior staff member.

Visitors/students and parents' mobile phones need to be kept in the office. On occasions such as the Christmas performance, parents can have their phones, in sight of staff. They can take photos of their children but need to be reminded that the photos are not to be shared on social media.

Failing to follow the mobile phone policy will be treated as gross misconduct and disciplinary routes will be followed.

Staff are encouraged to use the setting's land line for emergency contact rather than their mobile phones.

Smart Watches

Staff are permitted to wear smartwatches at preschool, however their connection to the mobile phone needs to be turned off.

Smartwatches worn during the preschool day are used only for the purposes of health tracking and telling the time.

Any staff found to be using their smartwatches for any other reasons will be taken down the root of disciplinary. Visitors and parent's may also be wearing smartwatches when they enter the setting, they are to be made aware of the setting's policy by a member of staff on arrival.

Outings and Walking bus

A senior member of staff will take the preschool mobile phone when going on outings. The mobile phone is fitted with all the necessary parental controls with content checked regularly.

The walking bus will also use the preschool's mobile phone with access to Family on it. This will be used to access the afterschool clubs register and also be used in case emergency contact with parents is needed. This is only to be used in sight of another staff member.

Family

The Preschool has tablets, used by the key workers. The tablets are for the use of the key workers only. Children can only have access to them supervised and for educational purposes.

At Duchy Preschool we provide all children attending an 'online learning journal' through the platform of 'Family' which records observations, photos and videos and provides an opportunity for parents to comment and add their own observations to their own child's journal. This helps to provide a strong partnership between the setting and home as the children develop from when they first attend the preschool through to when they leave to attend Primary School (or for any other reasons if before this time).

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We use the secure online system Family which allows staff and parents to access information via a personal password protected login. Each child is allocated a key worker who is responsible for their development and the compilation of their learning journals, however all staff can capture observations for each other's key children.

Parents logging into the system are only able to see their child(ren)'s learning journal. Parent access allows them to comment (or 'reply') to observations staff have input as well as adding their own observations and photos/videos – any observations the parents add must be approved and added into the journal by the staff to ensure appropriate content.

Before parents are linked to their child(ren)'s learning journal they are asked to give permission for their child's photo to appear in other children's learning journals. Before accessing the system, parents sign to agree not to download and share any information on any other online platforms or social networking sites (such as Facebook).

As well as containing the children's learning journeys, Family is used for general communication between parents and staff such as absence private messages and toileting information. Each child's learning journal is a document to record their learning and development which parents can add comments on or contribute to with information of what they have been doing at home. Any further discussion of progress or concerns will be done during a face-to-face conversation at the setting during a prior agreed time.

Observations are regularly monitored by the managing staff to ensure they are providing relevant and informative information.

Family is hosted on secure dedicated servers based in the UK. Access to information stored on Family can only be gained by unique user id and password. Parents can only see their own child's information and are unable to login to view other children's learning journal.

SAFE ACCESS PROCEDURES:

Staff should logout of the Family app or program when they are finished in order to maintain confidentiality. Staff should not share log in or password details with any person not employed by Duchy Preschool. Staff should not share any information or photographs relating to children with any person not employed by Duchy Preschool.

Staff should take all responsible steps to ensure the safe keeping of any portable device e.g. tablets that they are using and report any missing devices.

If accessing Family with a private computer/tablet/app, not on Preschool premises, staff must maintain confidentiality and professionalism.

All entries on Family must be appropriate.

All entries on Family remain the property of Duchy Preschool.

At all times staff must comply with Safeguarding Policy, Confidentiality Policy and Online Safety.

Cyber Bullying

If staff become aware that a child is the victim of cyber-bullying at home or elsewhere, they discuss this with the parents and refer them to help, such as: NSPCC Tel: 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk or ChildLine Tel:

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0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

Use of social media

Staff are expected to:

- Understand how to manage their security settings to ensure that their information is only available to people they choose to share information with
- Ensure the organisation is not negatively affected by their actions and do not name the setting
- Are aware that comments or photographs online may be accessible to anyone and should use their judgement before posting
- Are aware that images, such as those on Snapshot may still be accessed by others and a permanent record of them made, for example, by taking a screen shot of the image with a mobile phone
- Observe confidentiality and refrain from discussing any issues relating to work
- Not share information they would not want children, parents or colleagues to view
- Set privacy settings to personal social networking and restrict those who are able to access
- Not accept service users/children/parents as friends, as it is a breach of professional conduct
- Report any concerns or breaches to the designated safeguarding lead in their setting
- Engage in personal communication, including on social networking sites, with children and parents with whom they act in a professional capacity. There may be occasions when the educator and family are friendly prior to the child coming to the setting. In this case information is shared with the manager and a risk assessment and agreement in relation to boundaries are agreed

Use/distribution of inappropriate images

Staff are aware that it is an offence to distribute indecent images and that it is an offence to groom children online. In the event of a concern that a colleague is behaving inappropriately, staff advise the designated safeguarding lead who follows the Whistle blowing policy.

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Responsibility for periodic review	Personnel Sub-committee

Document History

Rev	Changes	Date	Approval
00	Original Policy	15/11/11	AGM
01	Addition of scope statement and other clarification	02/01/14	Business Manager
02	Reviewed, updated and amended. Added ref to tablets and Twitter. Added ref to Staff Handbook. Updated Mobile Phones section	06/06/19	Gosia Prout
03	Replaced "Record of Achievement Book" with "Tapestry"	09/01/20	Gosia Prout
04	Reviewed, replaced 'playgroup' with 'preschool' and 'Tapestry' with 'Family'	17/10/23	Katy Taylor
05	Updated to include smartwatches	7/1/24	Katy Taylor
06	Updated phones to be in the office and smartwatches to not be connected to mobile phones.	18/06/24	Katy Taylor
07	Updated to include reference to new preschool mobile phone	11/07/24	Kasia Howard
08	Updated to include new guidance.	12/12/24	Katy Taylor
08	Reviewed	28/08/25	Katy Taylor
09	Included new phone lock box	07/12/25	Katy Taylor
10	Added spot checks of tablets weekly	03/02/26	Katy Taylor

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