

Mobile Phones Cameras and Electronic Devices Policy

Effective from September 2026

Setting	Hemingbrough Pre-School
Manager and DSL	Summer Andrews
Deputy Manager and Deputy DSL	Jane Dodsworth
Chairperson	Gemma Howard
Review date	September 2027

1 Purpose and statutory basis

This policy explains how mobile phones, cameras, tablets, smart watches and other devices with imaging, recording or sharing functions may be used at Hemingbrough Pre-School. Its purpose is to protect children, staff and families while allowing necessary professional use of approved devices and Tapestry.

It forms part of the setting's safeguarding arrangements and reflects paragraph 3.6 of the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, effective 1 September 2026.

2 Core rules

- Only an authorised device and the setting's approved accounts may be used to photograph, film or record a child.
- Personal phones, cameras, tablets or smart watches must never be used to photograph, film or record children.
- No image, video, audio recording or information about a child may be copied to, stored on or shared through a personal account, device, messaging service, cloud account or social media platform.
- Device use must never compromise supervision, staff interaction with children or confidentiality.
- Children must not be given access to staff devices, Tapestry accounts, messages, photographs or records.

3 Staff personal devices

Staff personal phones and other personal devices must be kept on silent and stored securely with personal belongings while children are present. They may be checked during an agreed break away from children. If an urgent personal call is expected, the member of staff must tell the Manager and arrange to take it away from children.

A personal phone may be used in a genuine emergency when no approved setting device is available, for example to call emergency services. It must not be used to take images or recordings of children. The Manager must be told as soon as possible and the reason for use recorded where appropriate.

Smart watches and wearable devices must not be used for calls, messaging, photography, video or audio recording while working with children. Any camera or recording function must remain disabled.

4 Approved devices and Tapestry

Staff may use an approved device and the secure Tapestry account for observations, permitted photographs, attendance, accident records, invoices, parent communication and other necessary administration. Use must be brief and proportionate so staff remain attentive and available to children.

- Devices must be protected by a passcode and must not be left unlocked or unattended where a child or unauthorised adult could access them.
- Staff must use their own authorised login and must not share passwords or access another person's account.
- Images and records must be uploaded only to the approved system and must not remain in an ordinary camera roll, download folder or personal backup.
- A lost, stolen, damaged or compromised device, or any mistaken disclosure, must be reported to the Manager immediately.

5 Taking and using images

Images or recordings will be taken only when they have a clear professional purpose and the relevant parent or carer consent is in place. Staff will consider the child's dignity, privacy and wishes. Images will not be taken during toileting, changing, intimate care, sleep or distress, or where a child is not appropriately dressed.

Tapestry photographs and group observations will follow each child's recorded permissions. Material used publicly by the setting will follow the separate publication permissions and will not show children's faces. Images must not be altered, reused or shared for any purpose outside the permission given.

6 Parents carers visitors students and contractors

Parents, carers, visitors, students, volunteers and contractors must not use phones, cameras or recording devices in areas where children are being cared for unless the Manager has expressly authorised a specific purpose. They may be asked to switch a device off or keep it securely stored. Necessary calls must be taken away from children.

At performances, celebrations or stay-and-play events, the setting will explain the photography rules before the event. No one may photograph or share images of another person's child without permission. The setting may stop photography where consent, safeguarding or privacy cannot be assured.

7 Outings and off-site use

An authorised device may be taken on an outing for emergency contact, registers and agreed photographs. It remains under staff control and must be used in accordance with this policy. Personal devices must not be used to create images or records of children on an outing.

8 Children's own devices and assistive technology

Children are discouraged from bringing phones, smart watches or other connected devices to pre-school. Where a device is needed for communication, health, disability or another agreed individual need, arrangements will be made with the parent or carer and recorded. Access will be supervised and privacy settings considered.

9 Concerns misuse or suspected abuse

Anyone who sees or suspects unsafe, inappropriate or unauthorised device use must report it immediately to Summer Andrews as Manager and DSL. Evidence must not be deleted, forwarded or investigated personally. The device should be secured where this can be done safely and without examining its contents.

The safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures will be followed. Where the concern relates to the Manager, it must be reported to the Chairperson. Where there may be an allegation of harm by a person working with children, the setting will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer and make any required referral or notification to children's social care, the police and Ofsted. Data breaches will be managed under the setting's data protection procedures.

10 Responsibilities and review

All staff, students, volunteers and visitors must follow this policy. The Manager will explain the rules during induction, monitor practice, manage concerns and review permissions and security arrangements. The committee will provide oversight. Breaches by staff may lead to disciplinary action and safeguarding procedures.

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, technology, setting practice or a safeguarding incident indicates that changes are needed.

Policy adoption

Adopted by	Hemingbrough Pre-School Committee
Date adopted	_____
Signed	_____