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ONLINE SAFETY POLICY

Our Nursery is aware of the growth of internet use and the advantages this can bring. However, it is also aware of the dangers and strives to support children, staff and families in using the internet safely.

Children in the Early Years are using digital devices more. According to the [2024 Ofcom report](#) 85% of children aged 3 to 4 are using apps like YouTube.

Research shows that children are watching video-on-demand content on video-sharing platforms rather than television, such as cartoons, mini movies and songs. However, unlike older children, only a small number of children aged 3 to 4 (23%) play games online.

Keeping Children Safe in Education states “The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- ✓ content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material;
- ✓ contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; and
- ✓ conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.”

We refer to [Help for early years providers : Internet safety](#) for guidance and staff are encouraged to keep up to date on news and information on online safety here - [Latest online safety research articles and reports](#), and specifically here for under 5's - [Early Years resources for online safety | Internet Matters](#)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Nursery Manager (Claire Macklin), alongside Deputy DSL's Chloe Akbiyik, Sarah Cutts and Laura Neave. They are ultimately responsible for online safety concerns.

Within the Nursery we aim to keep children (and staff) safe online by:

*Ensuring we have appropriate antivirus and anti-spyware software on our three Nursery laptops. Two laptops are used by staff in the setting and access the Church's internet connection. This internet connection is password protected and is not given to visitors, unless they are from colleges / other professionals working in the building.

*Our SENCO (Terri Bown) also uses a Nursery laptop for completing the relevant SEN paperwork, e.g. one plans and one page profiles and for accessing SEN related emails and websites, such as “My Care Bridge” to upload documentation for referrals. All laptops are also password protected and passwords are kept safe and secure. These will be changed at least every term to keep the devices secure.

*All Nursery laptops and tablets are locked away in cupboards at the end of the day.

*The DSL and Deputy DSL's regularly review all apps or games downloaded to tablets to ensure all are age appropriate for children and to safeguard the children and staff.

*The Nursery has a camera for taking photographs of the children during special events as they provide a better quality of photo. These includes the end of term show, Nursery trips or Nativity and Christmas parties. These are then uploaded onto the Nursery laptop or the Managers laptop to go on to Tapestry. All photos are deleted, although some may be used for promotional materials, with parental permission.

Age Appropriate Technology –

Most of our technology used in the setting comprises of light up or push button toys. Screen use (depending upon how it is used) can support young children in our care by:

- *providing opportunities to promote creativity and learning
- *encouraging language development
- *improving numeracy and literacy skills
- *creating a greater understanding of their world
- *developing their digital skills

The children in Sunshine Room (3-4 years old) use the Nursery laptop or a staff members tablet for these educational purposes only to support their learning. All Nursery rooms may access websites like CBeebies as a class, to watch a Bedtime Story or the Remembrance Day Video. All use of this kind is supervised by staff and a child is never permitted to use a device alone.

We use filters and blockers when accessing You Tube Kids for videos for dancing and singing or for topic related information / videos. The Nursery laptops have anti-virus software updated. Staff and children do not use personal phones or tablets to access online.

Staff's Online Usage –

Staff are not permitted to access their mobile phones during a Nursery session. They all have a Nursery tablet, which is theirs while they are an employee. This is bought and paid for by Nursery, and remains the property of the Nursery. Staff are encouraged to protect their tablet with a password as it contains photos of children. These passwords must be kept secure.

Tablets are not to be used for personal use. 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.

Staff sign a Tapestry agreement (updated annually) should they take their tablets home to complete their Tapestry observations.

Photos are deleted from the tablet once uploaded to Tapestry. All Tapestry accounts log out once the member of staff has finished uploading and can only be accessed again by entering their username and password.

The Nursery tablets are not permitted to download social media, e.g. Facebook, Tik Tok or Instagram. Staff may also use their tablets to access early education sites for planning or ideas.

Staff do not give their tablets to the Nursery children to use unaided. Children may access educational games as part of an adult led activity. Pop ups are blocked.

Online Safety Rules for Nursery -

When discussing online safety with the children we teach them the following rules -

*Only use the internet or a tablet with a grown-up.

*Be kind and respectful online.

*Keep personal information (name, photos) private.

*Tell a grown-up if anything online makes you feel sad, scared, or uncomfortable.

*Talk to children about 'stranger danger' and decide who is a stranger and who is not, comparing people in real life situations to online 'friends'.

Staff receive online safety training as part of their safeguarding training. They are aware of the procedures around reporting concerns – to the Nursery DSL (Claire Macklin) or Deputy DSL's (Chloe Akbiyik, Sarah Cutts, Laura Neave).

Parental Engagement -

The Nursery shares this policy with our parents. We also share this website with parents in our annual Newsletters - [Early years online safety video guides | Internet Matters](#)

We communicate risks of accessing online to them via online safety emails, discussing the dangers of apps and online games, e.g. You Tube, Roblox, Snapchat. This is also helpful for parents with older children.

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.

Photo / Video Sharing -

We only take photographs of the children using Nursery devices, e.g. Nursery camera, Nursery tablets. Parents sign to say they give consent for their children's photographs to be taken while at play by the Nursery staff. They understand that these photographs are to be used by the Nursery for their child's records (see Tapestry, separate consent form) & occasionally for display or in promotional material. Photos are occasionally posted on our Facebook page, but to protect children, we do not post their faces & permission is sought from parents before anything is posted.

Nursery and Staff Digital Reputation -

The Nursery is 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.

We do not 'friend' parents / children on social media until they have left the setting to maintain a professional boundary. If a member of staff is already friends with a parent joining the Nursery they must alert the Manager / Deputy Manager. They must not discuss Nursery matters or message the parent about Nursery matters privately. Electronic communications between staff and parents should be professional and take place via the official Nursery communication channels, such as the setting's email addresses and telephone number. This is to protect staff, children and parents.

Should a parent contact a member of staff via a personal social media account, the member of staff will alert the Manager and the query will be replied to via the Nursery email address.

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 Nursery Manager (Designated Safeguarding Lead) will make sure that:

*All staff know how to report a problem and when to escalate a concern, including the process for external referral if they feel it is needed.

*All concerns are logged, assessed and actioned upon using the Nursery's Safeguarding procedure.

This policy was agreed and reviewed at a meeting of Nursery Committee held in December 2025.

Signed:

Manager

Committee member