

Brenchley Preschool

Mobile and Smart Technology Policy



Key Details

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Zena Ames

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Sian Scovell

Chair of the Committee with responsibility: Vic Relle

Date written/updated: September, 2024

Date agreed and ratified by Committee: 14th September 2024

Date of next review: September 2025

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 Brenchley Preschool involving staff, children and parents/carers, 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.
 - Brenchley Preschool 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), Zena Ames, DSL, is recognised as having overall responsibility for online safety, alongside the Deputy DSL and Manager, Sian Scovell.
- 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 committee, management team, practitioners, along with any 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, including but not limited to:
 - Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)
 - Behaviour policy
 - Cameras and image use policy
 - Child protection policy
 - Staff code of conduct/staff behaviour policy
 - Confidentiality policy
 - Brenchley Curriculum policies, including Tapestry
 - Data security and GDPR
 - Online Safety
 - Social media

3. Safe use of mobile and smart technology expectations

- Brenchley Preschool 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 the children's rooms, office and foyer area. Parents/carers are politely asked to refrain from being on their mobile phones and devices when dropping off and collecting their children to ensure the focus is on the children and important messages or communication can be shared. This is the same for all members of staff and visitors. Mobile phones are prohibited from being used once in the building, they must be kept secure in the lockable cupboard and staff may access them on lunch breaks.
- 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 any of our anti-bullying, behaviour and child protection policies.
- All members of the Brenchley Preschool 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. Brenchley Preschool provided mobile phones and devices

- If Members of staff were to be issued with a work phone, they would be provided with a work phone number in addition to their work email address, where contact with children or parents/carers is required.
- Staff providing formal remote/online learning will do so using Brenchley Preschool provided equipment in accordance with our Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
- Brenchley Preschool mobile phones and/or devices (e.g. kindles) will be suitably protected via a passcode/password/PIN and must only be accessed or used by members of staff.
- Brenchley Preschool mobile phones and/or devices will always be used in accordance with our staff code of conduct/behaviour policy, acceptable use of technology policy and other relevant policies.
- Where staff and/or children are using Brenchley Preschool 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. The children have supervised access to children's kindles with relevant apps. Staff members are

provided with a work device (kindle) in order to complete observations on their key children, these are pass word/code protected. Staff may use personal devices such as laptops, kindles or ipads to complete relevant work if necessary, with prior permission from the Manager and DSL, as well as ensuring they are not saving anything to their personal devices, using only the preschool provided storage (USB). Staff members are not permitted to access children's photos on their personal devices. Staff members are also not permitted to use their personal phones to access children's information such as tapestry.

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 Brenchley Preschool 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 (the lockable staff cupboard) during session times, accessing them on their lunch break in the staff lunch area is permitted.
 - Keep personal mobile phones and devices switched off or set to 'silent' or 'do not disturb' modes during session times.
 - Ensure that Bluetooth or other forms of communication, such as 'airdrop', are hidden or disabled during session times.
 - Not use personal mobile or smart technology devices during sessions, unless has been given by the Manager and DSL, such as in emergency circumstances. In this case, the staff member will be allowed to leave/access their phone in the office with agreement of the Manager and DSL. The mobile devices should never be accessed freely during sessions or be taken in to the rooms to protect all members of the Brenchley Preschool community.
 - 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 children or 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 members are not permitted to contact parents/carers/children through any other means than the preschool provided devices and communication lines e.g. tapestry, email and phone calls, this is to ensure that communication and parental relationships are kept professional and confidential. This also helps to ensure there is evidence and a paper trail to show the communication with parents is clear and not open to interpretation. At Brenchley Preschool we pride ourselves in our professionalism and all members of staff are expected to uphold the same values, the professional boundaries should be maintained at all times.

- Any members of staff found in breach of these policies and procedures will be subject to relevant disciplinary procedures.
- In exceptional circumstances the Management and DSL may consider the use of personal devices, in the event of an emergency situation at the preschool or in the surrounding area. However this will be discussed between the management and DSL to ensure this is done safely and securely.
- Staff will only use Brenchley Preschool 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 sessions/educational activities.
 - to communicate with parents/carers.
- Where remote learning activities take place, staff will use Brenchley Preschool provided equipment.
- If a member of staff breaches our policy, action will be taken in line with our staff behaviour policy/code of conduct, child protection policy and/or allegations 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 allegations policy.

6. Wearable smart technology such as smart watches

- At a staff meeting, dated **Monday 8th January 2024**, we discussed the Early Years Foundation Stage 2024 updates relating to Safeguarding and Child Protection.
 1. The EYFS currently states that: “The Safeguarding policy and procedures must include an explanation of the action to be taken when there are safeguarding concerns about a child and in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.”
 2. The DfE will add: “other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities” to this requirement, alongside clarifications to aid understanding of the current requirement.
- We discussed our own personal uses for wearing smart watches, with all members of staff that currently wear smart watches raising valid points regarding their own health for example with step monitoring and heart rate monitoring.
- Most members of staff currently have family members who are facing some health difficulties so wearing smart watches is beneficial to them as they can track their family members health through particular data and can view messages/incoming calls in case of an emergency. All family members have the preschool phone number, so in the event of an emergency, the preschool should be the first point of call, however equally we are aware that it is not always possible to call.
- All members of staff with a smart watch discussed how their watch worked in relation to camera and imaging. At this current point in time, no staff member is wearing a watch that has a camera on it. All members of staff currently with a smart watch, have a camera icon however this links to their phone and takes the picture on their phone and the watch is just

the remote control to it, not the actual camera. All mobile phones are kept in the lockable cupboard within bags, with no member of staff having access to those unless on their lunch break. In the event of an emergency, the staff members can leave their phone in the office with permission from either the DSL, Zena Ames, or the Manager and deputy DSL, Sian Scovell. If any staff member wearing a smart watch receives notification of an incoming call or message which is of high urgency or an emergency situation, then the staff member must consult the DSL or her deputy before doing anything. If ratios allow then the staff member will be allowed to use their personal phone in the office if it is an emergency situation, otherwise, they will be asked to wait until their lunch break or end of their shift.

- It was agreed that with the current circumstances, smart watches will be allowed to be worn, providing they do not have an actual camera on the watch. All members of staff were reminded of their professional duty, the safeguarding and child protection policies plus the code of conduct. Any staff member found in breach of these policies and practice will face the relevant disciplinary procedures. All staff members were reminded that we are Early Years Professionals, that we are here for the children and that if it is found that staff members are using their smart watches to check messages or reply to messages during the presence of the children, they will be escalated to the relevant disciplinary procedures. We are all adults with the children's priorities in our minds and currently we are a small team that work closely together, so can monitor each other's behaviour with smart watches.
- In the event that the guidance changes or additional information is presented, then we will review the current arrangement and follow the relevant guidance or information. All staff members are committed to the welfare of the children being paramount and have signed to agree to the terms and conditions relating to wearing smart watches, with the understanding that this can be updated and changed at any time with little to no notice depending on the circumstances.

7. 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, in an age appropriate way as part of our practice and curriculum.

- 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. Further information is contained within our child protection and relevant specific curriculum policies
- If a child requires access to personal mobile or smart technology devices in exceptional circumstances, for example medical assistance and monitoring, this will be discussed with the Manager and DSL prior to the child starting so that a relevant risk assessment, policy and procedure could be implemented.

- Any arrangements regarding access to personal mobile or smart technology devices in exceptional circumstances will be documented and recorded by the Preschool
- Any specific agreements and expectations (including sanctions for misuse) will be provided in writing and agreed by the child and their parents/carers before use is permitted.

8. Visitors' use of mobile and smart technology

- Parents/carers and visitors, including volunteers and contractors, are expected to ensure that:
 - They follow the same policies and procedures regarding mobile phones and smart technology. Mobile phones and smart technology are not permitted to be used on the preschool site; including in the foyer and children's rooms. The mobile phones and smart devices should be kept in the lockable staff cupboard once the parents/carers/visitors/contractors are on site. If access to mobile phones or devices is required as part of the contractors/visitors job specifications for example, then prior permission will need to be obtained by the Manager and DSL, so risks can be assessed and a safety of the children can be paramount.
- Appropriate signage and information are in place (such as posters and leaflets) 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 and DSL prior to use being permitted.
 - Any arrangements regarding agreed visitor access to mobile/smart technology will be documented and recorded by the Preschool. 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. Safety of the children is everyone's responsibility so every member of staff has the power to question or challenge any practice or suspicions they may have.

9. Policy monitoring and review

- Technology evolves and changes rapidly. Brenchley Preschool 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 Brenchley Preschool provided devices and systems and regularly evaluate online safety mechanisms to ensure this policy is consistently applied.
- All members of the community will be made aware of how the Brenchley Preschool will monitor policy compliance: through AUPs, staff training, room management for example.

10. Responding to policy breaches

- All members of the community are informed of the need to report policy breaches or concerns in line with existing Brenchley Preschool policies and procedures. This includes for example, but is not limited to; child protection, image use policy, acceptable use policy, confidentiality, staff code of conduct and/or behaviour policy.
- Where children breach this policy:
 - appropriate sanctions and/or 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.
- Where staff members breach this policy, concerns will be shared with DSL and Management, advice will be sought where necessary and policies/procedures will be followed regarding disciplinary procedures.
- After any investigations are completed, Management 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/carers 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.

This Policy was reviewed at a Management Meeting held on 14th September 2024.



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Mrs Victoria Relle - Chairman of Brenchley Pre-School Limited

Brenchley Preschool Mobile and Smart technology policy 2024



Staff Member	Signature	Date
Sian		
Helen		
Zena		
Kirsty		
Trina		
Elaine		
Claire		
Eryn		
Lucy		
Charlotte		
Lizzie		

