

Brenchley Preschool

Mobile phone and Smart Devices Policy 2026



Key Details

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Zena Ames

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Sian Scovell

Chair of the Committee with responsibility: Vic Relle

Date written/updated: September 2026

Date agreed and ratified by Committee: October 2026

Date of next review: September 2027

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.

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1. Policy aims and scope

- This policy has been written by Brenchley Preschool, involving staff, children and parents/carers, building on the Kent County Council LADO 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) and '[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)' (WTSC), the DfE non-statutory guidance '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 phones and smart devices.
 - 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, is recognised as having overall responsibility for online safety.
- This policy applies to all access to and use of all mobile phones, smart technology or smart devices on site. For the purposes of this policy, 'mobile phone' includes any device with similar functionality, such as the ability to send or receive messages or notifications, connect to mobile networks, or record images, audio and/or video. This may include, but is not limited to, devices with built-in mobile connectivity, smart phones, smart watches, smart glasses, fitness trackers and other wearable technology.
- This policy applies to children, parents/carers and all staff, including the committee members, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for, or provide services on behalf of the Preschool (collectively referred to as "staff" in this policy).
- Brenchley Preschool recognises that the use of mobile and smart devices/technology is part of everyday life for many children, staff and parents/carers. Children will be supported to develop an understanding of safe, responsible and appropriate use of technology through an embedded safeguarding approach, including through our curriculum delivery as applicable.

2. Links with other policies

- This policy links with several other policies, practices and action plans, including but not limited to:
 - Anti-bullying policy
 - Acceptable Use Policies (AUP)
 - Behaviour and discipline policy
 - Cameras and image use policy
 - Safeguarding and Child protection policy, including Online safety
 - Staff code of conduct/staff behaviour policy
 - Confidentiality policy

- Curriculum policies,
- Data security
- Social media

3. Mobile phone and smart device expectations in Brenchley Preschool

- Brenchley Preschool recognises that expectations regarding the use of mobile phones and smart devices must be appropriate to the age, stage, needs and context of the children attending the setting. Safeguarding and the creation of calm, safe and purposeful learning environments underpin our expectations regarding all mobile and smart technology use.
- Personal 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 capable of taking images/videos 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 staff lockers or lockable cupboard and staff may access them on lunch breaks.
- Staff are not permitted to use personal devices such as mobile phones or tablets to complete tapestry observations, staff are provided with a preschool kindle for this purpose and it is important to separate personal life from work life, including devices. **At times, Staff may be required to use other devices - a personal laptop or computer only, to support their completion of observations or reports. In this case the data should be accessed and stored securely involving passwords, authentication, encryption, logging off and locking of devices when not in use.**
- The sending of abusive or inappropriate messages or content, including via personal devices is forbidden by any member of the community; any breaches will be dealt with in line with our anti-bullying, behaviour and child protection policies.
- All members of the Brenchley Preschool community are advised to ensure that 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.
- Brenchley Preschool will ensure that appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place on all Brenchley Preschool-provided devices, networks and online platforms, in line with statutory safeguarding guidance, including the Prevent Duty and Keeping Children Safe in Education. For further details, please access our Safeguarding and Child Protection

Policy, which can be found in the policy folder in the foyer, in the safeguarding box in the office, under the documents section on tapestry and on the preschool website <https://branchleypreschool.co.uk/policies>

3.1 Adaptations and reasonable adjustments

- Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments and adaptations may be made to this policy to support individual needs. This may include, for example, circumstances relating to disability, special educational needs, medical requirements or other specific individual needs.
 - Branchley Preschool recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to ensuring that policies relating to mobile and smart technology do not disadvantage children with protected characteristics.
 - Maintained schools and academies have a duty under the Children and Families Act 2014 to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions, so that they can access education and participate fully in Branchley Preschool life. Where access to mobile or smart technology is required to meet a child's medical needs, this will be considered as part of those arrangements.
 - Branchley Preschool recognises that, in addition to disabilities or medical needs, there may be other exceptional circumstances where a child requires limited access to a mobile phone or smart devices. Any such circumstances will be considered on an individual basis, taking into account safeguarding, wellbeing and the best interests of the child.
- Any adaptations or reasonable adjustments will:
 - be considered on an individual basis.
 - be proportionate and necessary to meet the identified need.
 - be agreed in advance by the manager and DSL.
 - be risk assessed and clearly documented.
 - include clear expectations regarding use, supervision and storage of devices.
 - be discussed and agreed with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the child before access is permitted.
 - be regularly reviewed.
- The provision of adaptations or reasonable adjustments does not alter Branchley Preschool's default expectations regarding mobile and smart technology use for the wider community. Adjustments are not exemptions from behaviour expectations and will be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain appropriate.

4. Branchley Preschool provided mobile phones and smart devices

- If Branchley Preschool were to provide mobile phones this would be apply to this policy. Currently Branchley Preschool only provides smart technology devices in the form of kindles, these are issued for professional, safeguarding or educational purposes only and must be used in line with this policy and other relevant Branchley Preschool policies. The provision of Branchley Preschool devices does not alter the expectation that the school

operates as mobile phone-free environments by default and that device use is appropriate to our context as an Early Years setting.

- Members of staff will be issued with a work email address for work related updates and the main Brenchley preschool email address must be used where contact with children or parents/carers is required. Personal mobile phones or smart technology must not be used for this purpose.
- Staff providing formal remote/online learning will do so using Brenchley Preschool provided equipment in accordance with our Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)/remote learning AUP. Where this is not possible, any use of personal devices must be agreed in advance and subject to appropriate safeguards.
- Brenchley Preschool-provided devices (kindles, computers and laptops) will be protected by appropriate security measures, such as passcodes, passwords or PINs, and must only be accessed by authorised users.
- Brenchley Preschool-provided devices will be used in accordance with the staff code of conduct/behaviour policy, Acceptable Use Policy and other relevant safeguarding, data protection and confidentiality policies.
- Users of Brenchley Preschool-provided devices will be informed that activity may be monitored for safeguarding, security and policy compliance purposes, in line with data protection legislation. Monitoring will be proportionate, lawful and carried out only where there is a clear safeguarding or organisational need.

5. Staff use of personal mobile phones and smart devices

- Staff are expected to model safe, responsible and appropriate use of technology and to ensure that the use of mobile phones and other devices does not compromise supervision, safeguarding or the care of children.
- Members of staff will ensure that the use of any mobile and smart technology, including personal phones, wearable technology and other smart devices, will take place in accordance with the law, and relevant Brenchley Preschool policy and procedures. This includes but is not limited to confidentiality, child protection, data security, staff behaviour/code of conduct and Acceptable Use Policies.
- In line with our expectations regarding mobile phone free or restricted environments, staff must not use personal mobile phones or smart devices in a way that undermines behavioural expectations or the learning environment.
- Staff are expected to:
 - be responsible for ensuring that personal devices are configured appropriately so that their use complies with this policy. This includes disabling notifications, messaging, image display, recording and sharing functions where these could compromise safeguarding, professional boundaries or the learning environment. Where devices cannot be configured to meet these expectations, they must not be worn or used while on duty.
 - keep personal mobile and smart devices in a safe and secure place during session times (personal lockers or the lockable staff cupboard if needed) accessing them on their lunch break in the staff lunch area is permitted.

- ensure personal mobile and smart devices are switched off or set to 'silent' or 'do not disturb' modes during preschool sessions and other times when supervising children.
- disable or hide Bluetooth, 'AirDrop' or similar sharing and communication functions during preschool sessions or when supervising children.
- not use personal mobile phones or smart devices during Preschool sessions, unless written permission has been given in advance by the Manager and DSL, for example, in emergency circumstances. 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 brought onto site via personal mobile or smart devices is appropriate to their professional role and consistent with our behaviour and safeguarding expectations.
- Members of staff are not permitted to use their own personal mobile or smart devices for contacting children or their parents/carers.
 - Any pre-existing relationships or circumstances that may compromise this requirement will be discussed with the DSL and Manager and be formally recorded and appropriate measures implemented.
 - 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, the designated preschool email (not personal work gmail accounts, but the Brenchley.preschool@gmail.com (the only exception to this, is that the DSL is required to have their email address available as a point of contact for both staff and parents in case of confidential and sensitive information that cannot be shared which would be Brenchley.zena@gmail.com, there is also a designated safeguarding email address which can only be accessed by both DSL's Safeguarding.BPS@gmail.com) and preschool phone lines, 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.
- Staff will only use Brenchley Preschool provided equipment:
 - to take photos or videos of children in line with our image use policy
 - to work directly with children during educational activities.
 - to communicate with parents/carers.
- Where remote or online learning takes place, staff will use Brenchley Preschool-provided equipment wherever possible, in accordance with our Acceptable Use Policies. Where use of a personal device is unavoidable, this will be agreed in advance by the Manager and supported by a risk assessment and clear safeguards e.g. when taking preschool kindles home for observation purposes and if using personal devices such as laptops to complete observations or reports.
- Any breach of this policy by a member of staff will be managed in line with the staff behaviour/code of conduct policy, safeguarding and child protection policy and/or allegations management procedures.

- Where there is concern that a member of staff may have accessed, created or stored illegal content on a personal or school-provided device, or may have committed a criminal offence using a device, the matter will be reported to the police and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in line with our staff behaviour/code of conduct and allegations management procedures.

5.1 Staff use of wearable smart technology, specifically smart watches

At Brenchley preschool we recognise that technology is a fast paced, ever changing industry and therefore there are always continuous advances and new versions of various technologies available.

The EYFS currently states that: “Providers must have and implement policies and procedures to keep children safe and meet EYFS requirements... How mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities are used in the setting” (section 3.6, Early Years foundation stage statutory framework, effective 1st September 2026).

- At Brenchley preschool we have carefully considered all aspects of wearable smart technology, particularly smart watches and all members of staff have contributed to our current stance on smart watches.
- All family members have the preschool phone number, so in the event of an emergency, the preschool phone number should be the first point of call, however equally we are aware that it is not always possible to call. 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
- 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 personal lockers or the lockable cupboard, with no member of staff having access to those unless on their lunch break or when their shift has finished.
- With the current circumstances, smart watches will continue to be allowed to be worn, providing they do not have an actual camera on the watch. All members of staff are 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 are 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.
- 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.

6. Children use of mobile and smart devices

As an early years setting, children are unlikely to require access to personal mobile phones or smart devices whilst in our care.

- Children are not permitted to bring mobile phone or smart devices on to the preschool site. We are a mobile phone-free zone and any smart devices used during the preschool day will be on preschool-provided devices. In the event that a child may need access to a mobile phone or smart device due to medical needs, then this will be discussed with the child, parents/cares, DSL, Manager and key staff members, with appropriate risk assessments and clear procedures in place to protect everyone at Brenchley Preschool. Any such arrangements will be considered on an individual basis, agreed in advance, and supported by clear safeguards and expectations as set out in section 3.1.
- Any use of mobile phones or smart technology in relation to children within the setting is managed in line with safeguarding requirements, supervision expectations and the need to maintain safe, secure and developmentally appropriate environments for young children.
- Children will be educated about the safe, responsible, and appropriate use of mobile and smart devices. This includes understanding expected standards of behaviour and safeguarding risks at a level appropriate to their age and/or understanding in line with our curriculum.
- Brenchley Preschool will ensure that online safety considerations are reflected across all relevant policies and procedures, including behaviour, safeguarding, acceptable use, anti-bullying and educational visits policies.
- Where concerns arise in relation to online activity, including incidents that occur outside Brenchley Preschool environment children and parents/carers will be encouraged and supported to raise these concerns with staff.

7. Visitors' use of mobile phones and smart devices.

- Parents/carers and visitors, including volunteers and contractors, are expected to use mobile phones and smart devices in a way that safeguards our children and respects our policies and expectations.
- In Brenchley Preschool, this is achieved by:
 - Following the same policies and procedures regarding mobile phones and smart devices. 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 personal lockers or 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 in the foyer and leaflets) to inform visitors of our expectations for safe and appropriate use of mobile or smart devices.
- Visitors, including volunteers and contractors, who are on site for regular or extended periods of time are expected to comply with the setting's acceptable use of technology policy and other relevant safeguarding policies, including child protection.
- Where a visitor requires access to mobile phones or smart devices as part of their role when working directly with children, this will be discussed and agreed in advance with the Manager or DSL.
- Any agreed arrangements for visitor access to mobile or smart technology will be documented and recorded by Branchley Preschool and with appropriate leadership approval. Where appropriate, this may include undertaking a risk assessment.
- Members of staff are expected to challenge visitors if they have concerns about their use of mobile and smart devices and will report any breaches of this policy to the DSL or Manager.

8. Communicating the policy and working with parents/carers

- Branchley Preschool recognises that clear communication and effective partnership with parents/carers are essential to the successful implementation of this policy.
- The policy will be communicated to parents/carers, children and staff in a clear and accessible way. This will include publication on Branchley Preschool website, inclusion in induction materials, direct communication to parents/carers and ongoing reminders and communications throughout the year as appropriate.
- Communication with parents/carers will include the rationale for the policy, including its role in supporting learning, wellbeing and safeguarding.
- Where changes are made to expectations regarding mobile phones or smart devices, Branchley Preschool will provide parents/carers with appropriate notice and clear information about the rationale for the policy and how it will be implemented.
- Parents/carers are expected to support Branchley Preschool's approach and to work in partnership with staff to reinforce expectations, particularly where policies are breached or concerns arise.
- Where concerns or policy breaches occur, Branchley Preschool will seek to engage constructively with parents/carers to support positive outcomes for children.
- Where individual adaptations or reasonable adjustments are required, for example to support medical needs or disabilities, these will be discussed and agreed directly with parents/carers and recorded appropriately.
- Where parents/carers have questions or concerns, Branchley Preschool will address these in a timely manner and clearly communicate any reasons for prohibiting/restricting the use of mobile phones.

- Brenchley Preschool will seek to work constructively with parents/carers to promote children's wellbeing, including supporting safe and responsible use of mobile phones and smart technology beyond Brenchley Preschool environment.

9. Responding to policy breaches

- All members of the community are expected to report concerns or breaches of this policy in line with existing Brenchley Preschool policies and procedures. This includes Safeguarding and child protection policy, behaviour policy, code of conduct, Image use and AUP, confidentiality and other relevant policies.
- Where children breach this policy, Brenchley Preschool will respond proportionately and appropriately.
 - Appropriate sanctions and/or pastoral/welfare support will be implemented in line with our behaviour policy.
 - Parents/carers will be informed of concerns or breaches as appropriate.
 - Where there is a concern that a child is at risk of harm, Brenchley Preschool will respond in line with the safeguarding and child protection policy.
- Where incidents are investigated, leadership staff will review the circumstances, identify any lessons learned and implement changes to policy, procedures or curriculum provision where required.
- Brenchley Preschool expects staff, parents/carers and children to work in partnership to resolve concerns and support positive outcomes.
- All members of Brenchley Preschool community are expected to respect confidentiality and to follow official procedures when reporting concerns.
- Children and parent/carers will be informed of our complaints procedure and staff will be made aware of the whistleblowing procedure.
- Where Brenchley Preschool is unsure how to proceed with an incident or concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the deputy DSL and manager will seek advice from the local authority or other relevant agencies, in line with the child protection policy.

9.1 Confiscation of mobile phones and smart devices

If a child was to bring in a mobile phone or smart device from home, Staff will confiscate it due to safeguarding others and maintaining a safe environment.

- Confiscated devices will be stored securely in the office and released to parents/carers at collection.
- The DSL (or deputy) will always be informed of any confiscation incidents.
- The DSL (or deputy) will be involved in discussions with parents/carers about the incident.

10. Policy monitoring and review

- Brenchley Preschool will review this policy at least annually to ensure it remains appropriate, relevant and up to date. The policy will also be reviewed following any changes

to national or local guidance, identified safeguarding concerns, or significant changes to the setting's use of technology or technical infrastructure.

- Brenchley Preschool monitors the use of internet and technology on Brenchley Preschool provided devices and systems as part of its safeguarding responsibilities. Monitoring and filtering arrangements are designed to be lawful, proportionate and appropriate to the setting's context. Further information about the appropriate filtering and monitoring systems in place are detailed in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, which can be found in the policy folder in the foyer, in the safeguarding box in the office, under the documents section on tapestry and through the preschool website <https://brenchleypreschool.co.uk/policies>

- Any issues identified through monitoring will be addressed through appropriate safeguarding responses and incorporated into action planning.
- Members of Brenchley Preschool community will be informed of expectations relating to the use of mobile and smart technology and how compliance with this policy is monitored. This may include, for example, Acceptable Use Policies, staff training, induction processes and communication with parents/carers.