**Mobile Phone Policy**

The welfare, protection and safety of every child in our care is of paramount importance and we take our responsibility to safeguard children seriously. We have procedures in place which we ask everyone to respect, to help promote the safety of the children in our care. We believe our staff should be completely attentive during their hours of work to ensure all children in the nursery receive good quality care and education. We balance the risk with the benefits that mobile devices and photographs of childcare can offer and through observing this policy, all staff and visitors to our setting are contributing to a safe and effective environment.

Where this policy refers to mobile phones, this is also intended to cover any device which may be used to take images, including but not restricted to tablets, smart watches, cameras and recording equipment.

The aim of this policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use of guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with recognition that mobile phones are effective communication tools - which in turn can contribute to safeguarding practice and protection.

* All staff and Visitors are aware of, and adhere to their responsibilities under this policy
* Children are safeguarded against potential misuse of digital images.
* Staff and Managers are aware of the consequences of breaking this policy.

Safe and authorised use of digital images can contribute effectively to the experience of

families and potential families from Pegasus Childcare Centre.

**Staff (Including agency workers)**

It is appreciated that it can be difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions such as cameras. The use of mobile phones is therefore limited, regardless of their capabilities. The aim is to avoid distraction and disruption of the working day, and to minimise the opportunities for any individual to make and cohort images or misuses functions in any other way.

Mobile phone usage is not permitted in the play areas used by children. There is a Zero-tolerance policy in place with regards to the use of personal mobile phones. At some points the Management might agree to allow staff members to have their phone on the shelf in the office/main room if they are waiting for an important phone call such as Doctors , this will only be allowed if the person phoning is unable to call the works number and this has been agreed with the Manager beforehand.

Management will take their personal mobile phone as well as the work fire phone on an outing and may use it to take photos of the children. This will be done with a witness at all times and will be transferred over to the works computer or tapestry or emails as soon as they return from the outing. The photos on the phone will then get deleted with a witness so they are no longer on the device.

Mobile Phones will be encouraged to be kept on silent during working hours and ideally kept in staff members personal belongings in their bag or in the phone basket located in the office.

Mobile phones may only be used on a designated break and only in a child free area of the nursery .

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns to the Nursery Manager. Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately.

The manager or deputy manager reserves the right to check the image contents of a member of staff’s mobile phone should there be any cause for concern over the appropriate use of it. Should inappropriate material be found, then our Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted immediately. We will follow the guidance of the LADO as to the appropriate measures for the staff members dismissal.

**In summary :**

* Staff may not carry or use their personal mobile phones whilst working in the setting
* Setting telephone number should be given out to be used as an emergency contact for staff
* Staff are allowed to use their mobile phones during breaks
* Staff may not use any camera facility on their mobile during a session unless agreement is made with Management.

Smart Watches

The use of apple watches and/or smartwatches are not permitted, staff wearing smart watches will be asked to get a disconnect from their phone, if not to remove it and leave it  in their personal bag.

The use of mobile phones/smart watches are in staff breaks in a child free area.

Parent/Carers/Visitors

Parents/Carer or visitors who either arrive using a mobile phone or take a call on a mobile phone should be immediately told to end their phone call or leave the premises. Visitors are signed into the nursery and asked to leave their personal belongings and mobile phones in the office area.

Children with smart toys

Children that bring in toys that can record and photos on will be asked to remove it and placed in their bag until home time.

Mobile Phones while Driving

As part of our overall health and safety policy, Pegasus Childcare Centre is committed to reducing the risks which our staff face and create when driving or riding to work. We ask all our staff to play their part.

It is illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving. It is also an offence to cause or permit a driver to use a hand-held mobile phone while driving.

If staff do not have a hands-free kit installed in their car, they must not use their mobile phones whilst driving. If they need to make or receive a telephone call, they should do so at a convenient break in their journey. The vehicle must be stopped in a safe and legal area with the engine turned off before they make/receive a call. Using a handheld mobile phone whilst stationary in traffic or at a traffic light will still constitute an offence.

Staff are reminded of their duty to represent the nursery in  a positive manner and any improper mobile phone use whilst identifiable as a Pegasus Childcare Centre employee may damage the nursery’s reputation.

Social Media

Staff may use their mobile phone to take photos of the children’s art/activity to be uploaded onto the Pegasus Childcare Facebook page. At no point will there ever be any children's names, faces or anything that they could be identified by. Parents/Carers will have given written permission for this. See Social Media and Social Networking Policy.

Policy that helps support this policy are -

Safeguarding Children, ICT, Whistle Blowing, Social Media and Social Networking, Visitors, Staff induction, Health and Safety, Confidently, Outings.

**This policy was adopted on** 5th June 2024

**Signed (Chair)**

**Signed (Manager)**

The Policy will be reviewed every two years.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date of Review** | **Policy Updated** | **Signed (Chair)** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |