UNITED SYNAGOGUE NURSERY

Mobile Phones and other Electronic Devices Policy

DECEMBER 2024

REVIEW DATE: DECEMBER 2025

Mobile Phones and other Electronic Devices Policy

BabyiSH Nursery is committed to safeguarding the children and families that use our nursery and we are aware of the risk that mobile phones and other electronic devices with camera and messaging functionality pose to the children in our care. It is also recognised that mobile phones and other electronic devices (other electronic devices can include, smart watches, tablets. Fitbits – this list is not exhaustive) can cause an unnecessary distraction during the working day and can be intrusive when used in the company of others.

We balance this risk with the benefits that mobile devices and photographs of children 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 and electronic device, 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.

A breach in this policy may lead to disciplinary action; depending on the nature of the breach it may be considered as gross misconduct and result in summary dismissal.

The aim of the Mobile Phone and other Electronic Devices Policy is to promote safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable use guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with recognition that mobile phones and other forms of electronic devices 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 nursery managers are aware of the consequences of breaching this policy

Safe and authorised use of digital images can contribute effectively to the experience of families and potential families from BabyiSH Nursery.

Staff (including agency workers)

It is appreciated that it can be very difficult to detect when such devices are present or being used, particularly in relation to enhanced functions, such as cameras. The use of all mobile phones and other electronic devices 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 any covert images or misuse functions in any other way.

Designated 'mobile free' areas include Nursery classroom, garden, kitchen. These areas include any playrooms or play areas used by children, regardless if children are present in these areas as the areas may contain photos of or personal information relating to children. A zero-tolerance policy is in place with regards to the use of personal or work-related mobiles by any individual in these areas.

Staff are permitted to use their mobile phone and other electronic devices in designated areas providing no children are present. All nurseries operate guidelines of storage of personal mobile phones which are expected to be followed. The storage expectation is that staff leave their belongings in safe storage (a designated staff locker with key) at their own risk. It is therefore recommended that phones and other personal electronic devices are password protected and insured. No liability for loss and damage is accepted.

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BabyiSH Nursery has a specific risk assessment to assist staff with the safe and proper use and storage of mobile phones and electronic devices which can be found in our risk assessment folder.

BabyiSH Nursery understands that mobile phones play an important role in emergency situations and staff are encouraged to discuss any requirements to have enhanced access to their mobile phone on an individual basis with the nursery manager. Staff may also provide the nursery phone number for use in an emergency.

All staff are responsible for the safe and proper implementation of this policy and are expected to challenge any person who is seen using their mobile phone in such a way that breaches this policy. Failure to report a breach of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

Visitors

Visitors to the nursery includes but is not limited to parents, prospective parents, contractors, early years' partners, students, local authority staff and inspectors.

Upon arriving at the nursery, all visitors will be informed by a member of staff of the nursery Mobile Phone and other Electronic Device Policy and will be asked to observe the restrictions in place. Visitors will be asked to leave their mobile phones and any other electronic devices in the Safe Box or Managers Office and informed that they are not permitted to have their mobile phone or other electronic devices on their person while in a restricted area.

Visitors are permitted to use their mobile phone outside of the Nursery area providing that no children are present. If in doubt, visitors should seek permission from the Nursery Management Team. This is not only to safeguard children against the misuse of digital images, but to ensure that visitors are not distracted by using their device and potentially placing children at risk.

The nursery reserves the right to view any images that have been taken while on the premises and request that images are deleted if they are deemed inappropriate or unnecessary.

Outings

Our nursery has a mobile phone specifically for the use of outings with children. This mobile phone has no enhanced functionality or camera and is to be used solely for contacting the relevant person/emergency services in the event of an emergency whilst on an outing.

Mobile Phones while Driving

As part of our overall health and safety policy, BabyiSH Nursery is committed to reducing the risks which our staff face and create when driving or riding for work. We ask all our staff to play their part, whether they use a company vehicle, their own or a hire vehicle.

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. Depending upon the individual circumstances, drivers could be charged with 'failing to have proper control of their vehicle'. In more serious cases, the use of any type of mobile phone could result in prosecution for careless or dangerous driving.

If you do not have a hands-free kit installed in your car you must not use your mobile phone whilst driving; this includes using an earpiece. If you need to make or receive a telephone call, you should do so at a convenient break in your journey. The vehicle must be stopped in a safe and legal area with the engine turned off before you make/receive a call. Using a hand-held mobile phone whilst stationary in traffic or at traffic lights will still constitute as an offence.

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Improper or unsafe use of mobile phones while driving as part of your employment with BabyiSH Nursery may lead to disciplinary action. Staff are reminded of their duty to represent the nursery in a positive manner and any improper mobile phone use whilst identifiable as a Nursery employee may damage the nursery's reputation.