

**SOP/01/2024/EY/Use of mobile Phones References:**

A. DCS Safeguarding directive

1. Introduction

This SOP outlines the expected use and storage of personal mobile phones in DCS early years settings.

2. Context

To ensure the safeguarding of children and their personal information is controlled and the use of mobile phones, smart watches and recording equipment is only used when permissions to do so are given, and there is a valid reason.

3. Scope

This SOP will take effect from 14th October 2024 for all DCS EY locations, DCS EY Personnel and Contractors

4. the safe and effective use of personal mobile phones in DCS early years settings

- Personal mobile phones belonging to members of staff are only to be used in designated areas during working hours and away from children.
- Personal mobile phones are to be stored in staff locker or a locked draw within the manager's office and only removed for use at the start, end or break times for staff members.
- In the event of an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used in the privacy of the office, with permission from the Setting Manager.
- Members of staff ensure the telephone number of the setting is known to immediate family and other people who need to contact them in an emergency.
- Members of staff must not use their own personal mobile to make calls to parents unless it is an emergency. Communications will be made by setting approved platforms such as Family, the phone which is provided in the setting and work email only.
- During group outings nominated staff will have access to the setting's mobile phone, which is to be used for emergency purposes only.
- Members of staff will not use their personal mobile phones for taking photographs of children on outings or in the setting.
- Parents and visitors are requested not to use their mobile phones whilst on the premises and are reminded of this upon entry. In addition, receiving and responding to telephone calls/electronic messages when working with children is unacceptable. Staff can seek permission to use the setting telephone to make calls or to use their own telephones in an agreed non-public area.
- Staff wearing smart watches that have a messaging/call feature are required to disable the function and alerts during working hours, ensuring Bluetooth connectivity is disabled if a phone is near the setting.
- Staff and visitors are not permitted to wear a smart watch that has a photographic feature whilst in areas children are present.
- Members of staff must not bring their own cameras or recording equipment into the setting.
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken for valid reasons, i.e. to record their learning and development, or for displays within the setting.
- Photographs or recordings of children are only to be taken on MoD devices belonging to the setting.
- Where parents request permission to photograph or record their own children at special events, permission will first be gained from all parents for their children to be included.
- Photographs and recordings of children are only taken of children if there is written permission to do so (consent is written on the individual child's Registration Form & via Family).

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

5. Responsible Persons

- Use and storage of mobile phones and camera and video use is monitored by the setting manager.
- The management team is responsible for the storage of photographs and video footage once it has been taken.
- All images of children are to be deleted once a child has left the setting.
- All staff have a responsibility to be vigilant and report any concerns to the Setting Manager/DSL (see whistle blowing policy)

6. Responsibilities

- Photographic evidence must only be captured on equipment provided by DCS and must remain within working environments. Use of personal equipment must, therefore, be restricted to areas where children are not present.
- Ensure there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.