Tring Stepping Stones Preschool

# E-safety

# Online safety (inc. mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices)

Tring stepping stones preschool take steps to ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment or exposure to inappropriate materials in the setting. It is important that children and young people receive consistent messages about the safe use of technology and are able to recognise and manage the risks posed in both the real and virtual world.

Terms such as ‘e-safety’, ‘online’, ‘communication technologies’ and ‘digital technologies’ refer to fixed and mobile technologies that adults and children may encounter, now and in the future, which allow them access to content and communications that could raise issues or pose risks.The issues are:

*Content* – being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material

*Contact* – being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users

*Conduct* – personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm

**Our designated person responsible for co-ordinating action taken to protect children is:**

**Lucy Britain and Nicola Poulton**

Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment

* Only ICT equipment belonging to the setting is used by staff and children.
* The designated person is responsible for ensuring all ICT equipment is safe and fit for purpose.
* The Preschool leaders ensures that all computers have up-to-date virus protection installed.
* The designated person ensures that safety settings are set to ensure that inappropriate material cannot be accessed.
* Any files (photos, word documents, excel spreadsheets, emails) moved by email or memory stick must be encrypted.
* Staff use a dropbox account to avoid emailing information where children can be identified by their names.

The internet provides a number of benefits in which pre-school as an organisation may wish to participate:

Examples of internet usage-

• accessing information from Young in Herts & Childhood Support Services (including booking training)

• accessing information on policies, procedures, updates and on-line training from Pre-school Learning Alliance

• make equipment orders online,

• pay outstanding invoices,

• Send and receive emails,

Internet access

* Children do not have access to the internet through any ICT equipment provided at pre-school. However, we do display information on ‘Keeping Young Children Safe Online’ produced by Childnet International.
* The designated person has overall responsibility for ensuring that children and young people are safeguarded and risk assessments in relation to online safety are completed.
* Designated persons will also seek to build children’s resilience in relation to issues they may face in the online world, and will address issues such as staying safe, having appropriate friendships, asking for help if unsure, not keeping secrets as part of social and emotional development in age-appropriate ways.
* Staff report any suspicious or offensive material, including material which may incite racism, bullying or discrimination to the Internet Watch Foundation at [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk/).
* Suspicions that an adult is attempting to make inappropriate contact with a child on-line is reported to the National Crime Agency’s Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre at [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk/)**.**
* Visitors to the setting are asked to leave mobile phones in the kitchen. If we see a parent in the setting accessing the internet using any device such as mobile phones or smart watch, we will ask them to move to the kitchen.
* Staff members leave their mobile phones in the kitchen and do not use smart-watches other than to tell the time during the session.

Strategies to minimise risk include:

* Check apps, websites and search results before using them with children.
* Children in Early Years should always be supervised when accessing the internet.
* Ensure safety modes and filters are applied - default settings tend not to ensure a high level of privacy or security. But remember you still need to supervise children closely.
* Role model safe behaviour and privacy awareness. Talk to children about safe use, for example ask permission before taking a child’s picture even if parental consent has been given.

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* Check privacy settings to make sure personal data is not being shared inadvertently or inappropriately. (source: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-considerations/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-guidance-for-practitioners)

Email

* Parents and staff are not normally permitted to use setting equipment to access personal emails.
* Staff do not access personal or work email whilst supervising children.
* Staff send personal information by encrypted email and share information securely at all times.
* Staff will use Tring Stepping Stones Pre-school email to contact parents and not their own personal emails.
* Some emails will be saved as templates for use again, these will be generic emails with no personal information.
* Staff will delete any pre-school encrypted emails once they have read it and received necessary information.
* Under certain circumstances regarding recruitment, employment, whistleblowing and staffing it may be necessary for staff to contact the Chairperson and Treasurer from their personal email rather than pre-school webmail to ensure confidentiality to all staff. Details of the correspondence will be kept in line with our employment, safeguarding, confidentiality, complaints and whistleblowing policies.

Mobile phones – children

* Children do not bring mobile phones or other ICT devices/electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities with them to the setting. If a child is found to have a mobile phone or ICT device with them, this is removed and stored away from the children until the parent collects them at the end of the session.

Mobile phones – staff and visitors

* Personal mobile phones all other and internet enabled devices and electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities are not used by staff on the premises during working hours. They will be stored in the kitchen. Basic smart watches like fitbits are allowed to be worn but any smart watches with camera features will be disabled during working hours.
* In an emergency, personal mobile phones may be used in an area where there are no children present, with permission from the manager. All calls and messages are made out of the hall when the children are in attendance (9.15-12.15 and 2pm when lunch club is running.) This applies to staff, visitors and parents.
* Staff should note that whilst they are on the phone during a preschool session they are deemed to be out of the adult/child ratio so these calls should be limited to necessary calls only.
* The setting phone can be used in the children’s presence, as it does not have a camera or internet access and it is a requirement to have this phone with us at all times during each session.
* Preschool staff and volunteers ensure that the setting telephone number is known to family and other people who may need to contact them in an emergency.
* If members of staff or volunteers take their mobile phones on outings, for use in case of an emergency, they must not make or receive personal calls, or take photographs of children.
* Parents and visitors are requested not to use their mobile phones or other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities whilst on the premises. If a visitor or parent produces their phone/device in the presence of the children, they will be asked to move into the kitchen area or foyer to make or receive their call.

Cameras and videos

* Our staff and volunteers must not bring their personal cameras, video recording equipment or any other electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities 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, with written permission received by parents (see the Registration form) The pictures will be saved on the preschool laptop, or printed for use at pre-school or in the Learning Journals (for parents).
* The pre-school will have memory cards for the use of taking photographs during the sessions. Only those memory cards are to be used when taking pictures of the children.
* Cameras and video use are monitored by the pre-school leader.
* We shall print the photos where possible on the pre-school printer. If this is not possible, they will be printed only –not saved - at a member of staff’s home using their printer.
* No cameras or electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities are to be taken into the toilets.
* 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. There is a section on the registration form for parents to sign giving their permission for pre-school to take photographs of the children. If parents do not want photos taken of their child, they can circle the “no” box and pre-school will make a note on the staff notice board and all staff will be made aware of this. The key worker would explain to parents that the Learning Journal for their child would only contain observations and art work produced by their child. The registration form also includes a note about photos being taken by other parents during events, the note states “Please note: (Parents and families at events, such as Christmas and on outings, also take photographs.) If you do not wish your child to be photographed at such an event please remove your child on that occasion. Advance notification of events is always given. Thank you for your understanding.”
* A pre-arranged photographer visits the setting twice a year to photograph the children which the parents can then buy. Notice is always given to parents in advance so that they can request that their child is not included in these photos. The photographer is never left alone with the children and is always supervised by a member of staff when taking photographs.
* Our website is updated periodically. Prior to putting any photos on the website, we seek written permission from the individual parents.

**Use/distribution of inappropriate images**

* Staff are aware that it is an offence to distribute indecent images and that it is an offence to groom children online. In the event of a concern that a colleague is behaving inappropriately, staff advise the designated safeguarding lead who follows procedure 06.2 Allegations against staff, volunteers or agency staff.

Social media (i.e Facebook, X (previously Twitter), Instagram, Whatsapp, TikTok, blogging, mumsnet)

* Staff are advised to manage their personal security settings to ensure that their information is only available to people they choose to share information with.
* Staff and parents must understand that an online comment could be taken out of context and made public.
* The internet must not be used in any way to attack or abuse anyone. Users must not post derogatory or offensive comments on the internet relating to pre-school, staff, children, parents/carers, volunteers, students and others.
* Users must never post pictures taken at the setting with images of the children who attend. Parents give permission for photos to be used in individual learning journals only. We remind parents of this policy at preschool outings/concerts and parties.
* Staff must not discuss the daily operation of the setting in any way as this is a breach of the confidentiality policy.
* Staff must not comment on their work day on networking sites.
* Staff must take care when accepting people as friends on networking sites as parents of the children at pre-school may be able to access their page. Staff will not accept parents of children attending pre-school as friends on social media until their youngest child is post pre-school age and will not answer any queries relating to pre-school or a child attending pre-school via social media or personal email accounts. Any queries should be addressed via the Tring Stepping Stones email account. Preschool keeps a log of each staff member’s social media footprint which is re-signed at each 1:1 meeting.
* Staff must not name their place of work as Tring Stepping Stones Pre-school on any networking pages.
* Our pre-school uses Facebook after requests by parents and responses to our questionnaire to do so. Only authorised members of staff, currently Lucy Brittain (Leader), Nicola Poulton (Leader) can access and edit the Preschool Facebook page and are responsible for all postings and for monitoring responses from others. We do include photographs of our activities but do not include the children in these. We invite parents to comment and share our posts. We do not respond to comments or questions on named individuals on Facebook.
* Staff are not permitted to access their personal social media accounts using pre-school equipment at any time. Authorised staff accessing the preschool Facebook page will ensure that they log out fully from their personal account before accessing the preschool account.

Online Prescence

When someone clearly identifies themselves (as a person or separate organisation) as being associated with Tring Stepping Stones Pre-school, and/or discuss their work then they are expected to communicate in appropriate style and content for a ‘pre-school’. i.e. in ways that are consistent with the values, policies and procedures of Tring Stepping Stones Pre-School.

The reputation of pre-school on and offline is crucial and parents/carers and other outside professionals must be able to trust that pre-school operates to a robust ethical standard.

All persons associated with Tring Stepping Stones Pre-School including staff and committee members have a duty of care to report any posts that are or may be in breach of this policy and we request the same of our parents/carers.

The call to action is to notify the pre-school leader or chair person.

On their finding of unacceptable content, regardless of your personal view that a remark was made in jest or if it’s your personal opinion, if the pre-school leader or chairperson is asked to remove a comment then it must be carried out immediately. An appeal could then be made to the management/committee for them to consider the wider context.

**All committee members sign the committee pack regarding e-safety.**

Cyber Bullying

If staff become aware that a child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they discuss this with their parents and refer them to sources of help, such as the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 or www.nspcc.org.uk, or Childline on 0800 1111 or [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk).

Use and/or distribution of inappropriate images

* Staff are aware that it is an offence to distribute indecent images and that it is an offence to groom children online.. In the event of a concern that a colleague or other person is behaving inappropriately, the Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy, in relation to allegations against staff and/or responding to suspicions of abuse, is followed

*This policy is included in our staff induction process, staff code of conduct and staff contract documents.*

*This policy is included in our Welcome Pack given to all new starters, is available to view on our website and is included in new committee members information pack.*

*Staff who are found to have breached this policy by posting offensive comments may be brought to the management/committee to face possible disciplinary procedures as these comments could be seen to amount to be bringing pre-school into disrepute.*

Further guidance:

Tring Stepping Stones Privacy Notice,

NSPCC and CEOP *Keeping Children Safe Online* training: www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-expert-training/keeping-children-safe-online-course/

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| This policy was adopted by |  |  |
| On |  |  |
| Date to be reviewed |  |  |
| Signed on behalf of the provider |  |
| Name of signatory |  |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner) |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Staff name  | Signature | Date read  |
| Lucy Brittain |  |  |
| Nicola Poulton |  |  |
| Ellis Hughes  |  |  |
| Kim Smith |  |  |
| Jo Davis |  |  |
| Anne Clark |  |  |
| Megan Rayner  |  |  |

January 2025- **Use/distribution of inappropriate images**

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