

Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Use Policy

This policy refers to all electronic devices able to take pictures, record videos, send or receive calls and messages. This includes cameras, mobile telephones, tablets and any recording devices including smartwatches. More and more devices are technically capable of connecting us to the outside world. We will adapt the policy to include all devices we deem necessary to safeguard children.

Fitbits/smartwatches/and similar branded and non-branded devices that receive calls and messages are prohibited from use in school. This includes situations where the staff member requests to turn off the connectivity functions. Devices capable of making and or receiving calls and messages or taking photographs are prohibited, but devices that only have the capacity to count steps are allowed.

Mobile phones and other devices that accept calls, messages and video calling

At Grantham Farm Montessori School we promote the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We believe our staff should be completely attentive during their hours of working to ensure all children in the school receive good quality care and education.

To ensure the safety and well-being of children we do not allow staff to use personal mobile phones, smartwatches and/or fitness watches during working hours.

We use a mobile phone supplied by the school only to provide a means of contact in certain circumstances, such as outings.

This policy should be used in conjunction with our online safety and acceptable IT use policies, to ensure children are kept safe when using school devices online.

Staff must adhere to the following:

- Mobile phones/smartwatches/ fitness watches must be either turned off or on silent and NOT accessed during your working hours
- Mobile phones/smartwatches/ fitness watches can only be used on a designated break and this must be away from the children
- Mobile phones/smartwatches/ fitness watches should be turned off or on silent with vibrate deactivated and stored safely in the staff area; these measures must be followed at all times during the hours of your working day
- No personal device is allowed to be connected to the school Wi-fi at any time
- The use of school devices, such as tablets, must only be used for school purposes
- The school devices will not have any social media or messaging apps on them with the exception of the school mobile and the designated social media iPad, which the children do not have access to
- Any apps downloaded onto a school device must be downloaded only with the consent of Emma Wetherley or Lucy Parkinson Gadd. This will ensure that only age and content appropriate apps are accessible to the staff or children using them

- Passwords/passcodes for school devices must not be shared or written down and may only be changed by Emma Wetherley or Lucy Parkinson Gadd. Passwords/passcodes will be changed regularly
- Only school owned devices will be used to take photographs or film videos
- When it is necessary to take home a school device, the member of staff taking the device home must ensure it is securely transported and stored and that it is not accessed by any other individual. Passwords must not be shared with family members, written down or stored on or with the device. All devices remain the property of the school and must be returned to school as soon as is practicably possible after every home use

Parents/carers use of mobile phones and smartwatches

Parents/carers are kindly asked to refrain from using their mobile telephones whilst in the school or when collecting or dropping off their children. We will ask any parents using their phone inside the school premises to finish the call or take the call outside. We do this to ensure all children are safeguarded and the time for dropping off and picking up is a quality handover opportunity where we can share details about your child.

Parents are requested not to allow their child to wear or bring in devices that may take photographs or record videos or voices. This includes smart watches with these capabilities, such as Vtech. This ensures all children are safeguarded and also protects their property as it may get damaged or misplaced at the school.

Visitors' use of mobile phones and smartwatches

Visitors are not permitted to use their mobile phones or smart watches whilst at school and are asked to leave them in a safe secure place for the duration of their visit.

Photographs and videos

At Grantham Farm Montessori School we recognise that photographs and video recordings play a part in the life of the school. We ensure that any photographs or recordings taken of children in our school are only done with prior written permission from each child's parent and only share photos with parents in a secure manner. We will obtain this permission when each child is registered and update it on a regular basis to ensure that this permission is still valid.

We ask for individual permissions for photographs and video recordings for a range of purposes including: use in the child's My Montessori Child learning journey, for display purposes, for promotion materials including our school website, Facebook, Instagram and the local press. We ensure parents understand that where their child is photographed on another child's My Montessori Child photograph, but not as the primary person, that this photograph may be used in another child's learning journey. Photographs and videos will not be taken in areas where intimate care routines are carried out.

If a parent is not happy about one or more of these uses, we will respect their wishes and find alternative ways of recording their child's play or learning.

Staff are not permitted to take any photographs or recordings of a child on their own information storage devices e.g. cameras, mobiles, tablets or smartwatches and may only use those devices provided by the school. The head teacher, deputy head teachers and the DSL will monitor all photographs and recordings to ensure that the parents' wishes are met and children are safeguarded.

Photographs or videos recorded on school mobile devices will be transferred to the correct storage device to ensure no images are left on these mobile devices.

Parents, and children, are not permitted to use any recording device or camera (including those on mobile phones or smartwatches) on the school premises without the prior consent of the head teacher.

During special events, e.g. Christmas or leaving parties, staff may produce group photographs to distribute to parents on request. In this case we will gain individual permission for each child before the event. This will ensure all photographs taken are in line with parental choice. We ask that photos of events such as Christmas parties are not posted on any social media websites/areas without permission from parents of all the children included in the picture.

Applicable for settings using Online Learning Journals only

At Grantham Farm Montessori School we use iPads to take photographs of the children and record these directly onto their electronic learning journeys. We ensure that these devices are used for this purpose only and do not install applications such as social media or messaging sites on to these devices.

We also do routine checks to ensure that emails and text messages have not been sent from these devices and remind staff of the whistleblowing policy if they observe staff not following these safeguarding procedures.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the school	Date for review
<i>August 2023</i>	<i>E. Wetherley</i>	<i>August 2024</i>