

Internet and mobile phone usage policy

Statement of intent

Toy box preschool has a commitment to keeping children safe whilst using the internet. The internet usage policy operates at all times within the setting under the umbrella of the safe guarding policy. The internet use policy is the implementation of the safe guarding policy in relation to electronic communications of all types.

The internet is becoming as commonplace as the telephone or tv and its effective use is an essential life skill. Unmediated internet access brings with it the possibility of placing children in embarrassing, inappropriate and even dangerous situations.

The internet is now regarded as an essential resource to support teaching and learning. Computer skills are vital to accessing lifelong learning and development.

It is important for children to learn to be e-safe from an early age and the preschool can play a vital part in starting this process.

In line with other preschool policies that protect children from other dangers, there is a requirement to provide children with as safe an internet environment as possible and a need to begin to teach them to be aware of and respond responsibly to possible risks.

Aim

Our aim is to show the children that there is a significant educational benefit resulting from internet use including access to information from around the world and that internet use should be carefully planned and targeted within a regulated and managed environment.

We have a duty to ensure that children in the preschool are not exposed to inappropriate information or material. We also need to ensure that children know how to ask for help if they come across material that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Method

- Internet safety in the preschool depends on staff, parents, carers and visitors taking responsibility for the use of internet and other communication technologies such as mobile phones. It is the preschools responsibility to use technical solutions to limit internet access and monitor their effectiveness.
- The internet is an essential element in 21st century life for education, business and social interaction. The preschool has a duty to provide children with quality internet access as part of their learning experience.

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- Preschool internet access will be tailored expressly for educational use and will include appropriate filtering. Children will learn appropriate internet use. Staff will guide children in online activities that will support their learning journeys.
- The internet is also used in the preschool to support the professional work of the staff, to allow effective planning and to enhance the preschools management information and business administration systems.
- The preschools committee members are responsible for systems support which ensures the appropriate filters are applied in the preschool and proper usage of the pcs/laptops .The committee will also review the sites accessed.
- Staff will monitor the websites being used by the children during preschool sessions.
- Staff may use their logins during preschool sessions in order to view additional websites with the children, for example to look at sites related to topics they have been discussing. Staff must ensure they logout immediately after viewing the sites to restrict access for the remainder of the session. If a member of staff uses the preschool pc for preschool work, again they must ensure they logout immediately on completing the work to ensure access is restricted for the remainder of the session.
- If staff or children discover unsuitable sites have been accessed on the preschool pc/laptop, they must report to the manager immediately so this can be reviewed.
- The preschool committee will ensure there are sufficient funding and time made available for training, should this be required.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring that material accessed by children is appropriate and for ensuring that the use of the internet derived material by staff or by children complies with copyright law.
- Children will not have access to email.
- Staff using email will use preschool email address. This address is not to be used for personal use.
- Parents/carers attention will be drawn to the preschool internet policy.

Website

The point of contact on the website should be the preschool address, preschool email and telephone number. Staff or children's home information will not be published. Website photos that include children will be selected carefully and will not allow any individual children to be clearly identified. Children's names will not be used anywhere, particularly in association with photographs. Written permission has to be obtained from parents/carers for featuring their child on the website.

Communications and social networking

- Online chat rooms and social networking sites such as facebook etc. will not be used at the preschool.
- Staff will not discuss individual children or their setting on Facebook, twitter or any other social networking site at any time.

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- Any member of staff using their own pc/laptop must adhere to the internet policy in all matters relating to the preschool. Staff hold a professional position in the community and under no circumstances should comments about Toybox, staff or committee be made on any social or communication sites. (Refer to confidentiality policy)

Mobile Technologies

- Mobile phone use is not permitted in preschool during sessions. All mobiles are to be switched off and put in the preschools set place at the start of the sessions until all children have left at the end of the sessions. Staff can be contacted by the preschool telephone during sessions .The taking of photographs on mobile phones is strictly prohibited anywhere in the preschool site.
- Permission will be gained from parents /carers to allow photographs to be taken on the preschool camera. Access to these photographs by the Childs parent/carer will be available at all times.
- All photographs taken on the preschool camera are deleted after its use. These photographs are used only for the children’s name card and their records produced by their key workers.

How published content will be managed

ToyBox obtains permission from all parents before using photographs on our website and social media. Observations and photographs of children completing activities may be used in the child’s learning diaries, these are only shared with parents.

Handling complaints

Any complaints about the appropriate use of internet or other technologies will be handled through the complaints procedure (Refer to complaints policy).

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| This policy was adopted by Toy Box Pre-School | Date: |
| Signed on behalf of the management committee | |
| Name of signatory | |
| Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner) | |