

Mobile Phone & Electronic Device Use (Childcare)

Policy Owner: Director of Communities/SLT	Policy Developer: Head of Family & Children’s Services/AA
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The current version of any policy, procedure or guideline is the version held in the Knowledge Library on Workplace. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that they are following the current version.

EYFS: 2.1 & 3.4

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 and fit – bits that can receive calls and messages and not the ones that only count steps. 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 required to safeguard children.

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

At all of our Childcare Settings 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 our settings receive good quality care and education.

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

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

All staff are expected to use tablets for staff observations and assessments. The tablets are the property of YMCATGG and no photos, images and child details should be stored directly onto the tablets and should be removed once they have been uploaded onto the connect management system.

This policy is to be used in conjunction with our online safety policy to ensure children are kept safe when using devices online

Staff must adhere to the following:

- Mobile phones/smartwatches/fit bits are either turned off or on silent and not accessed during your working hours
- Mobile phones/smartwatches/fit bits can only be used on a designated break and then this must be away from the children
- Mobile phones/smartwatches/fit bits should be stored safely in staff lockers or in a safe place such as a locked office at all times during the hours of your working day

- No personal device is allowed to be connected to the settings Wi-Fi at any time
- The use of YMCATGG devices, such as tablets, must only be used for childcare setting purposes
- The YMCATGG devices will not have any social media or messaging apps on them
- Any apps downloaded onto devices must be done only by management. This will ensure only age appropriate and safe apps will be accessible to staff or children using them
- Passwords / passcodes for setting devices must not be shared or written down
- During outings, staff will use mobile phones belonging to YMCATGG wherever possible. Photographs must not be taken of the children on any personal phones or any other personal information storage device. Only YMCATGG owned devices will be used to take photographs or film videos
- No YMCATGG devices will be taken home by staff and will they remain secure at the setting when not in use. If a device is needed to be taken home due to unforeseen circumstances, then the person taking this device home must ensure it is securely stored. The device can only be taken home with permission from a senior manager, signed for and not accessed by another other individual. The tablet must be returned to the setting as soon as practically possible and signed back in.

Parents' and visitors' use of mobile phones and smartwatches

Whilst we recognise that there may be emergency situations which necessitate the use of a mobile telephone, in order to ensure the safety and welfare of children in our care and share information about the child's day. However, parents and visitors are kindly asked to refrain from using their mobile telephones whilst in any of our childcare settings or when collecting or dropping off their children.

If found to be using a mobile phone inside the childcare premises, they will be asked 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.

Visitors are requested to leave their mobile phones or smart watches in the safety of the office where they can be locked away safely.

Photographs and videos

At YMCA Thames Gateway Group we recognise that photographs and video recordings play a part in the life of each setting. We ensure that any photographs or recordings (including CCTV) taken of children in any of our settings are only done

with prior written permission from each child's parent and only share photos with parents in a secure manner. We obtain this when each child is registered, and we update it on a regular basis to ensure that this permission still stands.

We ask for individual permissions for photographs and video recordings for a range of purposes including: use in the child's learning journey; for display purposes; for promotion materials including our website, brochure and the local press; and for security in relation to CCTV and the different social media platforms we use. We ensure that parents understand that where their child is also on another child's photograph, but not as the primary person, that may be used in another child's learning journey.

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 provided by the childcare setting. The manager will monitor all photographs and recordings to ensure that the parents' wishes are met, and children are safeguarded.

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

Parents are not permitted to use any recording device or camera (including those on mobile phones or smartwatches) on the premises without the prior consent of the manager.

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

We use tablets in the rooms for all of our childcare provisions to take photos of the children and record these directly on to their electronic learning journals or for wow

moments during their time with us. 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 (where applicable) 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 by	YMCA Thames Gateway
On	14/01/2023
Signed on behalf of the provider	
Name of signatory	Amanda Allen
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Head of Family and Children’s Services

Policy review date	13/01/2024 – on or before
Name of reviewer	
Signature of reviewer	
Role of reviewer	