1.5 Online Safety & Screen Use Policy

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1.5 Online Safety & Screen Use Policy

(Including Mobile Phones, Digital Devices and Cameras)

Policy Statement

At Miss B's Nursery, protecting children from harm and ensuring their **well-being is our highest priority**. As part of our safeguarding responsibilities, we have clear procedures to ensure that the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) within the nursery does not expose children to risk, inappropriate material or misuse of images.

This policy sets out how ICT equipment, mobile phones, cameras and online platforms are used responsibly within the nursery environment. It should be read alongside the nursery's Data Protection and Confidentiality policies.

The nursery recognises children's rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), including:

- **Article 3** – The best interests of the child must always be a primary consideration.
- **Article 16** – Children have the right to privacy and protection of their personal information.
- **Article 19** – Children have the right to protection from harm and exploitation.

By implementing strict procedures around digital technology and online communication, Miss B's Nursery ensures these rights are upheld.

Linked Legislation and Guidance:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (September 2026)
- Help for Early Years Providers: Screen Use (Department for Education, July 2026)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Online Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

1.5.1 Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

ICT equipment within the nursery may include:

- computers
- tablets or iPads
- mobile phones
- digital cameras
- other electronic devices capable of recording images or accessing the internet

Miss B's Nursery has a designated ICT co-ordinator, Kayleigh Botha, who oversees the safe use of digital equipment in the setting.

Key procedures include:

- Staff must only use **nursery-owned ICT equipment** when working within the setting.
- The ICT co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that all devices are **safe, secure and appropriate for use**.
- Children at Miss B's Nursery **do not independently use computers or internet-enabled devices**.
- Staff may show children photographs and written observations that record their learning and development.

This approach supports children's right to privacy and protection of personal data (**UNCRC Article 16**).

1.5.2 Email Use

The use of email within the nursery is managed carefully to maintain confidentiality.

- Staff must **not access personal email accounts using nursery equipment**.
- Work emails must **not be checked or responded to** while staff are actively **supervising children**.

1.5.3 Mobile Phones

Miss B's Nursery recognises that mobile phones are a common part of modern life; however, strict guidelines are required to ensure they do not compromise safeguarding.

- Children are **not permitted** to bring mobile phones or digital devices into the nursery. If a child arrives with such a device, it will be returned to the parent or carer to take home.
- Staff may only use personal mobile phones **within designated staff areas**, such as the staff kitchen.
- Mobile phones must **not be used in rooms** where children are present.

Parents and visitors are also asked to avoid using mobile phones **while on nursery premises**.

Parents may only use mobile devices to take photographs of **their own child** during nursery events authorised by the Nursery Manager or senior staff. These images must be taken in a way that respects the privacy and dignity of all children.

Photographs taken by parents are for personal use only and must **not be shared publicly**, in line with the nursery's safeguarding and social media expectations.

1.5.4 Cameras, Video Equipment and Image Recording Devices

To protect children's privacy and ensure images are handled responsibly:

- Staff are **not permitted to use personal cameras** or recording devices in the nursery.
- Photographs and recordings of children are taken only for **legitimate educational purposes**, such as documenting development and learning.
- Images are used within the nursery's **secure online learning journal system** (Tapestry).

The following safeguards are in place:

- Images are taken and stored **only with parental consent**.
- Only **authorised** staff members can **access** the Tapestry learning journal system.
- Staff must follow the nursery's **training and procedures** when uploading observations or images.
- Devices used to access Tapestry are **password-protected**.

- Children's records are encrypted and stored securely on **dedicated servers**, rather than on individual devices.

When devices are not in use, they must be **stored securely**, and staff must always follow safeguarding and confidentiality procedures.

Parents may take photographs of their own children during approved nursery events (such as performances or celebrations), but these images must remain for **private family use only**.

Parents are provided access only to **their own child's learning journal**, which they can view but cannot edit. Access requires a personal email login and password.

Senior staff monitor observations uploaded to the system to ensure the information recorded is **appropriate and secure**.

These procedures protect children's right to privacy and dignity (**UNCRC Article 16**).

1.5.5 Social Media

Policy Statement

Social media is widely used by many individuals and families to communicate and share information. Miss B's Nursery recognises the benefits of these platforms but also understands that the sharing of images or information about children must be handled carefully.

This policy outlines expectations regarding the use of social media in relation to the nursery.

Examples of platforms covered by this policy include:

- Instagram
- TikTok
- Facebook
- X (formerly Twitter)
- LinkedIn
- Blogs and other online forums

Staff, Volunteers, Visitors and Students

Staff, volunteers, visitors and students may use social media in their personal lives; however, they must ensure that their online behaviour **does not compromise safeguarding or professional conduct**.

They must:

- Avoid **publicly identifying** themselves online as employees or volunteers of Miss B's Nursery.
- **Never** upload photographs or videos of nursery children to social media.
- Avoid discussing **nursery matters online**, including children, families, staff members or internal issues.
- Refrain from participating in **online discussions about the nursery.**
- **Report to senior staff** if they become aware of online discussions that are critical of individuals or the nursery.

Staff must **not create social media friendships with the parents** of children currently attending the nursery to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. An exception may be made where a friendship existed prior to the child joining the nursery. This restriction ends once the child leaves the nursery.

These measures protect children's right to safety and privacy (**UNCRC Articles 16 and 19**).

Parents and Carers

Miss B's Nursery recognises that parents and carers regularly use social media and does not seek to restrict personal use. However, parents are asked to consider the following guidance to support safeguarding.

Parents should:

- Remember that information shared online is **rarely** fully private, even with strict privacy settings.
- Avoid posting information that could reveal the **nursery's location**.
- Avoid sharing the **names or identifying details of staff, other children, or families** attending the nursery.
- Raise any concerns about the nursery **directly with management** rather than discussing them publicly online.
- Avoid **forming social media friendships with staff members** while their child is attending the nursery.

If social media activity harms the nursery's reputation or the well-being of children, families, or staff, the nursery may take appropriate action.

Parents are reminded that any photographs taken during nursery events are **strictly for personal use**.

1.5.6 Data Security and Backup Systems

The Tapestry online learning journal used by Miss B's Nursery operates on dedica**ted servers hosted in a secure UK data centre** managed by a professional hosting provider.

Security measures include:

- perimeter **security fencing** and anti-intrusion barriers
- **reinforced** doors and windows
- electronic access control systems
- monitored **CCTV** operating continuously
- **on-site** security staff
- restricted access to server areas using identity verification
- secure locked server cabinets

Only **authorised personnel** may access the server environment.

All learning journal data is stored within these secure systems. **Backups** are performed multiple times each day and stored at an additional secure off-site data centre to ensure information can be recovered in the event of an emergency.

Each nursery account has its own secure database, preventing information from being shared between different organisations.

These measures ensure the protection of children's information and support their right to privacy and protection of personal data (**UNCRC Article 16**).

1.5.7 Children's screen use in the nursery

In accordance with paragraph 3.94 of the EYFS Statutory Framework (September 2026), the nursery has regard to the Department for Education guidance Help for Early Years Providers: Screen Use. The guidance makes clear that:

- children under two years of age should avoid screen time altogether other than in exceptional circumstances such as video calls with parents or carers;
- children aged two to five years should have no more than one hour of screen time each day, with less being preferable.

As children spend time at home as well as within nursery, Miss B's Nursery aims to minimise screen exposure during the nursery day and work collaboratively with parents to promote healthy lifelong digital habits.

Children learn most effectively through:

- conversations with caring adults;
- imaginative play;
- physical activity;
- sensory exploration;
- outdoor learning;
- music and movement;
- books and storytelling;
- creative experiences;
- interactions with peers.

Technology should support, *not replace*, these experiences.

Screens should never be used:

- as entertainment;
- to occupy children because staff are busy;
- as a reward;
- as a punishment;
- as a behaviour management strategy;
- instead of adult interaction;
- during meals or snack times;
- immediately before sleep.

1.5.7.1 Children Under Two Years

Children aged under two years will not routinely be exposed to screens whilst attending nursery.

This includes:

- televisions;
- tablets;
- mobile phones;
- laptops;
- projectors displaying moving images.

The only exceptions may include:

- a supervised video call with a parent or primary carer in exceptional circumstances;
- specialist SEND interventions where recommended by an appropriate professional;
- safeguarding purposes where directed by statutory agencies.

Where an exception applies:

- exposure will be kept as short as possible;
- an adult will remain fully engaged with the child throughout;
- the screen will never replace responsive interaction.

1.5.7.2 Children Aged Two to Five Years

For children aged two to five years, screen use will be exceptional rather than routine, they should have a maximum of one hour, preferably less of screen time a day.

Where technology is used it must:

- have a clear educational objective;
- directly support the EYFS curriculum;
- involve active participation rather than passive viewing;
- encourage conversation;
- promote thinking and problem solving;
- be age appropriate;
- be supervised by practitioners at all times.

The nursery will not routinely provide screen time simply because children enjoy it.

Technology may occasionally be used to support learning such as:

- observing insects or animals using a live nature camera;
- listening to music for movement sessions;
- following yoga or dance activities that involve physical participation;
- viewing photographs of seasons, cultures or occupations to stimulate discussion;

- researching answers to children's questions;
- viewing live footage of zoo animals, to experience the animals' movements;
- recording children's own voices;
- supporting speech and language activities;
- supporting communication devices for children with SEND.

In every case, the practitioner will interact alongside children by asking questions, extending vocabulary and encouraging conversation.

1.5.7.3 Children with SEND

Some children may require carefully planned use of technology as part of their individual support programme.

This may include:

- communication devices;
- visual timetables;
- eye gaze technology;
- speech generating devices;
- specialist educational software.

Such use will:

- be agreed with parents;
- form part of the child's support plan;
- be proportionate;
- be regularly reviewed;
- never replace practitioner interaction.

1.5.7.4 Staff Responsibilities

Practitioners are responsible for ensuring that:

- children are not left watching screens unattended;
- screen activities have a clear educational purpose;
- learning continues through discussion and interaction;
- activities remain age appropriate;
- screen use is kept to the minimum necessary;
- alternatives are always considered first.

Staff should model healthy relationships with technology.

Personal mobile phones, smart watches and personal electronic devices must never be used around children.

Practitioners will also ensure the digital safety of the children, so that where technology is used:

- internet access will be controlled;
- content will be suitable for young children;
- children will always be supervised;
- devices will have appropriate security settings;
- practitioners will remain actively engaged with children throughout.

Children will never independently browse the internet.