

Oyster Bay Nursery

Acceptable use of mobile phones and other devices policy

Date written: October 2026

Date of last update: October 2026

Date agreed and ratified by October 2026

Date of next full review: September 2027

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any lessons learnt and/or updates to national or local guidance and procedures.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Debra Hines
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Grace Sidders Rachel Finch
Nominated Individual	Debra Hines
Nursery Manager	Grace Sidders

1. Policy statement

Oyster Bay Nursery is committed to safeguarding children and protecting their privacy, dignity and wellbeing. Mobile phones, cameras, smartwatches and other electronic devices can create risks if they are used inappropriately around children.

This policy explains how such devices may be brought into and used within the nursery. It must be followed alongside the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Data Protection and Privacy Policy, Children's Image Use Policy and Social Media Policy.

The safety and best interests of children will always take priority.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Prevent unauthorised photography, filming and audio recording of children.
- Protect children's personal information and images.
- Ensure staff maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Set clear expectations for personal and nursery-owned devices.
- Establish safe procedures for photography, video recording and emergencies.
- Explain how breaches and safeguarding concerns are reported.

3. Personal mobile phones and devices belonging to staff

Staff must not use personal mobile phones, tablets, cameras or other personal recording devices while supervising or caring for children.

Personal devices must be:

- Stored in the designated secure area during working hours.
- Kept out of children's reach.
- Used only during authorised breaks in designated staff areas, away from children.
- Used in accordance with the nursery's safeguarding and confidentiality requirements.

Staff must not take photographs, videos or audio recordings of children using personal devices.

Staff must not use personal devices to access, store or share children's personal information, nursery records or confidential communications.

Smartwatches and wearable devices with cameras, recording functions or messaging capabilities must not be used in a way that compromises children's privacy, supervision or safeguarding. The Nursery Manager may require such functions to be disabled or the device to be stored securely.

4. Nursery-owned devices

Nursery-owned devices may be used for authorised nursery business, including:

- Contacting parents and carers.
- Communicating during outings and emergencies.
- Taking approved photographs or videos for learning records.
- Recording activities or events where appropriate permissions and safeguards are in place.

Only authorised staff may use nursery-owned devices to take images or recordings.

All images must be captured for a legitimate nursery purpose and stored using the nursery's approved secure systems. Staff must not transfer images to personal devices, personal email accounts, private messaging applications or personal cloud storage.

Devices must be protected by appropriate security measures and returned to their designated storage location after use.

5. Taking photographs and videos of children

Before taking or using photographs or videos, staff must check the nursery's records of parental permissions and any relevant safeguarding restrictions.

Staff must:

- Use an authorised nursery device.
- Take images only for an approved purpose.
- Respect the child's dignity and wishes.
- Ensure children are appropriately dressed.
- Avoid capturing unnecessary personal information or other children where practicable.
- Follow the Children's Image Use Policy when storing, displaying or sharing images.

Photographs and recordings must never be taken in toilets, changing areas or other situations where a child's privacy could be compromised.

No image may be taken or shared for personal use or for an inappropriate purpose.

6. Personal emergencies

The nursery recognises that staff may occasionally need access to a personal phone for an urgent personal or family matter.

Staff must seek permission from the Nursery Manager or designated person wherever practicable. Any use must take place in a way that does not compromise children's supervision or privacy.

In an emergency, staff must follow the nursery's emergency procedures and ensure that children remain safely supervised.

7. Parents, carers and visitors

Parents, carers and visitors must follow nursery instructions regarding mobile phones, cameras and recording devices:

- Visitors must turn off phones or leave them to be securely kept in the office.

Unless expressly authorised by the Nursery Manager for a specific occasion:

- Photography and video recording of children on nursery premises are not permitted.
- Visitors must not photograph or record other children.
- Personal devices must not be used to access or share confidential information about children or families.

The Nursery Manager may introduce specific arrangements for events such as celebrations, performances or graduation activities. Any permitted photography must follow the nursery's instructions and respect the privacy and safeguarding needs of all children.

8. Professional photographers and external visitors

Any professional photographer, videographer or other person authorised to take images must have approval from the Nursery Manager before recording begins.

The nursery will:

- Establish the purpose and intended use of the images.
- Check relevant permissions and safeguarding requirements.
- Explain the rules for storing, accessing and sharing images.
- Ensure the photographer is appropriately supervised.

- Prevent unauthorised contact with children or access to confidential information.

External individuals must not be given unrestricted access to children or nursery records.

9. Use of devices during outings

During outings, staff may use authorised nursery devices for communication, navigation, emergency contact and approved photography.

Staff must not allow device use to distract them from supervising children.

The outing leader must ensure that:

- A suitable communication device is available.
- Relevant emergency contact details are accessible.
- Photographs are taken only where authorised.
- Images and personal information are handled securely.
- Any loss of a device or suspected disclosure of information is reported promptly.

10. Storage and security of images

All photographs and recordings containing identifiable children must be handled in accordance with the nursery's Data Protection and Privacy Policy and Children's Image Use Policy.

Images must be stored only on approved systems, with access restricted to authorised individuals.

Staff must not:

- Send children's images through personal messaging services.
- Upload images to personal social media accounts.
- Make unauthorised copies or screenshots.
- Leave devices unlocked or images visible to unauthorised people.
- Retain images beyond the period required by nursery procedures.

Images must be securely deleted or retained in accordance with the nursery's record-retention arrangements.

11. Reporting concerns and breaches

Any suspected misuse of a mobile phone, camera or recording device must be reported immediately to the Nursery Manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Examples include:

- Unauthorised photography or recording.
- Suspected inappropriate use of a device around a child.
- Unauthorised sharing of children's images.
- Loss or theft of a device containing personal information.
- A suspected breach of confidentiality or data protection.

The nursery will respond promptly, follow its safeguarding and incident procedures, preserve relevant evidence where appropriate and consider whether referral to the police, children's social care, Ofsted or the Information Commissioner's Office is necessary.

Staff must not attempt to investigate serious safeguarding concerns independently or take action that could compromise an investigation.

12. Staff responsibilities

All staff must:

- Read and follow this policy.
- Complete relevant safeguarding training.
- Keep personal devices stored as required.
- Use nursery-owned devices only for authorised purposes.
- Respect children's privacy and dignity.
- Report concerns or breaches immediately.
- Follow all related nursery policies.

The Nursery Manager is responsible for explaining the policy to staff, monitoring compliance and taking appropriate action where concerns arise.

13. Breaches of the policy

Breaches may be addressed through the nursery's disciplinary procedures and safeguarding processes, depending on the nature and seriousness of the incident.

Where necessary, the nursery may restrict device access, refer the matter to relevant authorities and take steps to protect affected children and families.