

# Pioneer Childcare

## **Mobile Phone and Electronic Devices Policy**

This policy is part of Pioneer Childcare's wider commitment to safeguarding the welfare of children and is linked to our policies on Whistleblowing, Safeguarding Children and Use of Photographic Images Policy. This policy also aims to ensure the well-being of our staff and volunteers and keep them safe from allegations of abuse.

At Pioneer Childcare we recognise that mobile phones and electronic devices are a part of everyday life but there are times and places where their use is inappropriate.

### **Use of Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices**

#### **Staff**

Staff working directly with children must not use personal mobile phones or devices as it is inappropriate and can distract them from caring for the children in their group.

Mobile phones must be given to the manager at the start of each session and will be kept in a secure place, out of sight, until the end of the session. Any personal electronic devices should be also handed to the manager at the start of the session, including smart watches.

The exception to this rule is for the Club Manager who will always have a company club mobile phone on them. Any member of staff expecting an urgent call during working hours at the club premises should direct these to the club phone. Club Managers are also permitted to use their own personal mobile phone in the case of an emergency, such as an evacuation or a safeguarding concern, to keep the club phone free for incoming calls.

Any member of staff leading an activity off the premises will also take a mobile phone with them when distance may not permit effective use of walkie-talkies. Staff involved in the dropping off and collection of children will be required to have a mobile phone so that they can be in regular contact with the Club Manager. For the purposes of this, staff are authorised to use their own mobile phone on the strict understanding that they should only use their phone during this time for work purposes, specifically related to contacting the Club Manager in case of queries or emergencies. Once they return to club, their phone should be handed to the Club Manager.

Staff may also be permitted by the Club Manager to use their personal mobile phone in exceptional circumstances, such as in the case of looking for a missing child. Staff may also be permitted to have their mobile phone on them for medical and health reasons (e.g., to access a diabetic app for monitoring blood sugar levels). In these circumstances, staff will discuss the requirement with their Line Manager and a Health Plan and risk assessment will be put in place to ensure that all aspects of mobile phone safety are covered. The plan and RA will be shared with other staff (if appropriate) so that they are aware of the requirement for the member of staff to have access to their mobile phone.

Please note that we do not allow you to log in or access work emails or data on your personal devices without expressed permission from Pioneer Childcare. If you do need to access work emails or data for any reason, please contact your line manager for further guidance.

#### **Children**

We realise that some children may have mobile phones on them. These must be given to the manager upon arrival and will be kept in a locked box during club hours and handed back to the children at the end of the session. If possible, such items should not be brought to Pioneer Childcare but left at home. Children are discouraged from bringing electronic devices (including smart watches) to club. They should not bring any device that is able to make or receive phone calls or messages, record voices (such as a voice recorder) or that can take photos or video footage (even if this device can be deactivated) with them to club.

If any device is brought to club, it must be given to the manager upon arrival and will be kept in a secure place until collection. Pioneer Childcare cannot be responsible for loss, theft, or damage of such items. Children are not permitted to use the club mobile phone, unless it is under the supervision of the Club Manager and for exceptional circumstances (e.g., to speak to their parent/carer).

### Parents and Carers

We would prefer if parents/carers did not use their phones within the setting to make or receive calls. Mobile phones and conversations can be very disruptive, and they divert the parent/carers attention away from the responsibility of looking after their children. If calls must be taken parents are asked to step outside and to have the conversation off the premises. Parents/carers should not take photos within the setting unless it is with the express permission of the Club Manager.

### Cameras and camera phones

One of the ways that practitioners support children's development in the Early Years and engage parents/carers in their children's learning is through photographs that record their activities and achievements. Staff will always check with parent/carers that they consent to the use of cameras for appropriate recording purposes in this way.

No member of staff will be allowed at any time to photograph children using their personal mobile phones, cameras, or electronic devices. At Pioneer Childcare the club camera/mobile phone may be used for making photographic records with the permission of a senior member of staff.

### Visitors

All visitors to the setting will be advised of this policy and be expected to adhere to it. Ofsted Inspectors or other professionals attending the setting may be required to use their electronic devices to carry out their work, but they should be made aware of the policy about the use of their mobile phone and agree with the manager how this will be used and where it will be kept.

### Related Policies: Safeguarding Children, Whistleblowing, Use of Photographic Images

This policy was adopted by: Pioneer Childcare	Date: 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2025
To be reviewed: 24 <sup>th</sup> January 2026	Signed: <i>J. Wilkins</i>