

Mobile Phone and Wearable Technology Policy

Children, Parents, Visitors and Staff

Happy Times fosters a 'culture of safety' in which the children and staff are protected from abuse, harm, and distress. Happy Times accepts that mobile technology is part of the ever-changing digital environment that we live and work in. We therefore have a clear policy on the acceptable use of mobile phones, tablet computers and wearable technology that have imaging and sharing capabilities, that is understood and adhered to by everyone: staff, children and parents. Abiding by the terms of the club's mobile phone policy ensures that we all:

- Protect children from harm and abuse
- Prevent staff from being subject to false allegations
- Help staff remain focused on the care of children
- Work in an open and transparent environment.

With the evolution of mobile phones, tablet computers and wearable technology that have camera facilities and sharing capabilities as standard, it is of the utmost importance that the way we deal with technology is handled safely.

Staff use of mobile phones and wearable technology

Personal mobile phones belonging to members of staff are kept with personal belongings in a place agreed by the supervisor, usually the kitchen area during working hours.

Supervisors need to use their phones to check for any updates from our administrator using Whatsapp. This should be done away from children.

If a member of staff needs to make an urgent personal call, they can use the club phone or make a personal call from their mobile in an area designated by the supervisor eg school staffroom.

If a member of staff has a family emergency or similar and needs to keep their mobile phone to hand, prior permission must be sought from the Supervisor who will also need to check with their area manager. The club phone number can be given to family members for emergencies. This phone is kept by the Supervisor at all times.

Under no circumstances may staff use their personal mobile phones/smart watches and similar devices to take photographs at the club during working hours with the exception of Supervisors who can take photographs of any art/craft work (with no children present).

Wearable technology such as smart watches, Fitbits etc can be worn during the day but must not be used to take photos during the day or used to access the internet. These smart watches should be changed to "flight mode" while working with children so only the watch part of the phone is accessible. Supervisors and area managers will have the right to check this functionality with the staff on site in order to protect children and staff from false allegations.

Only tablets computers that are owned and maintained by Happy Times Ltd can be used on site. These can be used to take photos of children where permissions from parents/carers have been sought for a particular activity eg bouncy castle, birds of prey. Only our marketing manager will then download these for marketing purposes and to share with parents/carers.

Children's use of mobile phones and wearable technology

Whilst we understand that some children have mobile phones and smart watches, we actively discourage them from using their phones and wearing the watches within our club. Mobile phones and smart watches should be handed back to the parent/carer on arrival to our club. If a mobile phone, tablet computer or wearable device with camera or sharing facilities is seen by a member of staff, the item will be kept safely by the supervisor and returned to the parent/carer on collection of the child.

Happy Times does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to mobile phones, tablet computers or wearable technology brought to the club by the children and we would suggest they are taken home by parent/carer.

Children must not use their mobile phone or wearable technology to take photographs of any kind whilst at the club. If they want a photograph of a particular activity they can ask a member of staff to take one using the club iPad.

Children must not use their mobile phone or wearable technology to access the internet whilst at the club. This is to ensure we are safeguarding the welfare of all children whilst they are attending our club.

Under no circumstances are staff allowed to take photographs of the children using personal mobile phones/watches or any other smart technology.

Visitors' use of mobile phones

Parents and all other visitors must not use their mobile phone - or any other device - to take photographs within the club. This includes taking photographs of their own children. If they want to have a photograph of their child involved in an activity or at play, parents can ask a member of staff to take one using the club iPad. If a parent/guardian arrives at a club on their phone they will be politely asked to turn it off or finish their call outside away from the areas used by the club .

Guidance

To safeguard children and practitioners online, our staff will be encouraged to refer to "Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations". (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-protecting-professionals-in-early-years-settings-online-safety-considerations>)

Related policies: Safeguarding Children policy.

This policy was adopted by Happy Times Ltd	Date: June 2024
To be reviewed: March 2025	Signed: Surjit Bains Manager

Written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2024)*
Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements: Safeguarding Policies and Procedures [3.7]