



We demonstrate tolerance and respect through child-led play

Technology and Online Safety Policy

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Technology and Online Safety Policy

1 Scope & Purpose

1.1 To ensure that there are effective procedures in place to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from the unacceptable use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment or exposure to inappropriate materials in the setting.

1.2 To set ensure appropriate use of social networking websites by staff of Croft playgroup.

1.3 This policy applies to all employees of the playgroup whether permanent, part-time or temporary (including fixed-term contract) and bank staff.

1.4 This policy applies to all websites which can be used by staff for communicating information within the public domain. This includes blogs and social networking websites.

1.5 This policy applies irrespective of location and time that is on playgroup premises and elsewhere, during working times and all other times.

1.6 Failure to adhere to the contents of this policy will lead to disciplinary/ safeguarding procedures being followed.

2 Outline

2.1 We have a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who is responsible for co-ordinating action taken to protect children.

2.2 With regards to the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment:

- All staff sign a Staff Professional Conduct Agreement which contains information on 'acceptable use online'
- Staff are not allowed to wear or use any personal portable ICT devices in the setting at any time.
- Only ICT equipment belonging to the setting is used by staff and children.
- The designated person is responsible for ensuring all ICT equipment is safe and fit for purpose.
- All computers have virus protection installed.
- The designated person ensures that safety settings are set to ensure that inappropriate material cannot be accessed.

2.3 With regards to Internet access:

- Children do not normally have access to the internet and never have unsupervised access.
- The designated person has overall responsibility for ensuring that children and young people are safeguarded and risk assessments in relation to online safety are completed.



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- Adults will also seek to build children's resilience in relation to issues they may face in the online world, and will address issues such as staying safe, having appropriate friendships, asking for help if unsure, not keeping secrets as part of social and emotional development. Information is shared with parents to raise their awareness and to enable them to support their children in understanding and being safe online.
- All computers for use by children are located in an area clearly visible to staff.
- Children are not allowed to access social networking sites.
- Staff report any suspicious or offensive material, including material which may incite racism, bullying or discrimination to the Internet Watch Foundation at www.iwf.org.uk.
- Suspicions that an adult is attempting to make inappropriate contact with a child on-line is reported to the Family contact point / MASH team (01793 466903 or if out of hours 01793 436699) as part of the safeguarding children and child protection policy.
- The designated person ensures staff have access to age-appropriate resources to enable them to assist children to use the internet safely.
- If staff become aware that a child is the victim of cyber-bullying, they discuss this with their parents and refer them to sources of help, such as the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000 or www.nspcc.org.uk, or Childline on 0800 1111 or www.childline.org.uk.

2.4 With regards to emails:

- Children are not permitted to use email in the setting. Parents and staff are not normally permitted to use setting equipment to access personal emails. Staff do not access personal or work email whilst supervising children.
- Staff send personal information by encrypted email and share information securely at all times.

2.5 With regards to acceptable Use of Mobile Phones & Cameras:

- It is Croft Playgroup's intention to provide an environment in which children, parents and staff are safe from images being recorded and inappropriately used.
- Croft playgroup allows staff to bring in personal mobile telephones for their own use during their break times.
- Staff are not permitted to wear watches that link to their mobile phone if it can take photos on the device or link to social media.
- Users bringing personal mobile telephones into Croft Playgroup must ensure there is no inappropriate or illegal content on the device.
- All staff, students, committee members and volunteers must ensure that their mobile telephones are left inside their bag and in the staff room, throughout contact time with children or within the playroom's. Bags should be placed in the designated cupboards in the staff room.
- Mobile phone calls may only be taken out in staff members' own time. If staff have a personal emergency, they are free to use the setting's phone or make a personal call from their mobile in the office, with consent of the manager.



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- If a member of staff is waiting for an emergency personal call, then their phone may be left with the Office administrator or manager, who with permission will answer and then notify the member of staff.
- Staff will need to ensure that the Office has up to date contact information and that staff make their families, children's schools etc, aware of emergency work telephone numbers. This is the responsibility of the individual staff member.
- All parent helpers will be requested to place their bag containing their phone, camera or a watch that may have a camera built in or links directly to the internet or their mobile phone in the office and asked to take or receive any calls in the office area.
- Visitor's mobile phones are to be left in the office. If it is necessary for visitors to have their mobile phones to implement their role effectively then they are to be supervised at all times.
- It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns to the manager or deputy manager. Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately in line with croft playgroups safeguarding policy.
- Photographs are taken for the purpose of recording a child or group of children participating in activities or celebrating their achievements and are an effective form of recording their progression in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- They may also be used on our displays, website, social media page and/or by the local press with permission from the parents. It is made clear to parents how their information is stored, where it is used and also the terms and conditions of chosen internet platforms, such as Facebook.
- However, it is essential that photographs are taken and stored appropriately to safeguard the children in our care.
- Only the designated Croft Playgroup cameras are to be used to take any photos within the setting or on outings.
- Images taken on this camera must be deemed suitable without putting the child/children in any compromising positions that could cause embarrassment or distress.
- All staff are responsible for the location of the cameras and these should be locked in the office at the end of the playgroup session.
- Images taken and stored on the camera must be downloaded on site as soon as possible, and printed to be used for journals or displays.
- Under no circumstances must cameras of any kind be taken into the toilet area without prior consultation with the manager or deputy manager. If photographs need to be taken in the toilet area or handwashing area i.e., photographs of the children washing their hands, then the manager must be asked first and staff to be supervised by another member of staff whilst carrying out this kind of activity. At all times the camera must be placed in a prominent place where it can be seen.



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2.6 With regards to Productions/Outings:

- Photographs maybe taken during outings if permission has been granted by the manager as occasionally there are restrictions for safety reasons.
- If permission is granted, then photographs are only for parent/carers personal use and must not be under any circumstances be placed on any social networking platforms.

2.7 With regards to Social Networking:

- Croft Playgroup recognises that social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, Bebo, Twitter, Snapchat and blogs) can be a useful and fun way for individuals to keep in touch with friends and colleagues.
- However, Croft Playgroup understand the risks that arise from the use of such sites by its staff. The risks include:
- A staff member may disclose too much personal information about themselves and risk identity theft.
- A staff member may disclose person identifiable information about children, their parents/carers or other members of staff without authorisation.
- A staff member may make inappropriate or harmful statements about their work, the playgroup and risk breach of the relationship of trust and confidence.
- A staff member may discuss other team members, this can be seen as bullying.
- Staff are reminded that information posted on these websites becomes public and may be viewed by colleagues, parents, members of the public and the press.
- This policy does not mean that a member of staff can never post comments on these websites about their work for the playgroup. However, before posting comments, the staff members should always consider whether they would be happy for the parents, colleague or managers to read the comments and consider what their reaction might be.

2.8 With regards to Social Networking Using Privately Owned Equipment:

- Croft Playgroup recognises that staff may access or contribute to social networking websites in their personal time outside of work using their own equipment.
- Staff have general obligations not to breach confidentiality and not to act against the best interests of the playgroup and not to breach the relationship of trust and confidence that exists between the playgroup and its staff.
- Staff are held responsible and personally liable for any comments, images and information they may post relating to the playgroup in any way.

2.9 The Playgroup considers any of the following actions by staff may be in breach of their obligations and this would be in breach of this policy and will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal depending on the severity of the incident:



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- Posting information or making comments that are speculative or derogatory or that could bring the playgroup into disrepute or that could act negatively on the playgroups reputation or that could cause embarrassment to the playgroup, committee, staff, children or parents.
- Posting any sensitive or confidential information.
- Posting any information which could potentially identify a child or parent.
- Posting comments about children, their parents or other staff members which could cause offense even if their names are not mentioned.
- Posting comments or images that are discriminatory or could amount to bullying or harassment.
- Posting any recognisable signs, pictures relating to the playgroup, or any pictures of staff or children without their explicit, fully informed consent.
- Posting information about a work-related grievance.

2.10 Staff are offered the following advice if they decide to use social networking websites:

- Do not reveal personal details such as your date of birth or contact details. Disclosing such information could put you at risk of identity fraud.
- Before posting images or joining any campaigns/causes be aware that it is not just your friends who may see this but parents, colleagues and managers/committee members.
- If after careful consideration you decide to post comments relating to your work in any way you should make it clear that the comments expressed are your own and not those of your employer.
- Staff should inform management if you have any longstanding friends with parents of children at playgroup on their social media accounts, but are advised not to accept any new friend requests from parents.

2.11 With regards to Monitoring and Reporting Non-Compliance:

- If a member of staff is concerned about something they read on a social networking site, it is their professional responsibility to alert the manager or Committee Chair.
- Croft Playgroup does not routinely monitor social networking websites for evidence of employee activity. However, if it is brought to the Playgroup's attention that inappropriate information, images or comments have been posted then the allegation will be investigated using the croft playgroups disciplinary policy.

Further guidance NSPCC and CEOP Keeping Children Safe Online training:

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/training/online-safety>



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This policy was adopted by Croft Playgroup

Signed on behalf of the Croft Playgroup

Croft Playgroup Committee

Croft Playgroup Manager

Print Name: Katherine Chan

Print Name: Michelle Barrow, Helen Dearlove

Signed.....

Signed.....

Dated.....

Dated.....

Date policy to be reviewed: June 2024 *or earlier if required*