



Acceptable Use Policy

Aim of Policy

Peapod Pre-School recognises that there are significant educational and social benefits associated with the use of the Internet, which has become an everyday tool to support the development and learning within education. However, the nature of such an ever-changing environment highlights the need for a regular review of how we use and manage such technologies. Alongside the educational benefits there will always be risks when using technology that is available to the public and such risks need to be highlighted to all our Pre-School's users.

This policy sets out the roles, responsibilities and procedures for the acceptable, safe and responsible use of all technologies to safeguard all adults, children and young people within our Pre-School. This policy should also provide support and guidance to parents/carers and the wider community (where appropriate) for the safe and responsible use of these technologies **outside** of our Pre-School. It explains procedures for any unacceptable use of these technologies by adults and children.

Definition of terms

E-Safety

Whereby the setting or user promotes the use of accessing and utilising information and communication technologies safely and responsibly, in ways that do not compromise the safety and wellbeing of others.

Information and Communication Technologies

'Information and communication technologies' refer to those technologies accessed electronically by all members of the public, both in the home and educational environment, and are currently listed as follows:

- Websites
- Social Networking and Chat Rooms
- Gaming
- Music Downloading
- Mobile phones with wireless connectivity
- Email and Instant Messaging
- Video Broadcasting

The Legal Framework

There is certain legislation and guidance that this policy needs to be based on:

- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Computer Misuse Act 1990
- Obscene Publications Act 1959
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Communications Act 2003
- The Children Act 1989
- What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- EYFS Statutory Framework 2012
- Working Together 2023

Procedures

Peapod Pre-School recognises the importance of clear rules, procedures and guidelines to minimise risks whilst internet technologies are accessed. All adult users of our setting should be clear about the procedures, so that they are also safeguarded from misunderstandings or allegations through a lack of knowledge of potential risks. Any incidents that may arise should be dealt with quickly and according to policy to ensure children continue to be protected.

Role & Responsibility of The Board of Directors

It is the overall responsibility of the Board of Directors to ensure that there is an overview of E-Safety across the Pre-School, as part of our Safeguarding Policies and commitment to all users of the setting. The Board will ensure that any incident is dealt with appropriately and in accordance with our policies and procedures. Action such as informing the police, parents and or suspension will be taken if necessary. Please refer to our **Safeguarding Policy** and **Disciplinary and Grievance Policy** for further information.

Staff or Adults

It is the responsibility of all adults within the setting to:

- Ensure that they know who the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are within setting, so that any misuse or incidents can be reported which involve a child. Where an allegation is made against a member of staff it should be reported immediately to the LADO or Local Authority Designated Officer, in accordance with our **Safeguarding Policy**.
- Be familiar with the **Behaviour, Safeguarding** and other relevant policies so that, in the event of misuse or an allegation, the correct procedures can be followed immediately.
- Alert the Managers of any new or arising issues and risks that may need to be included within policies and procedures.

- Use electronic communications in an appropriate way that does not breach General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), May 2018.
- Remember confidentiality and not to disclose confidential information.

Inappropriate Use of the Internet by Staff or Adults

If a member of staff is believed to misuse the internet in an abusive or illegal manner, a report must be made to the Managers immediately and then the Safeguarding Policy must be followed to deal with any misconduct and all appropriate authorities contacted.

Mobile Phones & Cameras

Peapod Pre-school allows staff to bring in personal mobile phones or devices. However, use is only permitted during breaks and away from the children in the staff room.

Photographs are taken of the children using the Pre-School tablets, which are stored securely at the end of the day. Photographs are an important part of recording the children's learning and development as they form a part of their Learning Journeys. Consent is always requested from parents during the registration process.

Please refer to our **Use of Mobile Phones & Digital Photography Policy** for further information.

Tapestry: Online Digital Learning Journeys

Peapod Pre-School subscribes to Tapestry, a web-based software package through which key persons update their key children's learning journeys. The package itself is a specialised and secure piece of educational software that has been specifically designed for use by schools and early years' settings. Tapestry is overseen by the Managers who are responsible for updating children's, parents, and staff members' details. Individuals, including parents and staff have their own personal passwords and login details. Parents are asked to sign permission details on their registration form when their child starts. Parents must specify if they do/do not give their consent for their child's image to appear in other children's learning journals as either a photograph or part of a video. The registration form also specifies that parents must not upload any photos from their child's learning journeys onto any social networking sites.

Managing Social Networking and Other Online Technologies

Peapod Pre-School realises that social networking has now become an integral part of everyday life and that many people enjoy membership of social network sites such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok or Twitter. Such sites can be useful tools for bringing the community together, and we ourselves have our own Facebook page, managed by designated members of staff and directors. Our page regularly advertises up and coming events and provides useful links for parents. However, as outlined above, it is necessary to provide clear guidance for staff, parents, directors and volunteers on the usage of social network sites so that the Pre-School and its users are not compromised in any way. We are also aware that these sites can become a negative forum for complaining or gossiping and care must be taken not to breach our confidentiality policy or offend anyone when using these sites.

Social Networking Advice for Staff, Volunteers and Directors

When using social networking sites staff, directors and volunteers should consider the following:

- Ensure that full privacy settings are in place to prevent anyone other than personal friends from accessing personal information or photo albums.
- Staff members should not make reference to working in childcare or for Peapod Pre-school within their profile details.
- Staff members should decline parent friend requests; neither should they seek to make requests themselves, unless the families have left our setting.
- Social media activities should not interfere with work commitments.
- Information or comments posted on social networking sites, blogs or forums should comply with the Pre-School's Confidentiality and Data Protection Policies. Breach of confidentiality will result in disciplinary action and may result in the termination of your contract.
- Always be respectful to:
 - The Pre-School
 - Other staff members
 - Parents and relatives
 - Children
 - Competitors
- Remember that at all times, in or out of working hours, staff and directors are ambassadors or representatives for Peapod Pre-School and that your online presence reflects on the setting. Be aware that your actions captured via images, posts or comments can reflect on our setting.
- Staff should be aware that any disrespectful comments to the above may be seen as libellous. Staff will ensure that they will not post anything online, or in an email or text, that may damage their personal and professional reputation, or the reputation of colleagues or bring the Pre-School into disrepute. If there is evidence to suggest that such damage has taken place then disciplinary action may be undertaken against the staff member in question in line with our **Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures**.
- Any employee, who becomes aware of a social networking activity that would be deemed distasteful, should make the Managers or Chair of the Board aware. All Staff shall adhere to the above; breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Other Related Safeguarding Policies & Procedures

The following policies provide additional information regarding the safeguarding and welfare of the children in our care:

- Safeguarding (including Child Protection) Policy
- Tapestry Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistle-blowing Policy
- Use of Mobile Phones and Digital Photography Policy
- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Policy
- Children's Rights and Entitlements Policy

Useful Contacts

Kerri Jefferson: DSL

Mary Newman: DSL

Sarah Riley: DSL

Fran O'Neill: DSL

Norfolk Safeguarding Children's Board: www.norfolkscb.org

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer): www.norfolkscb.org

(Follow link to "People working with children")

Reviewed by Sarah Riley & Fran O'Neill, Managers October 2025

Review Date: October 2026