

Unity Stars Nurseries

Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Use Policy



Approved by:	Management Committee	Date: July 2026
Last reviewed in:	July 2026	
Next review due by:	July 2027	

Issue No	Date	Amended by	Summary of Changes
1	July 2026	Karen Davies & Laurel Parry	New Policy for Unity Stars Nurseries (strengthened July 2026)

Authorisation (Responsible Owner)

Name	Role	Approval Date
Karen Davies	Nursery Manager – Chalkstone	July 2026
Laurel Parry	Nursery Manager – Norton	July 2026

Approval (Accountable Owner)

Name	Role	Approval Date
Jemma Lynch	Trust Safeguarding Lead	July 2026

Distribution List – Once authorised (Informed)

Name	
Setting Leads	For uploading to Famly and distributing to parents and carers
Dave Gooderham	For uploading to Trust website

Review Period (at least annually or whenever statutory guidance changes)

Date Document Reviewed	By Whom
July 2026	Jemma Lynch – Trust Safeguarding Lead

This policy applies to all electronic devices that can take photographs, record video or audio, access the internet, send or receive calls, messages or notifications, or store and share information. This includes mobile phones, tablets, cameras, smartwatches, fitness watches, wearable technology, headphones or earbuds with recording capability, laptops and any other personal or nursery-owned device. As technology changes, the nursery will apply this policy to any device that may present a safeguarding, privacy, confidentiality or supervision risk.

Mobile phones and other devices capable of making/receiving calls, sending/receiving messages and/or video calling

At Unity Stars Nursery we promote the safety, welfare and privacy of all children in our care. Staff must be fully attentive during working hours so that children receive safe, high-quality care, education and supervision. Personal devices must never compromise children's safety, confidentiality, dignity or the professional boundaries expected within the nursery.

To safeguard children, staff, students and volunteers must not use personal mobile phones, smartwatches, fitness watches or any other personal electronic device during working time, or in any area used by children. Nursery-owned devices will be used only for agreed nursery purposes, such as learning journeys, communication with parents/carers, safeguarding, administration or outings.

This policy should be read alongside the nursery's Online Safety Policy, Acceptable Internet Use Policy, Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy, Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policy and any relevant Trust IT and device management procedures.

Staff must adhere to the following:

1. Personal mobile phones must be switched off or placed on silent and stored securely in staff lockers or the agreed staff storage area before staff enter nursery rooms or areas used by children.
2. Smartwatches and fitness watches must either be removed and stored securely, or set so that they function only as a watch and cannot receive notifications, calls, messages, photographs, video, audio or internet content.
3. Personal devices may only be used during designated breaks, away from children, outside nursery rooms and not in any area where children may be present or visible.
4. Personal devices must not be connected to nursery Wi-Fi, nursery systems, nursery charging points or nursery-owned devices at any time, unless expressly authorised by Trust IT for a legitimate operational reason.
5. Nursery devices, including tablets and phones, must only be used for nursery purposes and must remain subject to Trust-approved filtering, monitoring, security and device management arrangements, including Smoothwall or any successor system approved by the Trust.
6. Nursery devices must not have personal accounts, unauthorised apps, social media apps, messaging apps, cloud storage accounts or photo-sharing apps installed or accessed on them, unless approved for nursery purposes by the Trust's Central IT and Safeguarding Teams.
7. Only apps, platforms and software approved by the Trust's Central IT and Safeguarding Teams may be downloaded or used on nursery devices.
8. Passwords, passcodes and log-in details for nursery devices and systems must not be shared, written down in insecure locations, saved in browsers, or used by anyone other than the authorised user. Any suspected compromise must be reported immediately to the Nursery Manager and Trust IT.
9. During outings, staff must use nursery-owned mobile phones only. Personal phones must not be used to contact parents/carers, take images, access maps, or communicate with the nursery except in a genuine emergency where no nursery device is available.

10. Only nursery-owned devices may be used to take photographs or videos of children. Images must be used only for agreed nursery purposes and must be uploaded or transferred to the approved secure system at the earliest opportunity.

11. Photographs and videos must be deleted from the device once transferred and must not be stored on personal devices, personal cloud accounts, removable media, messaging apps or unauthorised platforms.

12. Nursery devices may only be taken off site or home by staff with prior approval from the Nursery Manager, or in their absence the Deputy Nursery Manager. Devices must be signed out and back in, kept secure, and must not be accessed by family members or anyone outside the nursery.

13. Staff must not use personal devices to contact parents/carers or children. All communication must take place through agreed nursery channels.

14. Any loss, theft, damage, unauthorised access, inappropriate image, accidental upload or data breach involving a device must be reported immediately to the Nursery Manager, Trust Safeguarding Lead and Trust Data Protection arrangements, so that safeguarding and data protection action can be taken without delay.

Parent use of mobile phones and electronic devices

Parents/carers must not use mobile phones, cameras, smartwatches or other recording devices inside the nursery or during drop-off and collection. If a parent/carer needs to take or finish a call, they must do so outside the nursery premises and away from areas where children can be seen or heard.

This is to safeguard all children, protect confidentiality and ensure that handover remains focused on the child. Where a parent/carer needs to use a device for accessibility, translation, medical or emergency reasons, they should speak to the Nursery Manager so this can be managed safely and discreetly.

Children must not bring or wear devices that can take photographs, record video or audio, access the internet, send or receive messages, or store/share information. This includes children's smartwatches or devices such as VTech watches. This protects all children and reduces the risk of devices being damaged, lost or misused.

Visitors' use of mobile phones and smartwatches

Visitors, contractors, volunteers, students and professionals are not permitted to use mobile phones, smartwatches or recording devices while in nursery areas used by children, unless this has been agreed in advance by the Nursery Manager for a specific professional purpose. Where a device is required for professional reasons, its use must be supervised and limited to the agreed purpose.

Visitors will be asked to keep devices switched off or on silent and stored securely, such as in the nursery office or another agreed location, for the duration of their visit. Visitors must not take photographs, videos or audio recordings of children, staff, rooms, displays or records without the explicit permission of the Nursery Manager and only where this is lawful, necessary and in line with consent and safeguarding requirements.

Photographs and videos

At Unity Stars Nursery we recognise that photographs and video recordings can play an important role in children's learning, development and nursery life. We ensure that photographs and recordings, including CCTV where installed, are used lawfully, proportionately and safely. Images and recordings of children will only be taken where there is a clear nursery purpose and, where required, prior written permission from each child's parent/carer.

Photograph and video permissions will be obtained when each child is registered and reviewed at least annually, usually every September, or sooner if a parent/carer requests a change. Consent can be changed or withdrawn at any time and this will be applied going forward.

We request separate, opt-in permissions for photographs and video taken in nursery. We use images to:

- document a child's learning and development within their secure learning journey;

- display children's work and experiences within the nursery setting;
- share updates securely with parents/carers through approved nursery systems;
- feature children in public materials, such as the website, brochure, local press or official social media, only where specific consent has been given.

CCTV, where installed, is used only for security and safeguarding under the nursery's CCTV policy. It is not used for marketing or general observation of staff practice.

In group activities, photographs may capture more than one child. Where consent has not been given for a child's image to appear in another child's learning journey, display or publication, the nursery will take reasonable steps to crop, blur or avoid using that child's image.

We never publish children's full names with images. Images are stored securely and must only be accessed by authorised staff for legitimate nursery purposes. In rare safeguarding, legal or statutory situations, relevant images may be shared with appropriate agencies without consent where this is necessary and proportionate, in line with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

Photographs and videos must never be taken in areas where intimate care routines are carried out, including toilets, nappy changing areas, sleep/rest areas where children are undressed, or any situation where a child's dignity or privacy could be compromised.

If a parent/carer is not satisfied with one or more proposed uses of photographs or videos, we will respect their wishes and identify alternative ways of recording and sharing their child's learning and development.

Staff are not permitted to take photographs or recordings of a child on personal devices, including cameras, mobile phones, tablets, smartwatches or any personal storage device. The Nursery Manager will monitor the use of photographs and recordings to ensure parental wishes are followed, children are safeguarded and images are used appropriately.

Photographs or videos recorded on nursery devices must be transferred to the approved secure system at the earliest opportunity. Staff must then delete the images from the device once transfer has been checked, unless there is a legitimate reason for temporary retention, such as an unresolved safeguarding or incident record.

Parents/carers and children are not permitted to use any recording device or camera, including those on mobile phones or smartwatches, on the nursery premises without the prior consent of the Nursery Manager.

During special events, for example Christmas celebrations or leaving parties, the nursery may arrange photographs or videos where this is appropriate and safe. Individual permission will be sought in advance. Parents/carers must not post images or videos from nursery events on social media, websites, messaging groups or other platforms unless they have permission from the parents/carers of every child included in the image or recording.

Online learning journals

At Unity Stars Nursery we use nursery-owned tablets and approved systems to record children's learning and development directly onto their electronic learning journeys. These devices are used for this purpose only and must not be used to access unauthorised websites, personal email, social media, messaging apps, personal cloud storage or any other non-approved application.

The Nursery Manager, or a delegated senior member of staff, will carry out routine checks of nursery devices and online learning journal use. These checks will include reviewing whether photographs have been transferred and deleted appropriately, whether unauthorised messages or emails have been sent, and whether any unauthorised apps, accounts or content are present.

Staff are reminded that any concerns about the misuse of devices, images, online learning journals or electronic communication must be reported immediately in line with the nursery's safeguarding, whistleblowing



and staff conduct procedures. Concerns will be taken seriously and may result in safeguarding action, data protection action, disciplinary action and/or referral to external agencies where appropriate.