Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Policy statement

At Cotswold Bunnies we understand that ICT, digital and mobile technology resources are regarded as useful to support learning, teaching and personal and social development. They form part of an essential life skill. When using technology with young children and adults in their setting, professionals need to ensure that the resource is used safely and responsibly.

Procedures

Why is internet use important?
The internet can be used to support learning as well as for social and personal development activities. It can motivate, engage and develop self- esteem, confidence and as a tool for the development of social capital. It is now regarded as a necessary tool, in settings, for practitioners and children.

Children and young people learn most effectively where they are given managed access to computers and control of their own learning experiences; however such use carries an element of risk. Early years practitioners, their managers and volunteers, alongside parents and carers, should ensure that very young children (under 5) can only access internet use with an adult's guidance.

Internet access for children and young people will be designed for educational aspects of social and developmental use and will include age-appropriate filtering. All practitioners should guide children and young people in online activities that will support their developmental and learning outcomes.

How will internet access be authorised?

All users of the internet will need to agree to responsible internet use. Access to the internet will be closely supervised by an adult allowing access to specific and agreed sites only. The Designated Safeguarding Leader manages the implementation of the Internet Policy. They will ensure:

- Day to day responsibility for online safety issues and as such will have a leading role in implementing, monitoring and reviewing the Internet Policy.
- All ICT users are aware of the procedures that must be followed in the event of a potentially unsafe or inappropriate online incident taking place.
- The recording, monitoring and filing of reports in the event of a potentially unsafe or inappropriate online incident. This should include the creation of an incident log which should be used to inform future online safety practice.
- All necessary actions are taken to minimise the risk of any identified unsafe or inappropriate online incidents reoccurring.
- Regular meetings take place with the registered person and senior managers to discuss current issues, review incident reports and filtering/change control logs.

How will filtering be managed?

Senior staff will manage the permitting and banning of additional web sites identified by Cotswold Bunnies. Staff will consider the use of YouTube Kids as opposed to YouTube to ensure that children are not shown adverts that are inappropriate to their age range. It may be deemed necessary to set up parental controls on devices that children have direct access to. Any material that the setting or organisation believes is illegal must be referred to the Internet Watch Foundation (http://www.iwf.org.uk)

How will the risks be assessed?

In common with other media such as magazines, books and DVDs, some material available via the Internet is unsuitable for children. Cotswold Bunnies will take all reasonable precautions to ensure that users access only appropriate material. However, due to the international scale and linked nature of internet content, it is not possible to guarantee that unsuitable material will never appear on a computer. Cotswold Bunnies cannot accept liability for the material accessed, or any consequences of internet access but will uphold high standards to try to prevent it.

If a child or young person accidentally accesses inappropriate material, it must be reported to an adult immediately. Appropriate action should be taken to hide or minimise the window. The computer should not be switched off, nor the page closed, in order to allow investigations to take place. All such incidents must be reported to the Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding who must ensure a report of the incident is made and that any further actions deemed necessary are taken.

The use of computer systems without permission or for inappropriate purposes could constitute a criminal offence under the Computer Misuse Act 1990. Staff at Cotswold Bunnies will have an awareness of current e-safety advice and will embed this within the work with children and young people.

The senior practitioners will ensure that the Internet policy is implemented and compliance with the policy monitored.

Where necessary, staff will undertake training on Online Safety.

How should website and social media content be managed?

As part of our registration process, written permission from parents or carers will be obtained before photographs of children and young people under the age of 16 are published on the setting's web site.

Full names of children and young people should not be used anywhere on the website, first names will only be used in association with photographs. Where audio and video are included (e.g. Podcasts and Video Blogging) the nature of the items uploaded will not include content that allows the children to be identified.

The manager will take overall editorial responsibility and ensure that content is accurate and appropriate.

Managing e-mail

Cotswold Bunnies will promote safe use of e-communications to other practitioners, professionals, parents/carers, children and young people. Sending images without consent or messages that cause distress and harassment to others are considered significant breaches of appropriate conduct and may be classed as bullying. E-mails sent to an external organisation should be written carefully and authorised before sending, in the same way as a letter written on headed paper.

On-line communications and social networking

Children will not be allowed access to social networking sites. The minimum age limit for accessing social networking sites is usually 12.

Mobile technologies

The Nursery mobile phone is used for business purposes by staff. The setting mobile phone is allowed within the rooms as it supports working with children and young people, e.g. use to capture images of activities for exhibition/display. Information will be downloaded and deleted when necessary. Provision is made to safely store personal phones. For Further information see 'Use of mobile phones Policy'

Parents sign an agreement within their contract on registration that they will not download or use photos from Tapestry for any purpose other than their own viewing. Staff are advised not to accept invitations from parents to "friend" on social networking sites and to do so may put them in a difficult work position. We expect them to maintain a professional relationship that is not compromised by sharing information on a social networking site. Similarly, we ask that staff and parents/carers do not post information on their site that could affect other families and their children from our childcare setting. This particularly would apply if children's names or photographs were to appear in the context of our setting. We would always take legal advice if our setting were to be quoted in a defamatory way on a social networking site.

Consulting with practitioners and their inclusion in the e-safety policy.

All practitioners should be consulted about the contents of this policy to ensure that the use of the internet and mobile technologies supports their work with children and young people in a safe environment. The consequences for internet and mobile phone /technology misuse should be clear so that all adults are confident to apply this should the situation arise (e.g. supervised access, withdrawal of access)

The monitoring of internet use is a sensitive matter. Practitioners who operate monitoring procedures should be supervised by senior practitioners. Practitioner development in safe and responsible internet use will be provided as required by the setting.

How will complaints be handled?

Responsibility for handling incidents will be delegated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Any complaint about practitioner misuse must be referred to the manager/DSL. This may include any allegations made outside of the setting. Parents will need to work in partnership

with practitioners to resolve issues should they arise. There may be occasions when the police must be contacted. Early contact could be made to establish the legal position and discuss strategies. Sanctions available include:

- Interview/counselling by a designated senior practitioner,
- informing parents or carers,
- removal of internet or computer access for an identified proportional amount of time,
- supervised access.

If a serious allegation is made against a staff member then Ofsted will be notified and procedures outlined in the 'Safeguarding children' policy will be followed.

Legal framework

Every Child Matters

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Education Act 2011

Working together to safeguard children (2018)

Data Protection Act (2018)

General Data Protection Regulation (2018)

Further guidance

GOV.UK – "Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety for practitioners" 2019

GOV.UK – "Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety for managers" 2019

This Policy was adopted by:		Cotswold Bunnies Nurseries Ltd	
On:	18/10/2024	Date to be reviewed:	18/10/2025
Signed on behalf of the Provider:			

Name of Signatory:	Pippa Collins
Role of Signatory (e.g, Chair, Director or Manager)	Manager