



“A Confident Start in a Caring Environment”



HOME FARM CHILDREN'S NURSERY LTD (HFCN)

On-line Safety Policy and Procedures

Last updated:	July 2025
Next review:	July 2026
Ratified By:	HFCN Board

ONLINE SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES
(including mobile phones and use of cameras)

This is a Statutory Policy

Policy statement

At HFCN settings online safety (e-Safety) is an essential element of safeguarding children and adults in the digital world, when using technology such as computers, cameras, webcams, CCTV, mobile devices and gaming consoles.

The purpose of the online Safety Policy is to:

- seek to ensure that images and videos taken within and by the HFCN Nurseries are taken and held legally and the required thought is given to safeguarding all members of the setting. It applies to all images (including still and video content) taken by the Nursery.
- clearly identify the key principles expected of all members of the community with regards to the safe and responsible use of technology to ensure that the setting is a safe and secure environment.
- safeguard and protect all members of the HFCN Nurseries.
- raise awareness with all staff regarding potential risks as well as benefits of technology.
- enable all staff to work safely and responsibly, to role model positive behaviour online and be aware of the need to manage personal standards and practices when using technology.
- identify clear procedures to use when responding to online safety concerns that are followed by all members of the community.

HFCN identifies that the breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable, but can be categorised into four areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful content. For example, pornography, fake news, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, anti-Semitism, radicalisation and extremism.
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users. For example, peer to peer pressure, commercial advertising and adults posing as children or young adults with the intention to groom or exploit them for sexual, criminal, financial or other purposes.
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm. For example, making, sending and receiving explicit images (e.g. consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi-nudes and/or pornography), sharing other explicit images and online bullying.
- Commerce: risks such as online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and or financial scams.

- HFCN will ensure online safety is reflected as required in all relevant policies. Online safety is considered as a running and interrelated theme when devising and implementing our policies and procedures and when planning our curriculum, staff training, the role and responsibilities of the DSL and parental engagement.
- HFCN recognises that technology, and the risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly. The settings will carry out an annual review of our approaches to online safety, supported by an annual risk assessment which considers and reflects the risks our children face.

- The named Trustee for safeguarding will report on online safety practice and incidents, including outcomes, on a regular basis to the wider governing body.

This policy applies to all staff and includes parents/carers, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for or provide services on behalf of the HFCN Nurseries.

At HFCN Nurseries, we aim to provide an environment in which children, parents/carers are safe from images being recorded and inappropriately used. We also want to minimise the risk to our staff of allegations arising from the inappropriate use of mobile phones, photographs or personal cameras.

Procedures

Mobile Phones

- HFCN allows staff personal mobile phones and devices to be used for personal use only.
- Mobile phones should be kept in locked boxes in the office, away from the children.
- Personal calls should be made at break times.
- All parent helpers/students on work placement will be requested to place their bag containing their mobile phone in the office.
- If staff have a personal emergency they are free to use the settings phone.
- Staff should ensure that their families, children's schools etc. have the nursery's contact details in case of an emergency. This is the responsibility of the individual staff member.
- During walks or outings staff will take the Nursery mobile, which is to be used for emergencies only.
- All staff have a duty of care and must notify the management or designated Safeguarding Officers of any concerns regarding inappropriate or misuse of mobile phones by staff.
- Visitors to the Nurseries should be informed that mobile devices may not be used.

Note:

- *In no circumstances should a personal phone be taken into the toilet area.*
- *In no circumstances should a personal phone be used to take images of a child /children in our care.*

Cameras, Photographs and Video recording

Photographs and video recordings are used for the purpose of observing a child or group of children participating in activities or celebrating their achievements and is an effective way of recording their progression through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Photographs/ recordings are also taken on trips, fun days and at the Nativity play.

Parental consent is obtained when the child joins HFCN Nurseries and lasts for the duration of the child's stay. Parents have the right to withdraw their consent at any time by putting a request in writing to the Management.

Procedure for taking Photographs

- Only nursery cameras to be used for taking photographs in nursery or on outings.
- In no circumstances should cameras of any kind be taken into the toilets.
- The removal of cameras and iPads from the premises is prohibited, with the exception of authorised outings, for the purpose of conducting observations, or other pre-approved activities.
- Images are only downloaded onto the nursery computer and are deleted as soon as no longer required.
- Images will be deleted from the camera when photographs are printed.
- Images taken of the children will be purposeful and accurately reflect the experience or activity.
- Images used in the digital photo frame will be deleted when finished with.
- HFCN nurseries will not digitally enhance or alter photographs.
- Unused printed photographs will be shredded.
- Photographs provided by a third party (i.e. family member) will be used in the child's learning journal or returned.

Photographs/ Video observations for use in University/College courses.

As part of their continuing professional development Staff at HFCN Nurseries may need photographic evidence of a child/ children for their portfolio. If this is required the member of staff will inform the management and also obtain written permission from the parent/carer concerned. The staff member will use the **nursery camera** to take the photographs/recording. The staff member will not alter the image in any way. The **Nursery computer and printer** will be used to develop the photograph and when no longer needed it will be shredded as in the above procedures. If the photograph/recording is needed for work stored on the student's computer the student must follow the above procedures and delete the image/s as soon as they are no longer needed.

Professional Photography

HFCN Nurseries occasionally uses the services of professional photographers. Parents are advised in advance and asked in the morning if they would like their child's photograph taken. Parents are welcome to stay. During the session children are constantly supervised by at least one member of staff.

If we invite the local press to an event, Nursery parents will have the opportunity to decline their permission for their child's photograph to be taken.

Photography by Parents/Carers - Video cameras and camcorders

The UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent parents/carers from recording images for purely personal use. Photographs taken solely for a family album, for example, are generally exempt from most obligations of data protection legislation under the 'household exemption'.

However, to protect the privacy and safety of all children, parents/carers are strictly permitted to take photographs of only their own child at Nursery events.

HFCN Nurseries will make it explicitly clear at the commencement of any event that all images taken must be for private, personal use only. Failure to adhere to this may lead to a breach of the privacy rights of other children and their families.

For any photographs or recordings, the Nurseries wish to place on the Nursery website or use for promotional materials, HFCN will always contact parents/carers to seek specific, informed consent beforehand.

The right to refuse parents and carers the opportunity to take photographs and make videos is reserved on health and safety grounds. This right will be implemented should it be deemed appropriate. For example, if the excessive use of flash photography, or bulky and noisy equipment, is considered a potential health and safety risk to children or staff.

Internet use and other types of Technology

Home Farm Children's Nursery is linked to the Homewood School and 6th Form Centre's intranet system, therefore benefit from integrated filtering systems and restricted access to certain internet content, which significantly reduces the risk of accidental exposure to inappropriate material.

Nevertheless, the following procedures must be diligently followed to ensure the safety of both children and adults while using the internet:

- Filtering breaches or any other internet safety concerns identified through our monitoring procedures will be recorded and promptly reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who will respond as appropriate.

Procedures for using the Internet, staff and children.

- Children will be monitored at all times while using the internet and only use approved and pre-checked websites only.
- Children should be given age appropriate guidance about acceptable and safe behaviour when using technology and the internet. See www.thinkuknow.co.uk and www.childnet.com.
- Children must always be reminded not to give out or post personal details on websites, particularly information which could identify them.
- Any new technologies will be risk assessed and evaluated to determine their learning and development potential for children before being used in the Nursery.
- All ICT users are expected to write online communications in a polite, respectful and non-abusive manner.
- Internet access may be monitored.
- If a potentially unsafe or inappropriate incident occurs, the responsible person for Safeguarding, DSLs must be informed, a written report of the incident made, and the safeguarding procedure followed. A log of incidents will be kept in the safeguarding folder.
- A secure password system is in place and nursery email accounts are secure.
- Regularly monitored and updated anti-virus protection is in place.

Social Networking

Access to social networking sites is not permitted by children in the setting. Managers and staff are not permitted to use work related technology for personal access to networking sites.

It is not permissible for staff to engage in personal online communications with children, parents or carers. This includes social networking platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. This is considered inappropriate.

If staff are friends with parents they must remain mindful about maintaining their professional integrity at all times. At no time must the nursery, staff or children be commented on.

Parents and carers are prohibited from posting pictures of children taken at the setting on social networking sites. These procedures are in place to protect staff, children and families.

Working with Parents/Carers

HFCN Nurseries will build a partnership approach to online safety, supporting parents/carers to become aware of and alert to the potential online benefits and risks for children. This will be achieved by sharing relevant information on the nursery websites, through newsletters, and via informative leaflets.