**Internet & ICT Usage Policy**

**Purpose of Policy**

Rainbow Nursery is aware of the growth of internet use and the advantages this can bring. However, it is also aware of the dangers and strives to support children, staff and families in using the internet safely.

**Internet Usage**

The internet can be freely accessed for nursery matters (including finding resources, planning etc.) during working hours however staff must not download personal content such as music/films etc.

Staff must be aware of viruses which could lurk in emails. Whilst using the nursery internet facilities staff must be cautious of unsafe sites and must not open any emails in error from names that aren’t recognised to protect the nursery computer from potential viruses.

It is vitally important that staff are careful about content that they search out or download. Every time you view a page on the internet, it is possible to trace your visit back to the nursery computer. This means that it is possible to tell if the nursery computer was being used to look at inappropriate web pages.

Children should not have access to any social media sites but are to be encouraged to use the internet to access educational learning sites under close supervision from staff.

**Computers, Tablets & Other ICT**

The nursery will ensure appropriate antivirus and anti-spyware software is activated on all devices and updated regularly - ensuring content blockers and filters are on all our devices.

Staff should ensure all apps or games downloaded to tablets are age appropriate for children and monitor and review regularly to safeguard the children and staff.

We abide by an acceptable use policy; ensuring staff only use the work IT equipment for matters relating to the children and their education and care. No personal use will be tolerated.

Staff must ensure that all nursery devices are locked away at the end of the day.

**Social Media**

Staff are advised to manage their personal security settings to ensure their information is only available to people they chose to share with. In the event that staff name the organisation or workplace in any social media they do so in a way that is not detrimental to the organisation or it’s children or parents/carers. Staff observe confidentiality and refrain from discussing any issues relating to work. Staff should not share information they would not want children, parents or colleagues to view.

Staff are advised not accept parents/carers as friends, and should avoid personal communication, including on social networking sites, with the children and parents with whom they act in a professional capacity. If a practitioner and family are friendly prior to the child coming to the nursery, this information must be shared with the manager prior to a child attending and a risk assessment and agreement in relation to boundaries is agreed. Staff should report any concerns or breaches to the nursery manager.

We promote the safety and welfare of all staff and children and therefore ask parents and visitors not to post, publically or privately, information about any child on social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We ask all parents and visitors to follow this policy to ensure that information about children, images and information do not fall into the wrong hands. Therefore, we ask that parents do not screen shot or share any posts or pictures from the nursery on social media platforms (these may contain other children in the pictures) or post any photographs to social media that have been supplied by the nursery with other children in them (e.g. Christmas concert photographs or photographs from an activity at nursery).

We ask parents to share any concerns regarding inappropriate use of social media through the official procedures (please refer to the Partnership with Parents policy, Complaints policy and Grievance policy).

Rainbow Nursery aims to promote itself as widely as possible, and so hosts accounts on social media streams such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The use of these main accounts is restricted to the management team and comments/posts/tags by/to these accounts will be in keeping with the positive image being promoted by the organisation.

Typical posts on these organisational accounts may include general activities happening at nursery, upcoming events, interesting activities to try at home, pedagogy based information, adverts of recruitment, registration adverts and press releases. These posts may include photographs or videos from the nursery, which will adhere to the consent guidance in the Photograph policy. Families are able to change their consent for public use of photographs/videos at any point by informing a member of staff who will notify the nursery manager.

**Reporting Concerns of Misuse**

Staff are aware that it is an offence to distribute indecent images. In the event of a concern that a colleague or person is behaving inappropriately, the Child Protection & Safeguarding policy, in relation to allegations against staff and/or responding to suspicions of abuse, is followed. Staff are aware that grooming children and young people online is an offence in its own right and concerns about a colleague’s behaviour must be reported.

The nursery manager will make sure that all staff know how to report a problem and when to escalate a concern, including the process for external referral if they feel it is needed. All concerns are logged, assessed and actioned upon using the nursery’s Child Protection & Safeguarding policy. Parents are offered support to help them talk about online safety with their children using appropriate resources. Parents are signposted to appropriate sources of support regarding online safety at home and are fully supported to understand how to report an online safety concern

If any concerns arise relating to online safety or disregard for any of the policy then we will follow our Child Protection & Safeguarding policy and report all online safety concerns to the nursery manager.

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**Date Completed: October 2023**

**Review Date: October 2024**

*This policy will be monitored in line with relevant legislation and good practice guidelines.*