



"Together we learn"

Mobile Phone, Photography & Social Communications Policy

Ratified on:
Chairperson's Signature:

THE USE OF MOBILE PHONES

The following protocols should be followed by all staff members using mobile phones.

- Incoming calls should only be taken once the children have left school and inside coffee and lunch breaks except for emergencies.
- Outgoing calls should only be made by staff, once the children have left school and inside coffee and lunch breaks.
- In emergency situations, staff must inform the Principal of the need to make or receive a call and seek permission to do so. These calls will be kept as brief as possible.
- Text messages should only be received and sent once the children have left school and inside coffee and lunch breaks.
- Mobile phones must never be used to take photographs of children anywhere on school property under any circumstances.
- The staff will take their own mobile phones on school trips. Each staff member has their colleagues' telephone numbers, school telephone numbers etc stored on their phone. No parents numbers are stored on staff phones.

The following protocols should be followed by parents/carers/daycare staff when in the building:

- Parents and carers are asked to take note of the highly visible notices placed around the school building and refrain from using their mobile phones for any purpose within the school building.
- Parents are not permitted to use their phones to make or receive calls or to send or receive text messages during the course of school trips or visits or during school events without the expressed knowledge and permission of the school Principal or the teacher in charge.

PHOTOGRAPHY

At Banbridge Nursery School we recognise that staff have a duty to safeguard and ensure the welfare of all the children in our care. We are aware of the potential harm which could be caused by the improper use of photography and strive to ensure that all photographic records are stored and used safely and securely, in line with GDPR protocol.

All members of staff carry or have the use of an iPad to take photographs in all areas of the nursery environment except the bathrooms. Photography is used to

capture staff's observations of the children and the photographs are used as evidence to record the children's interests, enjoyment and learning.

Parents are asked to sign a form giving their permission for staff to take photographs. If permission is not given staff will be instructed not to photograph a specific child/ren under any circumstances.

The nature of the nursery environment means that children are often photographed alongside others. This means that some photographs of specific children may be included in a second child's portfolio. This is explained to parents by the Principal during the parents' introductory information session. Parents who are not happy with this arrangement may decide not to grant permission for their child to be photographed during the school year.

PROTOCOL FOR THE USE OF CAMERAS/IPADS BY STAFF MEMBERS AND VISITORS TO SCHOOL

The following protocols should be followed by all staff when photographing children.

- Digital cameras / iPads which are school property may only be used on school premises or on school trips.
- Staff may not use their own cameras.
- Staff will not photograph children who say they do not want to be photographed or who are obviously uncomfortable with having their photograph taken.
- All photographs taken of children remain school property and may not be shared with anyone outside school.
- No photographs may be taken in the bathrooms except for those used in our hand washing routine.
- Photographs of the children will be displayed in various areas throughout the school.
- A selection of photographs is included in the children's Seesaw journal and the school website to illustrate various aspects of the children's development and learning.
- Ex-display photographs may occasionally be purchased by parents if they are not being included in the children's portfolios. Any unused photographs are destroyed at the end of the school year, in line with GDPR protocol.
- Photographs may be stored only on school computers and tablets. All copies are deleted at the end of the school year, in line with GDPR protocol.
- Photographs may be published in the local papers using children's first names only.
- Photographs will be placed on the gallery page of the school website on a regular basis. No names will be attached to these photographs.
- External providers or visitors to school, e.g. EVO's football; Cantata; Authentic Yoga are not permitted to take and/or publish photographs of children without the written permission of the parents. This will be sought prior to

visits and all visitors will be made fully aware of any objections from parents. Children who do not have parental permission will NEVER be photographed by external providers.

- Students may not photograph the children at any time.
- Volunteers may not photograph the children at any time.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PARENTS

- Parents'/carers' mobile phones must never be used to take photographs of children, staff or visitors anywhere on school property except during special events and then only with the expressed permission of the Principal.
Parents will only be permitted to take photographs of their own children on these occasions. Parents must not take pictures of children from other families.
- Photographs taken on school premises or at school events **MUST NEVER BE PLACED ON ANY SOCIAL MEDIA SITE.**
- Parents must never record videos of their children or staff in school or at school events.

CHILDREN'S USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

- A number of defunct cameras are available for the children to incorporate into various play scenarios. These cameras help the children to become familiar with photographic technology but do not actually take real photographs. When these are included in play areas the children are free to use them as they desire.
- A number of cameras and iPads for use by children are made available to them at various times throughout the school year at the discretion of the teaching staff. These cameras / iPads take real photographs. The photographs captured by the children may be printed/displayed throughout the school/used to inform evaluations of the children's experiences/included in the children's Seesaw journals.
- The children may not take photographs in the bathrooms under any circumstances.

PROTOCOL FOR THE USE OF INTERACTIVE EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS, SPECIFICALLY 'SEESAW' AND 'FACEBOOK'.

In 2020, use of the interactive, educational platform 'Seesaw' was introduced in Banbridge NS. The main function of this facility was to ensure continuous provision for communication, learning and development for all families during the extended periods of school closure that were enforced during the COVID 19 pandemic. During 2020 we also established our Banbridge Nursery School page and private group (for each school year).

These platforms enable two-way communication from home to school and vice versa under very strict privacy regulations. Each year a new private group is

established for that specific group of children and the administrators (Miss Thompson and Mrs Porter) do not permit access to this group by any parties other than parents/guardians. This platform is used to share very general school information and NEVER refers to individual children or groups of children. When a photo/video of children is posted to Facebook, it is only ever posted on our private group page and names are never attached to the photos or videos. All staff and parents posting on Facebook are expected to do so in a respectful and positive manner.

Any inappropriate use of this platform will result in the offending party being removed from the group. Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.

In the case of Seesaw, each family is provided with their own personal QR code and only children/parents tagged in the communication will be able to view written or photographic material pertaining to a child.

This platform was invaluable to our school community over the course of the COVID pandemic and it continues to hold great value in enabling parents to develop a sense of their children's learning and development in school and to access advice about how best to support their children at home.

A number of rules for the safe and respectful use of the Seesaw platform are followed by families and staff alike:

1. Specific information about an individual child's progress and learning is shared **ONLY** with their family.
2. No specific information pertaining to an individual child's progress and learning will ever be shared in a group post.
3. All communications are respectful and positive, offering clear and constructive advice when required.
4. Staff will respond to posts/questions from parents on weekdays, during the school term, between the hours of 8.30am and 4.30pm on weekdays. *On occasions, staff will post photos and information for families in the evening but staff will not be expected to respond to queries from parents outside the hours stipulated above nor during school holiday periods.*
5. Parents will use Seesaw to communicate **ONLY** information about their child's progress and learning. All other information and queries must be forwarded in one of the following ways:
 - ✓ by face-to-face communication
 - ✓ by phone
 - ✓ by letter
 - ✓ by email to the school Principal at info@banbridgens.banbridge.ni.sch.uk

Any inappropriate use of this platform will result in the offending party being removed from the group. Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

Our Mobile Phone, Photography and Social Communications Policy has links with our Child Protection, Pastoral Care, Complaints' Procedure, Intimate Care and ICT policies. All staff permitted to use cameras will have undergone criminal record checks. All staff are trained in the school's child protection procedures on a regular basis.

CONCLUSION

At Banbridge Nursery School we recognise the potential of the appropriate use of photography to enhance our practice. Parents and staff are thrilled to be able to share many of the children's experiences through viewing photographs of the children and their friends at work and play. The ability to capture a moment in a child's life in a picture is a privilege and can convey so much more than words. It can touch a special place in the heart and life of a parent. The children also love to share their experiences with others by recalling and sharing a moment in time caught on camera.

However, we recognise that the inappropriate use of photography has the power to cause untold harm and damage to our pupils and their families and consequently will take all reasonable measures to ensure that we use technology in a safe manner and in the best interests of our children whose welfare remains paramount in all we do.