Little Disciples Childcare

Media Policy

"Caring for children, supporting parents, and sparking imaginations – where quality, affordability, and excitement meet!"

Document Title:	Media Policy
Owner:	Little Disciples Childcare
Approval Date:	November 2024
Next Review Date:	November 2025
Distribution List:	Committee, Management Team, Staff & Parents
Responsible Individual Signature:	
Person in Charge Signature:	

Version	Date	Changes Made	Author	Approved By	Next Review Date
1.0	September 2023	Initial Release for Provider changes	S. Gocher	A. Stephens	Annually – September 2024
2.0	November 2024	Policy Review	S. Gocher	A. Stephens	Annually – November 2025
2.1	January 2025	Minor amendments – Pg numbers and Document Control	S. Gocher	A. Stephens	Annually – November 2025

Policy Statement

At Little Disciples Childcare, we are committed to providing a seamless and cohesive approach to childcare across all our services. This policy and procedure apply equally to both our Nursery Plus provision and our Breakfast, Afterschool, and Holiday Club services. This integrated framework ensures consistent standards of care, safety, and quality across all aspects of our provision, fostering a supportive and nurturing environment for every child in our care.

Media Policy

With the availability and accessibility of many different media, Little Disciple Childcare aims to ensure that no one attending or working at the Childcare is put at a disadvantage or feels threatened by the inappropriate use of mobile devices, smart watches, internet, cameras, videos, DVDs. Many devices such portable media players, gaming devices, mobile telephones are now equipped with internet access, GPS, cameras, video, and audio recording systems.

The designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for the implementation, monitoring, and review of this policy.

Communications

- Staff should remember that they have a respected position and should act accordingly. Although work emails may be used to exchange information, settings should be aware that free, web-based email services are not considered secure for personal data and their use could put the setting at risk. Sensitive personal data about children or families using this setting and industry-sensitive information about finances or business practices should be communicated in the most secure manner. The use of email and text messaging for these purposes is prohibited, unless through a secure email channel.
- All ICT users are expected to write online communications in a polite, respectful, and non-abusive manner.
- Confidentiality and privacy rights must be always respected.

Mobile Phone Use by Staff

- The setting does not permit staff to use their personal mobile phones during setting hours, except for specific work purposes, with direct permission from their line manager. Staff telephones should be safely stored away during setting hours. Members of staff can be contacted on the settings telephone number during opening hours. Staff can use the settings mobile devices to access the internet for work purposes such as finding activity ideas.
- Any member of staff found to be using their mobile devices for personal reasons without direct permission from their line manager is subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the setting's disciplinary procedure.
- Recording devices on smart watches, mobile telephones, such as cameras and videos, must never be used to record children at the setting.

Mobile Phone Use by Children

- The setting does not allow children to use their mobile phones in the setting for any purpose, i.e., conversations, messages, cameras, etc. Any parent wishing to contact their child in an emergency should do so through the settings telephone. Children who have mobile phones at the setting are asked to keep them in their bags. Any child's mobile telephone used in the setting will be kept by staff and returned to the parent when the child is collected.

Photographs/Videos

- In the course of our work with children, we sometimes like to record our activities through photographs or videos and other media. We will use the images and video recordings for publicity, which may include reports to funders, newsletters, promotion, our website, and social media (this list is not exhaustive). We will not do so without prior written permission from parents/carers. This permission is gained when the child is first registered at the setting and will be updated on an annual basis. Any outside agency which wishes to take photographs or videos of our setting will seek written permission from parents/carers in advance. Parents/carers or children may withdraw consent for the images to be used at any time. Please make such requests in writing to the Senior Playworker.
- Provided permissions have been granted, staff may use only the settings equipment, such as cameras, iPads, and mobile telephones to take images of the children. Personal photographic equipment owned by staff should never be used.
- Parents must not use any camera, video recorder, or another recording device on setting premises without prior permission from the settings management.

Internet Use

The setting recognises the Internet is part of everyday life and can be useful for learning and development for both staff and children. Playworkers, their managers, and volunteers, alongside parents and carers, should reinforce the messages given to children and young people about the potential risks associated with online technologies. This empowers them with the knowledge and skills to keep safe. Children and young people, where appropriate, should be encouraged to think carefully before placing images and information about themselves online, especially where doing so reveals personal information. Children are reminded not to give personal details online. Whilst the internet and social networking sites are exciting communication tools, children should be reminded that their use can pose potential risks. The setting will aim to source training and/or additional guidance to promote the responsible and safe use of the Internet:

- The internet can be freely accessed by staff for settings matters (such as finding resources, activity ideas) during working hours.
- The setting does not allow staff to send or receive any personal emails during working hours without prior permission from management.
- The setting ensures that the appropriate Internet security measures are in places such as secure broadband or wireless access, a secure, filtered, managed internet service provider and/or learning platform, secure email accounts, regularly monitored and updated virus protection, secure password system, an agreed list of assigned authorised users with controlled access.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring their passwords remain secure, regularly updated, and that they always log out when leaving the computer unattended. A list of authorised ICT users should be maintained with access to sensitive and personal data restricted.
- Children may use the internet for playing developmental games, finding resources, etc. either in groups or individually, but will always be supervised by a member of staff.
- Children are encouraged to report any inappropriate or harassing Internet or mobile messages. The settings anti-bullying policy includes cyberbullying.
- 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. All such incidents must be reported to the Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding Officer who must ensure a report of the incident is made and that any further actions deemed necessary are taken. Illegal websites should be reported to the Internet Watch Foundation: http://www.iwf.org.uk

- All users (children, staff, and volunteers) must report any concerns when using online technologies to the Senior Designated Person for Safeguarding Officer.

Social Networking

- The setting acknowledges that some social networking sites are useful for staff for work purposes e.g., activity ideas, and can be accessed using a work profile for specific work purposes as agreed with the line manager and Safeguarding Officer.
- The official setting email address should be used when creating a profile on a networking site rather than a personal email address. This will reduce the risk of impostor or fake profiles and is important in relation to any liability or risk for the individual who sets up the profile on behalf of the organisation. A designated person/s will be identified with authority to set up and manage the site. Only organisational and not personal email addresses are made available on or through a profile.
- The log-in details to the account (including the password to the account and webpage/profile) should be kept secure within the organisation. This will reduce the risk of someone hacking into online information.
- The privacy and safety settings available across all aspects of the services should be carefully considered – for photos, blog entries, and image galleries - and the appropriate level of the privacy setting. Failing to set appropriate privacy levels could result in messages which are defamatory, libelous, or obscene appearing on your profile before you have a chance to remove them.
- All messages are checked before they appear on the settings webpage/profile and any inappropriate messages are blocked and, if necessary, reported to the service provider. This may not be possible with all social networking services. If so, contact the service provider to establish whether you can adjust the privacy and safety settings to suit your needs.
- Any communication between adults and children/young people, by whatever method, should occur within clear and explicit boundaries and for professional reasons only.
- The setting does not allow staff to access social networking sites, **using personal profiles**, on any device whilst at work. Any staff found to be accessing such sites, or any website not relating to work, are subject to disciplinary action.
- Staff are discouraged from forging online friendships with parents/carers or children.
- Staff also need to protect their own online reputation, particularly when using social networking sites. The use of such sites must not compromise professional integrity or bring the setting into disrepute. Any issues raised on social networking sites etc. Must be carefully considered as they are open to public viewing. No connection to the setting, staff, children, or any incidents is to be mentioned on such sites.
- The setting confidentiality policy must be always followed.
- Any action which is seen to bring the setting into disrepute is investigated immediately and the issue dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedure.
- The use of USB sticks or other storage devices is not allowed.

IT Equipment

- The setting does not encourage children to bring in personal IT equipment such as laptops, tablets, music players, games consoles, and so on. We do not accept any responsibility for the equipment that is brought in.
- Any games or software provided by the setting is age-appropriate according to the age rating given to the game by the BBFC or PEGI or other appropriate organisation.

Television/DVD's/Films/Music/Literature

- All television/DVD's/films/music/literature used in the club is age-appropriate, and the relevant license will be sought where needed.

Publicity

All publicity materials prepared or any enquiries from the press or media must be passed first to the Chairperson of the setting.