Internet / ICT Policy

The internet is an incredible resource for children to access, support for homework, chatting to friends etc., but it can also be a very dangerous place. They can be exposed to inappropriate material, harassment and bullying, viruses and hackers and be conned into giving away financial information. They can also be vulnerable to on-line grooming by paedophiles.

As a Childminder, I offer children the opportunity to use the computer and the internet; however, I have introduced a range of procedures to ensure their safety.

* I have a filter on my computer that blocks out most inappropriate material
* I do not permit the children to go onto chat rooms or social networking sites
* I talk to the children about the websites they are using
* I am always nearby, and my computer is in the playroom when in use, so that I can keep an eye on the websites they are visiting
* I check the history of the computer regularly
* I discuss with the children about the importance of keeping safe online

I am also aware of the need to limit the time children spend on computers and will ensure that they spend a balance of time engaged in ICT and other activities. Our internet is password protected and I will not give the password to any child entering our home.

**If you would rather your child was not allowed access to the internet, then please let me know.**

I also allow the older children to bring their own tablets and mobile phones into my setting. However, these are allowed on the understanding that the child has the responsibility to keep the device safe and I will not be responsible for any breakages. The children are not allowed to take photographs of any of the other children in my setting and they are only allowed to use their own tablets and mobile phones under my supervision so that I can make sure that they are keeping themselves safe whilst using them.

Myself and my assistant will have our mobile phones on us whilst working. However, we will limit the websites visited during working hours to those appropriate for working with children (for example, websites to get ideas for activities).

I ask for written permission from the parents so that we can take photographs of the children. These photographs will be used in the child’s records or my records only. I ask for written permission from the parents so that if I take photographs of their child with other children in the setting, I can share these photographs with all the parents of the children in the photograph. We will not disclose any information or photographs about the children on any social media. I will regularly pass on the photographs of children to their respective parents, either by email, USB storage devices or other appropriate means.

As I use a business laptop and tablet for storing sensitive information about children and families (e.g., care plans, attendance, development records), I follow strict data protection measures to prevent unauthorised access. These include:

* Implementing password protection and encrypted storage for sensitive data.
* Using parental controls and separate user profiles to prevent children from accessing private files.
* Ensuring compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

For further details, please refer to my **Privacy Notice** regarding data security procedures and responsibilities.

I use the MindingKids App to keep parents informed of observations I have made, our routines, and other useful information. The App allows me to take photos and attach them to the child’s daily routines. I therefore ask parents to sign a permission form so that I can use this resource to record and document their child’s time at Little Rosebuds.

This policy was designed by Little Rosebuds with regard to the following legislation.

**The National Minimum Standards for regulated Childcare for children up to the age of 12 years**

* Standard 6: Working in Partnership with parents
* Standard 20: Safeguarding.

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