



Hilldrop Area Community Association

Mobile Phones, Cameras, Smart Technology and Devices Policy

March 2024

Policy No. 11	This policy was adopted by HACA in June 2018 and will be reviewed at least every 2 years.	Date of Review: March 2024
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We intend to provide an environment in which children, parents and staff are safe from images being recorded and inappropriately used, thus in turn eliminating the following concerns:

- a) Staff being distracted from their work with children or vulnerable adults
- b) The inappropriate use of All electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities including mobile phones, smart watches, iPads, tablets, gaming devices and gadgets around children or vulnerable adults

Mobile Phones and Smart Devices:

- Under no circumstances does HACA allow a member of staff to contact any users, children, or parents/carers using their personal device.
- Hilldrop Play Project and Under Fives Services request that staff secure personal mobile phones and cameras with their belongings and do not use or access them during session times.
- All Staff bringing personal devices into work must ensure there is no inappropriate or illegal content on their devices.
- All staff must ensure that their mobile telephones/Smart devices are left inside their bag throughout contact time with children. Staff bags should be placed in cupboards unless requested by the Manager or Leader to move them to another appropriate location.
- Visitors to the Play Project, including parents collecting their children, are instructed to keep their mobile phones and all Smart devices in a bag or pocket.
- Mobile phone calls may only be taken during staff breaks or in staff members' own time away from the service provision.
- If staff have a personal emergency, they are free to use the organisation's landline telephone or make a personal call from their mobile away from the designated area of the setting.
- If any Play Project staff member has a family emergency or similar and is required to keep their mobile phone to hand, prior permission must be sought from the Manager.

- During group outings, nominated staff will have access to a company mobile phone agreed by the setting, which is to be used for emergency purposes only and must not be used to make personal calls at any time.

Parents, families, or visitors on-site:

- To ensure the safety of our children we ask you to keep your phones in your bags or pockets while in the play project.
- If you are seen using your phone staff will ask you to stop or take your call outside.
- Whilst we understand there may be circumstances where the use of a mobile phone is needed staff will ask you to go to a designated area for safe use.

Children's phones:

- We do understand that children are getting phones as early as 9 or 10 years of age now for many reasons. If your child is bringing a phone to the centre they will need to :
 - Hand it over to staff where it will be kept in the staff office until the end of the session
 - Please note we here at Hilldrop will not be responsible for the phone if it gets lost or damaged.

Smart Watches:

Hilldrop Play Project recognises the health benefits that smartwatches can have on our staff's lifestyles i.e. counting steps and measuring heart rate. To ensure staff use of smartwatches is safe all staff must adhere to :

Core Staff:

- Only smart watches **without** cameras can be worn while working. The make and models of watches can be checked by management to ensure no hidden cameras.
- Smart Watches must be on flight mode with Bluetooth off to ensure no internet connectivity or connection to a mobile device.
- Staff understand they should not be checking their messages or taking calls as this is a distraction of your attention away from the children and potentially dangerous.
- Staff must be vigilant of other staff checking their watches and reminding them of our policies and if they continue to be distracted by their watch the Play Project manager and centre manager reserve the right to say it can not be worn while working.
- Photographs can only be processed from a Smart Watch with a mobile device in close proximity; staff are reminded that the safe storage of a mobile phone is in the Play Project manager's office.
- Staff should not use their Smart Watch to access photos or images whilst on Hilldrop community centres premises (indoors or outdoors) and whilst on local trips/outings.
- **At any point Hilldrop Community Centre reserve the right to remove the use of Smart Watches while working in the centre.**

Agency staff:

- All Smart Watches are not to be worn while working with the children and need to be away with other belongings.
- If a Smart Watch is needed for health reasons medical proof is required and approved. Then all rules for core staff apply.

Parents and Family:

- Should be reminded not to use any of their smart devices while on the premises.
- Staff can ask parents, carers, and family to put the watch in their pockets.

Outside Contractors:

- Can be asked to place the device in their pocket while working.
- Contractors are chaperoned by office staff or management while on site if children are onsite.

The use of Cameras and photos:

- Images will not be used for promotional or press releases unless the subject has consented, or in the case of under-18s - parents/carers have also consented.
- Those taking photos, including staff/volunteers must identify themselves.
- Children and young people can only be photographed if written permission from parents/carers is given on each occasion. (See photo consent form)
- It is not the intention to prevent parents or carers from taking pictures, but to ensure that photographic practices are monitored and to reduce the risks of inappropriate photography or filming.
- No one is permitted to photograph or record images in the following areas: changing areas, toilet areas or where children/adults are more vulnerable.
- Professional photographers will be required to have formal identification which must be worn at all times.
- Unseen and unsupervised access to children, young people, vulnerable adults, or one-to-one photo sessions are prohibited.
- Photo sessions outside the organisation's activities or at a child's or young person's home are not allowed.
- Any concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography or filming should be reported to the centre manager, play project manager or trustees.
- Use of cameras and video equipment can be a legitimate learning or training aid. Children, young people, and parents/carers should be made aware that this is part of the learning/training.
- Images will not be kept for longer than is to be considered necessary and will then be deleted.
- No images will be taken off-site unless prior consent has been given by the Head of the Centre.
- The Head of Centre reserves the right to view any images taken and/or to withdraw or modify a member of staff's authorisation to take or make images at any time.
- Any memory stick, CD or storage device containing images of children to be taken off-site for further work should be suitably encrypted.

Laptops or tablets:

- Only Hilldrop Community Area Association laptops or tables should be used within the Play Project when children are on site.
- Only our ITC tech from PPCP has the authorisation to be in the Play Project office with their own laptop while assisting with a technical issue.

Social Media Use:

- Staff social media should not be shared with any children at any point.
- Staff cannot use photos or videos of any children within our care at Hilldrop Play Project on their social media.
- No staff should use their social media while working directly with the children.

E-safety:

- When watching a film via laptops staff ensure they use the official website we subscribe to ie Amazon Prime, Disney and Netflix
- When watching films during the Holiday Play Scheme staff need to ensure the children or family section is displayed on screen before the laptop is connected to the projector, ensuring children only see child-rated imagery.
- Children are not allowed to use the internet unaided by staff here at Hilldrop.
- Staff must keep up to date with technology and the dangers of cyberbullying and grooming online
- Staff to have age-appropriate discussions with children on how to be safe online

Games Consoles

- Hilldrop are lucky to have a PlayStation and a Wii console at no point will these be allowed to be connected to the internet, they are for game use only.
- No games are allowed to be used that have a group chat space. Not being connected to the internet should stop these types of features from working. However, staff must be vigilant!
- Staff must keep up to date with technology and the dangers of cyberbullying and grooming online

The **Pan European Game Information (PEGI)** is a [European](#) video game content rating system established to help European parents make informed decisions on buying computer games with logos on game boxes. Please see image below.



- Only Age-appropriate games can be played 3+ for all children or 7 for older children however these games must be checked by management beforehand. Only if we have older children will we allow a 12-rated game depending on the content.
- In the holiday play scheme if we have older children and we have a game of an older rating 7+ or 12 a small group of children may be able to play under staff supervision (only if the rations permit this)
- Under no circumstances will we have any games that have violence or weapons this includes fighting, and boxing.
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Individual game consoles:

- We do allow children to bring individual game consoles for a designated time and days however, they cannot be connected to the internet at all while on the premises.
- We have a shearing rule if you bring it in you must shear it.
- Only age-appropriate games can be used
- They bring it in at their own risk we at Hilldrop Play Project will not be responsible for any damages or breakages.

Awareness and vigilance:

- All staff must be aware of the speed in which technology is improving and developing and it is their duty to keep updated.
- . We should be aware of spy technology mini cameras in normal watches and pens etc.
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Reporting concerns of misuse:

- It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns regarding the use of mobile phones to the Play Project Manager or Deputy, Centre Manager or Board of Trustees. Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately.
- The Manager reserves the right to check the image contents of a member of staff's mobile phone should there be any cause for concern over the appropriate use of it.
- Should inappropriate material be found then our Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted immediately. We will follow the guidance of the LADO as to the appropriate measures for the staff member's dismissal.