

Mobile phones

Mobile phones may be used in settings, as long as their use is appropriate. The use of a mobile phone must not detract from the quality of supervision and care of children.

Mobile phones have a place in settings, especially those without a landline, and on outings. They are often the only means of contact available in settings and can be helpful in ensuring children are kept safe.

The statutory guidance listed in the *Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage* states that providers should take contact telephone numbers and a mobile phone on outings.¹ The provider, as part of the risk assessment, will decide how to keep safe personal numbers that may be stored on the phone.

The safety of children in childcare provision is paramount. Casual or inappropriate use of mobile phones by staff may pose a risk, if staff are distracted from caring for children.

When developing safeguarding policies and procedures, registered providers should set out clearly how mobile phones and other potential distractions should be handled in their settings.

If inspectors observe, or become aware of, staff using a mobile phone for non-essential purposes they will consider drawing this to the attention of the manager, supervisor or registered provider. They will also consider if the staff member was meeting the needs of the children, when using the telephone, and consider the impact on inspection judgements, including setting an action.

The Department for Education published guidance on the use of mobile phones at: www.childrens-centres.org/SupportDocuments/MobilePhonesInEYSettingsNov09.doc.

¹ *Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*, DfE, 2008;
<http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/151379>.