**USE OF MULTIMEDIA COMPUTERS AT FOWEY PRE-SCHOOL POLICY**

Our group works to the government’s ‘early learning goals’, a government prepared document which sets out what is expected for most children by the end of the foundation stage of their early years education. The statement which applies to the use of computers is part of the area of learning called ‘knowledge and understanding of the world’. This states that children, by the end of the Foundation Stage, should find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology and use information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their learning.

We believe that for pre-school children familiarity with computers is important because:

* the use of iPad’s/computers is widespread in the technological world and likely to grow
* iPad’s/computers are an important medium for learning and study at all educational levels.

Providing access to multimedia iPad’s/computers within the pre-school setting will provide all children with the opportunity to become familiar with this technology, not just those fortunate enough to have it available at home.

In particular, for our pre-school we believe the use of multimedia iPad’s/computers will aid in the development of the following:

Thinking skills – *the computer can stimulate children to perform tasks related to problem solving and planning.*

Interactivity – children *have to make decisions about what they see and hear on the computer. These tools are self-motivating, children can learn at their own speed and be rewarded for their efforts. For example; by hearing some music or seeing a funny face.* Familiarity with everyday objects – *we are happy to teach our children the name of objects around the kitchen or let them switch on the TV and play DVDS, so why not the terms of computer equipment? E.g. computer, monitor, disk drive. Also in that we teach children not to touch electricity cables in the home then we should teach them about safety around computers.*

Social skills – *experiences on the computer can be shared as can a book or set of building bricks.*

Numeracy and basic skills – *developing* *familiarity with shapes, numbers and letters in an interactive environment.*

Having FUN!

Children will be supervised at the iPad/computer workstation. Children will be encouraged to take an interest in the iPad/computer, but no child will be forced to use the iPad/computer against their will – we aim to provide an environment which is fun and interesting at all times. The amount of time children spend at the iPad/computer, at any one time, will be restricted.

Listed overleaf are responses to some of the most frequently asked questions about the use of iPads/computers in the pre-school setting.

# Frequently Asked Questions

*Q. What is ‘multimedia’?*

A. Multimedia is the interaction of people and computers using text, voice and video. A multimedia computer will have extra facilities including, CD drive, speakers and microphone.

*Q. Isn’t pre-school age too young to be introducing computers to children?*

A. Pre-school recognises that children at a young age are still developing basic social skills or basic educational skills – too much of one thing leads to a shortage in something else – the way that you would regulate the amount of TV your child watches, use of computers should be regulated.

*Q. What if I don’t want my child to use the computer?*

A. That’s o.k., your child will not be forced to do anything against their will. Please inform our staff if you do not wish your child to use our computer?

*Q. My child has shown no interest at home on the computer. Will he/she be missing out?* A. Some children will take to computers and show interest (or lack of interest) more quickly than others. What is needed is lots of encouragement, lots of patience and no pressure.

*Q. What can the computer do for pre-school children?*

A. Software for pre-school children should be intuitive with large clear areas to click on, with buttons and controls that do what the child expects them to do. The best programmes allow children to explore and experiment without a lot of rules. Good software will give positive reinforcement when the child answers a question correctly and should offer help and encouragement when they make a mistake. This builds confidence and positive attitudes towards learning. Programmes we use in our setting have been carefully selected for use with pre-school children.

**EYFS key themes and commitment**

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| **A Unique Child**  | **Positive** **Relationships**  | **Enabling** **Environments**  | **Learning and Development**  |
| 1.1 Child development  | 2.1 Respecting each other 2.2 Parents as partners 2.3 Supporting learning  | 3.2 Supporting every child  | 4.2 Active learning  |

Date of next review: September 2024

Signed……………………………….. Position…………………………… Date……………….

Copies of the original signed document are available upon request.