

The Ranch Weymouth and The Ranch on the Wild Side - Observations, Cameras and Electronic Devices Policy

**Why do The Ranch Weymouth staff need to observe my child?**

**‘Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children’s progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support.’ *EYFS Framework 2021, DfE***

Observations form an essential part of our role of supportive provision, providing an insight into children's abilities, learning styles, progress and interests. Our observations allow named key workers to plan appropriate activities so that children can work towards their next steps in learning,and toward securing the outcomes set out for their continued engagement with education as well as enabling our team to provide additional support where necessary.

**What will observations look like?**

The Ranch Weymouth knows how important it is to focus on engaging in quality interactions and that young people develop and are best overseen in activities and experiences. Consequently, our observations will often involve the named key worker simply watching and taking notice of interactions, each season lead will then document any notable key facts or observations at the end of each session that is uploaded to the young person's individual record. The Ranch Weymouth uses this information to provide suitable support, resources and activities to meet need and required outcomes.

**How will observations be shared with me? Will photographs be taken of my child?**

Staff will only take photos or recordings of a child with a parent/carer's written agreement and these will only be used for the purposes that permission is given for. In order to give details of which circumstances, if any, you are happy for photos or recordings of your child to be taken and used, this is covered under the permissions section on the registration form.

Despite there being no requirement for The Ranch Weymouth to share written observations with parents/carers, communication about your child is an essential part of our role. It is important that we use the information to provide measurable progress and this will be in the form of regularly written reports and communication to any overseeing school/Local Authority. We welcome conversation with you about what your child has been doing and how you can support them at home, as well as informing the team about certain aspects of their home life that may be impacting their emotional or mental state.

Our comments and photographs may be shared as evidence of outcome and a form of supporting documentation, this will be done as an upload to the young person’s secure individual profile. We may also use some of these photographs or comments in a written book, a learning journal as a keepsake or verbally at the end of a session.

Our feedback may at times be requested by outside agencies, such as the school, SendCo on behalf of the Local Authority or Family Worker.

Such communications about your child can help us to work together to: build on their next steps in learning, reinforce the skills they have learnt and use their interests to make learning fun and monitor engagement with education. Working together will help me to plan activities that enhance your child’s experiences and with transitions away from the setting and to create continuity for them between home and The Ranch Weymouth and their tutor/school.

**Will anybody else be allowed to take photographs of my child?**

This is limited to The Ranch staff and mentoring team. Nobody else (adults and children) will be allowed to take photos or recordings of the young people and children on personal electronic devices whilst they are attending The Ranch Weymouth. Older children with their own electronic devices will either be asked not to use these within the setting or to disable any cameras and recording facilities.

Once the photos/recordings have been uploaded from the device of the staff member, onto the secure personal profile of the child, the staff member will delete the files on their device. The Ranch Weymouth follows a strict safeguarding and cyber security policy and details of this can be read on the stated policy.

**Are visitors allowed to use electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities while children are in the setting?**

Visitors may have electronic devices with them in the setting, but will be asked to leave the room or immediate vicinity if outdoors, if they need to use them. They will be made aware that they are not to take any photos or recordings of the children while in the setting, unless express written permission for this has been given by a child’s parents/carers.