

Technology and Device Use Policy

1. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

- (1) To outline our guidelines for managing technology and device use to ensure that we maintain a child safe environment, privacy is protected, and that technology is used safely and for educational purposes
- (2) This policy helps us to comply with the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, which requires our service to have policies and procedures in place for providing a child safe environment, including matters relating to the safe use of online environments
- (3) It complies with the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, and aligns with the National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children while Providing Early Childhood Education and Care (National Model Code), the ECEC Code of Ethics, and the Victorian Child Safe Standards

2. SCOPE

- (4) This policy applies to:
 - a. The approved provider, paid workers, volunteers and work placement students, **referred to as 'staff' throughout this policy**
 - b. Third parties who carry out child-related work at our service, including contractors, subcontractors, self-employed persons, employees of a labour hire company, **referred to as 'staff' throughout this policy**
 - c. Children who are in our care, their parents, families and care providers
 - d. Visitors to our service who carry out child-related work, including allied health support workers
- (5) It covers the use of both service-issued and personal devices on our premises and during any related off-site activities, such as excursions
- (6) The appropriate use of technology for taking, sending, and storing images or videos of children is also covered in our [Photography and Video Policy](#)
- (7) Staff must also adhere to our [Child Safe Code of Conduct](#) when using technology

3. DEFINITIONS

- (8) The following definitions apply to this policy and related procedures:
 - a. 'Technology' means any electronic device or digital platform used to access, store, or communicate information. This includes but is not limited to computers, laptops, tablets, smartphones, smartwatches, cameras, televisions (including smart TVs), DVD players, and internet-enabled devices
 - b. 'Service-issued devices' are devices provided by our service for professional use, including phones, tablets, cameras, and computers

- c. 'Personal devices' are privately owned devices (such as smartphones, tablets, laptops, voice recorders, cameras, and smartwatches) capable of accessing the internet or capturing images and videos
- d. 'Personal information' is defined in the *Privacy Act 1988* and includes any information about an identified individual such as their home address, email address, telephone number, date of birth, medical records, bank account details, and tax file number. Photos and videos are also treated as personal information
- e. 'Unapproved storage media' refers to any storage devices not authorised by our service, such as USB drives, external hard drives, and non-approved cloud storage platforms
- f. 'Staff' refers to paid workers, volunteers, students, and third parties who are covered in the scope of this policy. Note: 'staff', 'employees' and 'workers' etc may have their own, different definitions in legislation covered in this policy

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Using technology for education

- (9) Technology is used to support the educational and operational goals of our service
- (10) Experiences involving technology are limited and balanced with children's needs for physical, literacy, numeracy and social-emotional development
- (11) Technology is used with intention and purpose, and as a tool to extend/enhance children's learning and development. It is not used as a substitute for direct educator-child interactions or to manage children's behaviour. For example, educators should not routinely use electronic devices to tell stories, sing songs, placate children, answer questions that can be explored with the children without the use of the internet, or to teach children in place of in-person instruction
- (12) Any digital content we use, such as music, videos, or educational software, is age-appropriate and aligns with our educational objectives
- (13) Streaming content is allowed only from legal and reputable platforms (e.g., iTunes, YouTube, ABC iView) and should be directly relevant to the children's learning or staff development
- (14) Photos and recordings of children are used (with parental consent) for planning and programming, such as documenting children's learning experiences, supporting reflective practices, and engaging families in their child's development
- (15) Our service is guided by the Australian Government's recommendations for screentime for children:
 - from birth to 2 years - zero time per day (very short viewings for educational purposes is okay)
 - 2-5 years - no more than one hour per day
 - 5-17 years – no more than two hours per day (not including schoolwork)
- (16) Educators take into consideration the time children may also spend watching screen content at home
- (17) Educators teach children about safe and respectful use of technology, including not sharing personal information or inappropriate content online, avoiding online threats and being kind and polite in any digital interactions
- (18) Educators actively supervise and engage with children who are using devices

Use of devices

Service-issued devices

- (19) Service-issued devices are used solely for work-related tasks, such as:
 - Documenting children's learning and activities
 - Communicating with families about children's progress and daily activities
 - Accessing educational resources and child development information
 - Completing administrative tasks such as reporting and record-keeping
 - Participating in professional development and training
- (20) Only service-issued devices can be used for taking images or videos of children in our care
- (21) Personal electronic devices will not be approved as service-issued devices
- (22) The nominated supervisor must ensure that all inappropriate digital content (e.g., websites, apps, videos) are blocked on service-issued devices
- (23) The use of the internet on service-issued devices is permitted for accessing child-appropriate educational websites, professional development materials, and communication tools
- (24) Access to social media platforms is restricted unless approved for service-related purposes (see our [Social Media Policy](#))
- (25) Staff must not use any unapproved storage media to store or access content or data on service devices
- (26) Shared devices will be allocated according to the educational needs, age group, and specific activities in each room, the frequency of use, the need for specific applications, and the ability to support learning objectives
- (27) Where possible, our service provides dedicated devices in each room to ensure availability and accountability. Where sharing is necessary, room leaders will share according to a roster
- (28) Shared devices should be handled with care, wiped clean after use, properly maintained by the staff using them and stored in our secure storage in our front office when they are not in use and at the end of every day
- (29) Staff must not take any service-issued devices home with them

Unacceptable use of service technology

- (30) The following actions are strictly prohibited at our service:
 - Accessing systems, data or networks without authorisation
 - Installing software without authorisation
 - Misusing the service's equipment or resources
 - Circumventing security measures
 - Sharing passwords or login details
 - Introducing viruses, malware or other malicious code
 - Hacking or trying to gain unauthorised access to systems
 - Spamming or sending out unsolicited mass emails
 - Using the IT systems to harass, threaten or bully other users
 - Sharing or creating inappropriate, discriminatory or offensive content
 - Violating intellectual property (e.g., using pirated content or software)
 - Using the service's network for illegal activities
 - Disrupting or damaging our systems, networks, equipment or resources
 - Disclosing confidential information without authorisation
 - Using technology in any way that breaches our [Child Safe Code of Conduct](#)

Security and privacy

Data and system protections

- (31) Data is protected in line with our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy, the *Privacy Act 1988*, the *National Regulations* and relevant child protection laws
- (32) Images and recordings of children are captured, shared, protected, stored and destroyed according to our Photography and Video Policy and with the written consent of parents
- (33) All digital content and data are stored securely, and we take appropriate measures to prevent unauthorised access, loss, or misuse, including, for example:
 - password protection
 - limiting access to authorised staff
 - regular backups
 - storing service-issued devices in locked cabinets or secure areas when not in use, and ensuring that personal devices are not left unattended in accessible areas
 - installing and regularly updating firewall and antivirus software on all service-issued devices to protect against malware and cyber threats
 - regularly monitoring access logs and conducting audits to detect and address any unauthorised access or suspicious activity
 - educating staff on data security best practices, including identifying phishing attempts and other cybersecurity threats
 - encrypting devices where possible
- (34) All service-issued devices are securely stored and accessed only by authorised staff
- (35) Staff must not install unauthorised software or applications on service-issued devices
- (36) Any breaches of digital security protocols or data must be reported immediately to the nominated supervisor/approved provider
- (37) In the event of a data breach involving service-issued electronic devices or systems, immediate action will be taken to mitigate potential harm and protect the affected individuals' personal information. The approved provider/nominated supervisor follows our data breach response plan, contained in our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Oversight, control, and access to data

- (38) The approved provider is responsible for:
 - Making sure that staff access to digital and hardcopy files is being monitored, and for preventing the unauthorised movement of files onto non-approved devices or platforms
 - Making sure that any images, videos, and content shared online is limited to its intended purpose (e.g., educational, promotional), and that inappropriate or unauthorised sharing does not occur
 - Having processes in place to monitor the use of service-issued devices
 - Ensuring that device and technology usage is covered in our service's risk assessments, including for emergencies, and the potential for loss, misuse, or technical failures
 - Implementing device controls such as limiting app installations and disabling certain functionalities to prevent misuse
 - Fostering a culture of vigilance and accountability, and encouraging staff to report any inappropriate device usage

Breaches and complaints

- (39) Anyone can raise concerns or complaints regarding the handling of technology or devices according to our Complaint Handling Policy
- (40) Staff must follow our Child Protection Policy and Procedures if they have concerns for a child's safety or well-being
- (41) Any breaches of this policy, including the improper use of devices, or unauthorised use of technology, are treated seriously
- (42) Depending on the nature of the breach, staff members may be subject to disciplinary action, referred to the police/child protection authority, and/or have their employment terminated

5. PRINCIPLES

- (43) The safety and well-being of children is our one number one priority
- (44) We use technology and devices purposefully to enrich children's learning and development
- (45) We maintain the privacy of children, families and staff members, and protect and store data and content securely and confidentiality
- (46) Our staff maintain high standards of professionalism in all interactions involving technology and devices
- (47) Our use of technology and devices complies with all relevant laws, regulations and best practice guidelines, including the National Model Code

6. POLICY COMMUNICATION, TRAINING AND MONITORING

- (2) This policy and related documents can be found on our website and in our front office.
- (3) The approved provider and nominated supervisor provide information, training and other resources and support regarding the Photography and Video Policy and related documents
- (4) All staff (including volunteers and students) are formally inducted. They are given access to review, understand and formally acknowledge this Photography and Video Policy and related documents
- (5) The Nominated supervisor runs a professional development program for each staff member, which covers this policy
- (6) Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined in this policy and in individual position descriptions. They are communicated during staff inductions and in ongoing training
- (7) The approved provider and nominated supervisor monitor and audit staff practices through supervision and regular performance appraisal and address non-compliance. Breaches to this policy are taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action against a staff member
- (8) At enrolment, families are given access to our Photography and Video Policy and related documents
- (9) Families are notified in line with our obligations under the *National Regulations* when changes are made to our policies and procedures

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Approved provider responsibilities (not limited to)

Ensure our service meets its obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, including to take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury and ensure that children in our care are adequately supervised at all times

Ensure that our service's governance, management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management/action plans), systems, practices and procedures for technology and device use are appropriate in practice, best practice, align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, the National Model Code and comply with all other relevant legislation, including privacy laws

Ensure the Technology and Device Use Policy is effectively implemented across all aspects of our service. This includes providing necessary resources, such as service-issued devices and secure data storage solutions

Organise and facilitate regular training sessions for all staff members on the appropriate use of technology, data security, and privacy policies. Ensure that staff are updated on any changes to relevant laws or service policies

Establish and maintain systems for monitoring compliance with this policy. This includes periodic audits, spot checks, and reviews of digital content and device usage

Handle incidents of non-compliance, including conducting investigations and taking appropriate disciplinary action. This includes reporting any illegal activities to the relevant authorities, such as the police or child protection services

Nominated supervisor / persons in day-to-day charge responsibilities (not limited to)

Ensure our service meets its obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*, including to take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury, and ensure that children in our care are adequately supervised at all times

Support the approved provider to ensure that our service's management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management/action plans), systems, practices and procedures for technology and device use are appropriate in practice, best practice, align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, the National Model Code and comply with all other relevant legislation, including privacy laws

Ensure that daily operations adhere to the Technology and Device Use Policy. This includes monitoring the use of service-issued and personal devices by staff

Provide guidance to staff on acceptable and unacceptable technology use. Address any questions or concerns related to the policy and offer support in implementing it

Document and report any breaches of the policy to the approved provider

Act promptly to address any instances of non-compliance. This includes confiscating devices used inappropriately, issuing warnings, and escalating issues to the approved provider, police or child protection services if necessary

Inform families about our service's technology and device use policies and how they can access related documents. Communicate any significant updates to the policy that may affect their child's experience at the service

Educators / other staff responsibilities (not limited to)

Follow this [Technology and Device Use Policy](#) and other related child safety policies and documents, including using service-issued devices solely for work-related tasks

Maintain a high standard of professionalism in all digital interactions. Ensure that any digital content created or shared is appropriate, educational, and aligns with our service's curriculum, policies and codes, including our [Child Safe Code of Conduct](#)

Prioritise the safety and privacy of children at all times. This includes obtaining written consent before capturing or sharing images and videos of children and ensuring that all digital content is securely stored

Immediately report any breaches of the policy to the nominated supervisor or approved provider (or police or child protection services if necessary). Cooperate fully with any investigations into incidents of non-compliance or misuse of technology

Participate in ongoing training and professional development related to technology use, data security, and child protection. Stay informed about updates to the policy and relevant legislation

8. LEGISLATION (OVERVIEW)

Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations

Law	Description
s 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
s 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulations	
s 73	Educational program
s 74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program
s 168(2)(h)	Education and care services must have policies and procedures in relation to providing a child-safe environment
s 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
s 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
s 177(1)(a)	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider
ss 181,183 - 184	Confidentiality and storage of records

Other applicable laws and regulations

Act/ Regulation	Description
<i>Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</i>	Provides guidance on how to uphold the principles in the <u>Convention on the Rights of the Child</u>
<i>Privacy Act 1988</i>	Principal act protecting the handling of personal information

National Quality Standard

Standard	Concept	Description
1.1	Program	The educational program enhances each child's learning and development

Standard	Concept	Description
1.1.1	Approved learning framework	Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators
1.1.3	Program Learning Opportunities	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning
1.2	Practice	Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development
1.2.1	Intentional teaching	Educators are deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.3	Healthy lifestyle	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard
3.1	Physical environment	The design of the facilities is appropriate for the operation of a service
3.1.2	Upkeep	Premises, furniture, and equipment are safe, clean, and well maintained
3.2	Use	The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning
3.2.2	Resources support play-based learning	Resources, materials and equipment allow for multiple uses, are sufficient in number, and enable every child to engage in play-based learning.
4.2	Professionalism	Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical
4.2.2	Professional standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsible and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child is maintained

Standard	Concept	Description
5.2	Relationships between children	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships
6.1	Supportive relationships with families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service
7.1.2	Management systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service
7.1.3	Roles and responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood, and support effective decision-making and operation of the service
7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community
7.2.3	Development of professionals	Educators, co-ordinators and staff members' performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development

My Time, Our Place (MTOP) V2.0

MTOP Outcome	Key component
1: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect
3: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing Children and young people are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health, and personal safety
4: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people develop a range of learning and thinking skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating Children and young people resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural processed materials
5: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people collaborate with others, express ideas and make meaning using a range of digital technologies and media and communication technologies

National Principles for Safe Organisations

Most relevant principles

Child Safety and Wellbeing Embedded in Organisational Leadership, Governance, and Culture

Staff and Volunteers are Equipped with the Knowledge, Skills, and Awareness to Keep Children and Young People Safe Through Ongoing Education and Training

Physical and Online Environments Promote Safety and Wellbeing While Minimising the Opportunity for Children and Young People to be Harmed

9. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Key Policies	Child Safe Environment Policy Complaint Handling Policy Child Safe Risk Management Plan ECEC Code of Ethics Staffing Arrangements Policy Governance Policy Educator and Management Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Child Safe Code of Conduct Recruitment, Induction, Training and WWCC Photography and Video Policy Social Media Policy CCTV Policy
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Procedures / Plans	Child safety related procedures
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Templates / Resources	Digital device log template (attached at Appendix A)
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10. POLICY INFORMATION

Approval date	4/9/24
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Effective date	4/9/24
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Review date	4/9/25
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Approved by	Dina Kahn
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APPENDIX A

TEMPLATE - Digital device log

Date	Device ID	Device Description	Issued To (Name & Role)	Purpose of Use	Issued By (Name)	Return Date	Condition on Return	Remarks
01/10/2024	001	iPad Pro 11"	Zaim Sainsbury (Educator)	Capturing Learning	Amy Li	01/08/2024	Good	
02/10/2024	002	Samsung Galaxy Tab	Jo Rodriguez (Nominated supervisor)	Administrative Use	Amy Li			Not yet returned
03/10/2024	003	Nikon D3500 Camera	Amina Al-Hassan (Educator)	Documenting Activities	Amy Li	03/08/2024	Minor scratches	

Additional Notes

- Ensure all staff members authorised to use digital devices have read and acknowledged the Technology and Device Use Policy
- Devices should be secured with passwords and other necessary security measures to protect sensitive information
- Any incidents, such as loss or damage, should be reported to the nominated supervisor/approved provider

