



Digital Device and Social Media Use

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy relates to accessing and using social networking platforms, applications and all digital devices, including, but not limited to, gaming consoles, desktop computers, laptops, mobile devices and smartwatches. Lake Mac Newy OOSH will ensure that children, educators and families are not compromised on any social networking platform, related website, video, sound or image recording. Digital technologies and computers have become integral to many children's daily lives. For this reason, our educators must be not only familiar with the use of digital technologies but also guide children's understanding of and ability to interact, engage, access and use a range of digital technology. Technology and media items will only be used as an extension to the daily program, assisting in developing each child's social, physical, emotional, cognitive, language and creative potential. Digital technology can be helpful in the retelling of stories about our culture, help celebrate diversity, and assist in providing inclusive and equitable educational programs.

Technology use within our service aims to encourage children to solve problems and use logical reasoning, leading children to make decisions and choices and assisting them to use programs and games competently and safely. Our educators are diligent in ensuring children can only access age-appropriate technology on any device provided by the service. Digital devices should not compromise the safety and well-being of any child or staff member at the service.

IMPLEMENTATION

In the OOSH environment, having a school/leisure balance is also essential, as it allows time for play and leisure activities (*My Time, Our Place*). To achieve this, our OOSH Service may offer children opportunities to use age-appropriate and non-violent video games and gaming apps under the supervision of educators, keeping in mind the recommended maximum of 2 hours per day of technology for this age group.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/MANAGEMENT/ NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers know of and adhere to this policy
- families are aware of this *Digital Device & Social Media Use policy*
- promote and support a child-safe environment
- embed the National Laws & Regulations
- ensure all staff, educators, volunteers and students are aware of current child protection law, National Child Safe Standards and their obligation to protect children from harm
- record WWCC/vulnerable people checks of volunteers and students
- provide professional learning to educators and staff in response to the ECA- *Statement on Young Children and Digital technology*
- provide regular training for all staff on reporting obligations (including mandatory reporting) and child-safe practices
- report any breach of child protection legislation to relevant authorities- police, Child Protection Helpline, or Child Story e Reporting system, regulatory authority through the NQAITS portal
- identify technology training needs of educators for professional development



- maintain and promote a positive culture that supports the safe, responsible, and respectful use of digital devices and online services
- reflect on our Service's physical environment, layout and design to ensure it supports child-safe practices when children are engaged in using technology
- ensure risk assessments are completed for all physical and online activities and identify areas where adults may have opportunities to interact with children unsupervised
- perform regular audits to identify risks to children's safety and changes in room set-ups that can indicate areas of higher risk and become supervision 'blind spots.'
- ensure that the location of digital technology/equipment allows educators to remain in line with other staff members when working with children
- only permit children to use devices in open areas where staff can monitor children's use
- ensure all devices are set up safely- with controls, filters for privacy levels and safe search settings
- ensure all devices are password protected with access for staff only
- ensure the Service *Confidentiality Policy* is always adhered to by staff, educators, families, visitors, volunteers and students
- Ensure only authorised personnel can access the Service's technology facilities (programs, software, etc.).
- ensure all educators have appropriate login details to provide secure usage
- ensure all technological devices have current virus protection software installed
- develop guidelines about how technology will be used within our Service
- provide information to parents about technology use within the Service
- seek permission from families to use digital documentation, including photographs of children via social media and other forms of documentation platforms (OWNA)
- ensure children, educators, and parents are aware of our Service's complaints handling process to raise any concerns they may have about the use of digital technologies or any other matter
- provide a range of technology devices for educators to utilise- Smartboards, iPads, printers
- must ensure that no breaches of copyright eventuate if screening/viewing DVDs
- discuss with educators the terms regarding sharing personal data online; ensure children's personal information where children can be identified, such as name, address, age, date of birth, etc, is not shared online.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- comply with current legislation and Service policies
- keep passwords confidential
- model appropriate use of digital devices and online services for learning purposes
- identify and minimise risks to children in physical and online environments
- only permit children to use devices in open areas of the service to ensure close monitoring and supervision
- log out of computers and software programs after each use
- respond to and report any breaches and incidents of inappropriate use of digital devices and online services to management
- not harass, slander, intimidate, embarrass, defame, or seek to offend another person, group of people, or organisation via technological devices
- not make copies of, transmit, steal, or loan copies to other persons of Service documents.
- not use personal mobile devices to take photos at the Service, access social media (Facebook, Instagram or other) or breach children and families' privacy



- ask permission before taking photos of children on any device so children begin an understanding of how pictures of them can be used and where they will be published
- provide adequate supervision to children when using computers, iPads or other technology
- ensure supervision plans are designed so educators are not alone with a child (where possible)
- ensure they are aware of their mandatory reporting requirements and report any concerns related to child safety, including inappropriate use of digital technology, to the approved provider or nominated supervisor
- ensure children's personal information where children can be identified such as name, address, age, date of birth etc is not shared online

IN RELATION TO CHILDREN, EDUCATORS WILL:

- support children's natural curiosity for technology within the Service
- provide children with access to age-appropriate technologies to help develop their computer literacy skills
- introduce concepts to children about online safety at age-appropriate levels
- only provide programs or apps that they have viewed and assessed before introducing them to children
- build on children's learning and inspire the ongoing and enthusiastic acquisition of knowledge through technology
- use technology to build on current projects and document children's learning
- limit the amount of time spent on screens as per recommended screen times
- support children in turn-taking and learning to share when using digital technologies in collaboration with others
- provide a child safe environment to children- reminding them if they encounter anything unexpected that makes them feel uncomfortable, scared or upset, they can seek support from educators
- teach children to 'ask before they tap' or do anything new on a device
- limit experiences involving screen use to those that have an educational component or include movement and gross motor activity
- discuss with children the role of screen time in their lives and support them in making appropriate choices about their use of screen time for both education and recreation
- model appropriate screen behaviours and self-regulation to the children
- encourage productive sedentary experiences for rest that are not technology-reliant
- ensure that an appropriate balance between inactive and active time is maintained each day
- ensure that under no circumstances the screen is used as a reward or to manage challenging behaviours
- educate and support children in developing skills to evaluate sources of information on the internet critically.

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY WITHIN OUR SERVICE:

- implement risk management strategies to ensure children are always supervised when using any digital device
- use of digital technologies are used to promote social interactions between children, peers and adults



- programs must be carefully selected and be suitable to the needs and developmental levels of each child using or watching various types of technology or media
- programs and apps will be chosen to support and promote children's cognitive investment
- all online devices have appropriate filtering and monitoring in place with safe settings activated
- all devices are password protected, with access for staff only
- technology is used to assist in expanding the content of the daily program and appropriate current affairs (e.g., the Olympic Games, environmental resources)
- technology is predominantly used where play-based and 'hands-on' experiences cannot provide the same information (e.g., investigating planets or dinosaurs). It will not replace appropriate experiences or professional pedagogy
- programs are chosen that are engaging and age-appropriate to children: Only 'G' and 'PG' rated television programs and movies will be viewed at the Service
- the use of TV and watching DVDs will be kept to a minimum. Programs depicting violence or inappropriate content (including graphic news reports) will not be shown when used.
- TV programs or videos will only be shown that have positive messages about relationships, family and life
- all content will be socially and culturally considerate and appropriate
- children will be taught responsible concepts of digital use and citizenship as children are '*growing up digital*'
- only quality developmentally appropriate interactive media will be used

IN RELATION TO FAMILIES, OUR SERVICE WILL:

- create shared understandings between families and educators about digital technology use by adults in front of children
- provide information regarding online safety to families [eSafetyparents](#)
- provide families with information about the digital technology used within the Service
- request written consent from parents/families to collect and share personal information, images or videos of their children online (Website, Facebook, Newsletters or OWNA)
- provide information to parents and families about how to make a complaint and what to expect from our complaints-handling processes

PROCEDURE

Digital Devices

Children:

- Children will not be permitted to use their own devices in the service unless permission has been gained from staff prior and it is for a specific purpose or on programmed days in vacation care.
- Devices are not to be used to take any video, pictures or sounds.
- Children cannot connect their devices to a power supply whilst at the service.
- Children are responsible for taking care of their devices, and all devices must be clearly labelled for their identification.
- Children are not to share their devices with other children
- Devices are to be secured when not in use
- Devices are to be taken home at the end of the day and not left on the service premises



- Children are not to use messenger services or make phone calls on any devices, including smartwatches

Families:

- Caregivers will talk to their children about using their digital devices and explain the consequences of misuse.
- Caregivers are responsible for insuring their child's device for loss, theft or damage.
- The service accepts no responsibility for the loss, damage or theft of any device brought into the service.
- Caregivers are responsible for ensuring all content on their child/rens devices is appropriate and compliant with regulations and copyright law
- If you need to contact your child, please contact the service directly, and not the children's device.

Staff:

- Personal devices are not to be used during face-to-face hours for social interactions and use is limited to actions approved by the responsible person
- While at the service, educators can only use the work phones to take photos and document activities and social media content. Educators will ensure that they know the children who are not allowed to be on social media or photographed for program documentation (a list of those children can be found in the office). Educators are expected to send all photos to the service email. Educators are not to use their personal phones for photos.
- Students' use of devices on placement or with volunteers requires prior service approval.
- The service device will take photos, and approved images will be emailed to the student or volunteer.
- Students' use of images of children at the service requires the approval of the relevant child's guardian. Images can only be used for assessment purposes and must be deleted from email and devices after their intended use.
- Educators, in consultation with the responsible person, reserve the right to delete inappropriate content from children's devices, including, but not limited to, images, text and links and will notify caregivers if this action is taken.

Social Media

Children:

- When a family has permitted their child's image to be used by the service, the child shall have the final say as to whether they wish to use any image. Children can also decide they do not want any image to be used, even if a parent has already given permission. In all instances, the child's consent shall be sought before using any image, and they shall be informed it is perfectly reasonable to say 'No.'
- Children will not use any social media, video/photo upload app or anything connected to the internet.

Families:

- Families will be requested to complete the section in the OWNA online enrolment regarding the service's use of their child's image. If a parent has not completed an agreement, the service will act as if they do not wish images of their child to be used by the service.
- When participating on the service's social media platforms, caregivers will not post spam, advertising or commercial content (without prior consent from the service)



management). Ensure that any content posted meets relevant copyright guidelines.

- Do not post anything abusive, profane or defamatory toward a person, entity, belief or symbol.
- The service reserves the right to delete any content that does not comply with the service policy.
- Our social media platforms are not for grievances and complaints. Please use the services grievance procedure to lodge any complaints you may have.

Staff:

- Only an authorised staff member or member of management can add or amend information on the service's social media sites without seeking prior approval. The authorised staff member or management person can also permit other staff to add or amend information on the service's social media sites where necessary.
- Staff who can access their personal social networking site via their mobile phones are not to do so during their shifts at the service.
- Unless by prior approval from management/Nominated Supervisor, no information about what happens at the service should be posted on a social networking website, nor should any photos taken at the service or on an excursion be put on a social networking forum. If a staff member puts pictures of a child or children enrolled at the service on a social networking website, in that case families will immediately be contacted, and the staff member will be asked to remove it immediately. The social networking website will be contacted to delete the photos if necessary. The staff member will face an inquiry into their actions and possibly face termination of employment.
- We respect the right of staff to participate in public and political debate in their private lives. In doing so, staff must behave in a way that does not call into question their capacity to act apolitically and impartially in their work.
- Our social media platforms are not for grievances and complaints. Please use the services grievance procedure to lodge any complaints you may have.
- Staff should only interact with children and families on social media via the service's social media account, never from personal accounts.

Breaches of Policy

Children:

- If children are found to be misusing their devices as per the policy, an educator may take the device away for the remainder of the session/day and return it to the authorised nominee upon the child's collection.
- If continued misuse occurs or a case of highly inappropriate content being accessed, then the Behaviour Guidance policy will be adhered to, and suspension or termination of care could be considered depending on the severity and at the discretion of the Management.

Staff:

- Please be aware that social networking websites are not private means of communication but can be accessed by the public. Therefore, it is essential not to share private information about service families or other staff on social networking websites. A staff member doing so will face an inquiry into the situation by management and any involved party and, depending on the severity of the problem, may face possible termination of employment.
- Should harassment of any kind occur on a social networking site, such as, but not limited to, sexual or verbal harassment, staff will face an inquiry into their actions and, depending on the severity of the situation, may face possible termination of employment.



- This policy also complies with state and national laws regarding social networking websites. Should a staff member break the law on a social networking website, such as, but not limited to, defamation, the service will contact the police and other relevant authorities.

Families:

- Should a family member related to the service harass a staff member via a social networking website, management will inquire into their actions. Depending on the severity of the situation, the family member may face possible termination of their child’s place at the service.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Education and Care Services National Law & Regulations	National Quality Standards	Links to other Service Policies	Other Documentation/Evidence
R 73, 76, 84, 149, 155, 156, 168, 181 - 184,	NQS 1.1.1, 1.1.3 Child safe Standards 1 – 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication with Families - Code of Conduct - Confidentiality - Governance and Management - Staffing Policies. - Grievance and complaints - Providing a child safe environment 	

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

Approval date: August 2024 _____ Date for Review: August 2025 _____
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