

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



1.0 PURPOSE

Our Service recognises both the benefits and challenges of using social media platforms within our community and specifically within a preschool setting. This Policy aims to provide all members of our preschool community with the expected standards of use, including online privacy and safety practices, as they engage with social media for official, professional and personal use.

2.0 SCOPE

Applies to all members of the Service's community including management, staff, committee members, students, families, contractors and volunteers.

3.0 PRINCIPLES

Privacy and Confidentiality

All users will adhere to this policy, our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* and our *Acceptable Use Policy for ICT Resources* when engaging in or creating content on social media platforms specifically relating to our Service.

Continuous Improvement

Our Service will continue to evaluate and assess our social media use and online safety practices through critical reflections, professional learning and discussions. We encourage regular and ongoing feedback from staff, children, families and the community in relation to our social media utilisation.

4.0 NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES		
6.1	Support Relationships with Families	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.
6.2.3	Community Engagement	The service builds relationships and engages with its community.

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1.1	Service Philosophy and Purpose	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.
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.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
84	Awareness of child protection law.
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures.
181-184	Confidentiality of records and storage of records.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

WORD/TERM	DEFINITION
Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor	The Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor is the person who is in charge of the Service.
Social Media	Websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Snap Chat, Youtube, TikTok, WhatsApp).

6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure all relevant members of the Service's community are aware of this Policy.
- Obtain implicit and written permission from a child's parents/guardians prior to posting any comment about or photos of their child to any social media platforms.
- Ensure private information about families, children and staff is not posted online.
- Ensure an appropriate level of privacy settings are established and maintained on all social media accounts and pages.
- Ensure all passwords are kept secure and confidential.
- Log out of Facebook and other social media accounts when not in use.
- Regularly scan online content and comment sections on Service's social media pages to ensure appropriateness.

The Early Childhood Educators/Staff will:

- Ensure they are respectful in all online communication relating to or referencing the Service or wider Preschool community, including (but not limited to):
 - Not using obscenities, profanity or vulgar language;
 - Not disparaging the Service, committee, families and children or colleagues of the Service;
 - Not vilifying, harassing or bullying any member of the Service's community.
- Not access their personal Facebook accounts or any other social media accounts on any workplace device for personal reasons. Should they be required to access their personal social media accounts for work related matters, including promoting Pre School related social media content, approval must be sought from the Nominated Supervisor prior.
- Not access Facebook or any other social media accounts whilst educating and caring for children.
- Not use their personal camera or phones to take photos or video whilst at the Service or post photos taken of children enrolled at the Service on their personal Facebook or any other social media accounts.
- Not post any personal or private information about the Service, colleagues, children or families on any personal social media accounts.
- Adhere to the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics and our *Code of Conduct Policy* at all times and should consider their online behaviour to ensure they present themselves in a professional manner at all times and that their online conduct does not bring their relationship with the Service into disrepute.
- Adhere to all privacy and confidentiality obligations at all times.

Our Families will:

- Respect privacy and confidentiality of the service and wider Preschool community at all times.
- Give feedback in relation to Educators' professional conduct to the Approved Provider / Nominated Supervisor or appropriate delegate as necessary.

7.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Being part of our Service entails a position of trust and responsibility. We aim to ensure that our children, families, staff and educators are not compromised in any form on Facebook or any other social media platform and that all social media usage complies with our Service's philosophy and relevant policies.

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations recognise the importance of safe physical and online environments to promote safety and wellbeing of all children. Our Service has the responsibility to ensure children and our wider Preschool community are protected from harm when engaging with digital technology, including social media.

Online Privacy

All members of our community must remain aware that they represent and could be identified as a member of the Service's community through any online activity. Therefore, it is essential that the privacy of families, employees, students, children and volunteers is appropriately maintained, even if they have obtained permission to publish content to the Service Facebook account.

Absolutely no content will be published to Facebook or any other social media site without implicit and written permission of families whom the content relates. Our Service will gain implicit and written family permission prior to posting photos of children.

Passwords will be stored, shared and accessed as per our *Acceptable Use Policy for ICT Resources*.

Our Service will remain up to date with any changes to Facebook or any other social media sites it engages with to ensure privacy settings remain up to date.

Service Facebook Accounts

Our Service has a public Facebook account to converse and share information with our families and our wider community which is administered by our Service's official representatives - our Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor and our Office Manager.

The intent for our Service Facebook page is to:

- Promote our work and provide general information with what's happening at our Service, including special events and important dates.
- Connect with our community by providing educational information and resources relating to Early Childhood Education.

Our Service also has a private Facebook page for staff and a separate private Facebook page for the Committee of Management for the purpose of group communication and interaction.

OWNA Childcare App

Our Service utilises the software application OWNA to allow families to register the attendance of their children by signing them in and out of their sessions. The application has other features that allow the Service to communicate with families in a safe, private and secure manner.

Personal Facebook and other Social Media Accounts

It is extremely important not to post personal or private information about the Service, colleagues, children or families on personal social media accounts, as this not only contravenes the Service policies but is considered a breach of the Commonwealth's *Privacy Act 1988* and *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*.

Employees may refer to the Preschool as their employer on their social networking sites should they wish to, but should be aware that these sites are not private sites, therefore any references to your employment and/or the Preschool should always be respectful, considerate of privacy issues and not bring the employee/employer relationship into disrepute.

The Service does not recommend that staff add families of the Service to personal social media accounts (unless they have a pre-existing relationship outside of the Preschool) as they will still be seen as a representative of the Service and required to uphold the Service's Code of Conduct on all posts.

Families are asked to respect that staff may have a personal policy on adding families to personal social media accounts due to their professional philosophy, and that the Service does not recommend staff to have families as friends on their private account.

Consequences for Inappropriate Conduct / Breaches to Policy

Inappropriate conduct is considered behaviours that:

- Are likely to cause serious damage to the relationship between an individual and the Service;
- Damages or harms the Service's interests or reputation; and/or
- Is incompatible with the employee's duties in the education and care sector.

An individual who has been involved in inappropriate conduct and is in breach to this Policy, depending on the circumstances or seriousness, will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of their position.

8.0 REFERENCES

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) (2014).

Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations (2011).

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

eSafety Commissioner: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/esafety-early-years-program-for-educators> (accessed September 2022).

Childcare Centre Desktop, Childcare Policies,

<https://www.childcarecentredesktop.com.au/members/childcare-policies/> (accessed Aug 2022).

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Applications) Act 2010.

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998.

Privacy Act (1988).

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act (1998).

9.0 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy Enrolment and Orientation Policy Family Participation and Communication Policy Acceptable Use Policy for ICT Resources Code of Conduct	Governance and Management of Service Providing a Child Safe Environment Interaction with Children Confidentiality Policy Staff/Parent Communication Policy
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10.0 REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Narelle Blachford	Director / Nominated Supervisor
POLICY REVIEW DETAILS		NEXT REVIEW DATE i.e. September 2025
September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overhaul of content including the merging of existing policies – Social Networking and Online Privacy. Formatting, template updates. 	
POLICY REVIEW HISTORY	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	N/A