SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

We recognise both the benefits, and challenges, of using Facebook and other social media platforms in the early childhood setting. This policy has been developed to provide employees, families, volunteers and students with standards for using social media for official, professional and personal purposes.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1.1	Service philosophy and purposes	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 that is child safe.
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 LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S.2A	Paramount consideration – safety, rights and best interests of children
S.3A	Paramount consideration [NSW]
S. 162A	Child protection training
S. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
PART 6A	Devices in education and care services
84	Awareness of child protection law
181	Confidentiality and storage of records
183	Storage of records and other documents

RELATED LEGISLATION

Privacy Act 1988 (the Act)	*Crimes Act 1958*

RELATED POLICIES

Child Protection Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Code of Conduct Policy Dealing with Complaints Policy Family Communication Policy Health and Safety Policy Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Respect for Children Policy Responsible Person Policy Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy Student, Volunteer and Visitors Policy Supervision Policy Work Health and Safety Policy

PURPOSE

Being part of our Service and actively creating and maintaining a child-safe culture, entails a position of trust and responsibility for all stakeholders. This policy provides guidelines and expectations for all staff and families to promote child safe practices. We aim to ensure that our Service, children, educators, and families are not exposed to risks to their safety, privacy or wellbeing through Facebook, or any other social media platform, and that all social media use complies with our Service's philosophy, relevant policies, and our code of conduct. Our Service practices align with legislative requirements for taking, using and sharing images or videos of children and embeds the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations into our culture and Service operations.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

DEFINITION

Social media: refers to websites, platforms and applications that enable users to interact with each other, create and share information, ideas, messages, images, videos and other content.

IMPLEMENTATION

We recognise that there are many advantages to using social media to network within Service operations. It is important to approach usage with caution, through careful and systematic management. Whilst healthy debate may provide thought-provoking discussion, there are guidelines in place to ensure

that our Service remains open and welcoming for children, families, and staff. Our Service is committed to ensuring that children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration in all decisions, actions and practices.

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and Child Safe Standards recognise the importance of safe physical and online environments to promote the safety and wellbeing of all children. Our Service has a responsibility to ensure children, educators and staff are protected from harm when they engage with digital technology including social media.

This policy applies to all forms of social media, including (but not limited to):

- Social networking sites, e.g. Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn
- Image sharing sites, e.g. Instagram, Snapchat
- Music/dance video platforms, e.g. Tik Tok
- Messaging and chat, e.g. WhatsApp
- Video hosting sites, e.g. YouTube and Vimeo
- Community blogs, e.g. Tumblr and Medium
- Discussion sites, e.g. Reddit and Quora

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic devices may include mobile phones, smart watches, Meta smart glasses, or other electronic devices that are capable of taking images or videos. Our Service will ensure educators, staff, students, volunteers and visitors adhere to the following practices at all times when children are educated and cared for at our Service:

- personal electronic devices must not be used to take images, record audio or capture videos of children being educated and cared for at the Service
- personal electronic devices, including phones and smartwatches, must not be in the possession of any person while working directly with children within the children's environment (unless an exemption applies)
- only electronic devices supplied by the Service are used to record and store images and videos of children
- Service electronic devices are not to be taken out of the Service or away from Service premises except where required for operational activities, for example excursions or transportation
- procedures are followed regarding the safe storage and restricted access to images and videos of children, in accordance with the *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy*

SERVICE SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES

Our Service has a Facebook page and an Instagram page, which are primarily used for information sharing and marketing purposes. The accounts are operated by our nominated supervisor and administration officer via a centre computer or mobile phone. Consent will be gained from our families before any images of children are shared on our social media platforms. No identifying information (such as names or pictures) regarding our children will be shared.

PRIVACY

- All staff and educators must be aware that they represent and may be identified as employees of the Service through their online activity when using the Service's social media account and must always conduct themselves professionally
- Staff and educators must maintain the privacy and confidentiality of families, employees, students, children and volunteers, including when they have obtained permission to publish content to the Service social media account
- Absolutely no written content will be published to the Service social media account without the explicit written permission of families to whom the content relates.
- Our Service will obtain written family permission prior to posting images or videos of children.
- Passwords will not be shared without authorisation from management.
- Our Service will remain up to date with any changes to the social media platform ensuring privacy settings remain up to date.
- Upon resignation of an employee, management will ensure access to Service accounts, including social media and email accounts, is restricted immediately.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER AND NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations are met
- ensure educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- ensure all staff, educators, volunteers and students are aware of current child protection law, Code of Conduct, National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, National Model Code and their duty of care to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm to children
- ensure all staff, educators, students and volunteers are aware of their mandatory reporting obligations and promptly report any concerns related to child safety, including inappropriate use of

digital platforms and online environments to the approved provider or nominated supervisor [See *Child Protection Policy*]

- report any suspected cases of online abuse to the relevant authorities, including the e-Safety Commissioner and Police, in accordance with legal requirements and child protection obligations
- ensure families are aware of our *Social Media Policy* and *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy* and procedures, and are advised on how and where the policies can be accessed
- obtain parent/guardian written authorisation to collect and share images or videos of their children online
- ensure families are informed of the intended use for images and/or videos, including social media or other purposes
- ensure educators and staff complete online training through the eSafety Commissioner to ensure staff remain up to date with current research and are aware of how to report inappropriate content on social media sites
- ensure educators teach children consent for image taking to develop respectful social media use
- be responsible for determining who is authorised to upload images and videos of children onto the Service social media accounts
- ensure all images and videos of children are stored securely with password protection and used in accordance with Service policies
- ensure personal information about families, children and staff that reveals their identity is not posted on-line
- ensure images or videos posted on social media of children are appropriate in nature and do not show children in distress, in a position that may be perceived as sexualised or in a state of undress, including where genitalia may be exposed
- ensure appropriate privacy settings are established and maintained on the Service's social media accounts
- ensure all passwords are kept confidential
- log out of the Service social media account when not in use and prior to leaving the Service
- regularly scan online content related to the Service to ensure appropriateness
- adhere to our *Dealing with Complaints Policy* and procedures when investigating any concerns or complaints relating to:
    - posting images or information about the Service or children without authorisation
    - defaming, harassing or bullying another person who works at the Service or is connected to the Service
    - other inappropriate use of social media

- take appropriate action in response to substantiated concerns about inappropriate use of social media, in accordance with relevant Service policies, procedures and employment processes.

EDUCATORS AND STAFF WILL:

- know of and adhere to this policy and related procedures
- access relevant eSafety Commissioner resources and training to maintain their understanding of online safety and how to report inappropriate content
- maintain the privacy and confidentiality of families, children, employees, students and volunteers when using the Service's social media account
- only upload images and videos of children to Service social media accounts when authorised to do so
- ensure images and videos of children are appropriate in nature and do not show children in distress, in a position that may be perceived as sexualised or in a state of undress, including where genitalia may be exposed
- support children to understand consent when images or videos are taken of them, and ask for their consent in appropriate ways
- keep passwords confidential and not share passwords with others
- log out of the Service social media account when not in use and prior to leaving the Service
- promptly report concerns about inappropriate or unsafe content, including concerns about the use of digital platforms and online environments, to the approved provider or nominated supervisor.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER, NOMINATED SUPERVISOR, EDUCATORS, STAFF MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS WILL NOT:

- access personal social media accounts or any other social media accounts on any workplace device whilst educating and caring for children
- post any images of the children enrolled at the Service on their personal social media account
- post any information about the Service, colleagues, children, or families on any personal social media account
- vilify, harass or bully any other person who works at the Service, family or community member connected to the Service

- post offensive, defamatory or derogatory comments or information that could bring themselves or the Service into disrepute
- use their personal cameras, phones or any other personal electronic devices to take images or videos while at the Service.

FAMILIES:

- will adhere to our Service's *Social Media Policy*
- will provide written authorisation for the Service to take images or videos of their child using service-supplied electronic devices and upload them on social media platforms
- will not use personal electronic devices, such as mobile phones, smart watches or META sunglasses, to take images, record audio, or capture video of children being educated and cared for at the Service
- will not use images of children obtained through the Service's app for learning and observation purposes or images posted on the Service's social media or other social media platforms to publish on their own social media
- will respect the privacy of other children and families and will not photograph, record or share images or recordings of other children without appropriate authorisation
- are aware that they have the choice to withdraw their authorisation for images or videos to be posted on social media at any time
- will promptly raise concerns about inappropriate or unsafe content relating to the Service or children with the approved provider or nominated supervisor
- are provided with clear information on how to make a complaint and our complaint handling processes (see *Dealing with Complaints Policy*).

PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Staff members should carefully consider the professional implications of adding families of the Service as 'friends' or connections on personal social media accounts. The Service does not recommend that staff add families of the Service to their personal social media accounts, as this may blur professional boundaries and create potential conflicts between personal and professional relationships. They will still be seen as representatives of the Service and be 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

have families as friends on their private account. If adding families to personal social media accounts, educators will adhere to relevant policies, including the code of conduct of the Service.

BREACH OF POLICY

Any breach of this policy that placed a child at risk of harm will be investigated immediately. Staff members or educators who fail to adhere to this policy may be in breach of their terms of employment and may face disciplinary action. Visitors, students or volunteers who fail to comply with this policy may face termination of their engagement. Family members who fail to comply with this policy may place their child's enrolment at risk and their access to the Service may be limited.

RESOURCES

Australian Government. eSafety Commissioner. Early Years program for educators

Australian Government. eSafety Commissioner. eSafety checklist for early learning services

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Social Media Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation or ACECQA guidance, or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management. All families will be notified 14 days before any policy change that may have a significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the Service or the family's ability to utilise the Service.

RELATED RESOURCES

Media Authorisation – Child	Media Authorisation – Staff

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). *Embedding the National Child Safe Principles*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). *NQF Online Safety Guide*
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). Safe use of devices in education and care services
Early Childhood Australia. (2016). *Code of Ethics*.
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	SEPTEMBER 2027
VERSION	V13.09.26		
MODIFICATIONS	• annual policy review • added educators and staff will section and paramount consideration statement • expanded the policy from Facebook to include other social media accounts and platforms • clarified expectations for personal social media accounts • edits for clarity • sources and references updated as required		
PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS			
AUGUST 2025	• annual policy review • additional information added to strengthen child safety within policy and comply with recommendations for the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and National Model Code • new section added: *Families* • sources updated as required		
AUGUST 2024	• policy maintenance - no major changes to policy • National Model of Code and Guidelines added to policy • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • updated sources • Childcare Centre Desktop related resources added		