

POLICY 56 TECHNOLOGY POLICY & PROCEDURE

Key Policy Contact Person: Manager, Our Village Family Childcare.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Digital technologies and computers have become an integral part of many children's daily lives. For this reason, it is important that Educators are not only familiar with the use of digital technologies, but are able to guide children’s understanding of, and ability to use them. Technology and media items will only be used as an extension to the daily program assisting in the development of social, physical, emotional, cognitive, language and creative potential of each child. Quality TV programs and digital technologies can be helpful in learning and retelling stories about our culture, help to celebrate diversity and assist in providing an inclusive and equitable educational program.

We are committed to upholding the Child Safe Standards to help protect children and young people from harm. Alongside the Child Safe Code of Conduct this policy and procedure outlines the way in which staff, educators, students and volunteers use technology within the education programs provided by Our Village Family Childcare coordination unit and family day care educators.

CRITICAL INFORMATION:

All images and videos of children are stored and shared as per written consent given by parent/guardian upon enrolment on Harmony and updated as required.

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PURPOSE:

To provide educators and staff within Our Village Family Childcare with clear guidelines for the use of television, digital technology, and media in the delivery of the service to children and families.

SCOPE/RESPONSIBILITIES:

This document applies to all Educators, Families, Coordination Unit Staff, Volunteers and Students of Our Village Family Childcare Service.

STATEMENT OF DIVERSITY

Sunbury and Cobaw Community Health is committed to improving the health of our community and being accessible to all, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, people with a disability, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex, Queer, Asexual and other sexually or gender diverse (LGBTIQ+) people and other socially vulnerable groups and supporting their communities across the lifespan from birth to older age.

DEFINITIONS:

Digital Technology	Refers to digital devices, systems and resources that help create, store, learn, play and manage data. Examples of digital technologies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computers - Smartphones - Smart TV’s - iPads
Digital Media	Any content created, edited, stored, or accessed in digital form, through music encoding and decoding of data and that can include text, audio, video and graphics.
Software Programs	A set of instructions or, a set of modules or procedures, that allow for a certain type of computer operation.

PROCEDURES:

Television & DVD’S

The use of television programs (including streaming options through FOXTEL, STAN etc.) within the educational program are:

- Limited to programs that:
 - have an educational base and enhance children’s learning e.g. Music program, documentary.
 - Have been previewed by an educator before to determine the suitability and relevance to the children’s curriculum and learning. All television programs and DVD’s must have a ‘G’ rating.
- Used as a learning experience. Educators give children the opportunity to ask questions, describe their feelings and make sense of what is taking place.
- Followed up by other learning opportunities and experiences.

Digital Media (laptops, computers, mobile phones, cameras, and iPads)

The coordination unit will:

- Our Village Family Childcare will provide coordinators with authorised mobile devices such as phones and laptops for work-related use.
- Coordinators will only use these mobile devices such as mobile phones, cameras, or iPad to take photographs or videos of the children as well as documentation, resources, and research for the educators.
- Supports educators in using play-based activities to help young children to understand digital technologies by supplying Educator guidance and activities from organisations such as but not limited to “Playing IT Safe” (Appendix 1)
- Provide educators with up to date information to engage in regular opportunities for ongoing, formal and informal professional learning

Educator Responsibilities:

- Educators will set up login details and passwords for all digital media used in the provision of their family day care business.
- Login details and passwords will not be shared with other parties.
- Educators will store electronic records and personal information relating to children and families in line with Our Village Family Childcare’s Governance & Management of the FDC Service Including Confidentiality of Records.
- Educators will discourage families from allowing their children to bring their own personal devices.
- The Educator and/or service accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage of any personal device brought to the educator’s home.
- Keep up to date with professional leaning about online safety to ensure ability to identify and mitigate risks associated with being online.
- Educators are aware and compliant with OVFC Policy No 42 Social Media guidelines around privacy and their own use of social media for professional as well as personal purposes.

OVFC and educator responsibilities in relation to children:

- Use play-based activities to help young children understand digital technologies by participating in activities from organisations such as but not limited to “Playing IT Safe”.
- Consider the developmental levels of children when using technology for early learning.
- Support children’s natural curiosity for technology and build on children’s learning through this, using screens for education and movement and gross motor activity.
- Use technology to build on current projects, document children’s learning and include discussions and activities promoting respectful relationships with their peers.
- 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, teach and remind children about online safety and self-regulation to the children E.G asking permission before they take a photo
- Ensure that an appropriate balance between inactive and active time is maintained each day.
- Educate and support children to begin to develop skills to critically evaluate sources of information on the internet.

- Discuss and document within the parent/educator agreement upon enrolment the use and expectations and use of digital technologies and screen time within the program.
- Ensure screen time timeframes are capped to no more than 2 hours of screen time per day.
- Ensure all screen time is supervised and ensure it is discussed with children what to do if they encounter inappropriate materials online.

OVFC and educator responsibilities in relation to families:

- To ensure clear guidelines families receive *Policy No 18 – Dealing with complaint, grievance and feedback* upon enrolment to be able to raise concerns surrounding digital technologies.
- Offer families information surrounding eSafety through a variety of formats that may include:
 - Emails
 - Our Village Family Childcare Facebook Page
 - News (Via Harmony Web)
 - OVFC Term Newsletter

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Internet

- Websites such as Google and You Tube can be used to engage in collaborative research with children to enhance the program and extend learning.

Software programs

- Educators must preview any software to be viewed by the children to determine its suitability and relevance to the children’s curriculum and learning.
- Educators must ensure that the software they choose is open ended and focusses on children interacting with other children and/or educators rather than working in isolation and has an appropriate educational focus.

Security and Confidentiality

- Educators, Coordination Unit Staff, Volunteers and Students of Our Village Family Childcare Service will ensure a thorough understanding of their responsibilities regarding information, privacy, and confidentiality.
- Educators:
 - Will comply with all related Services policies and procedures.
 - Keep passwords confidential.
 - Log out of computers and software programs after each use.

Support agencies

- [Headspace](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [eSafety commissioner](#)
- [Parentline](#)

APPENDICIES:

- [Playing IT Safe Activity and Educator resources](#)

REFERENCES:

- Department of Health - <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/physical-activity-and-exercise/physical-activity-and-exercise-guidelines-for-all-australians>
- Education and Care national Regulations (current version October 1, 2023)

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES/ WORK INSTRUCTIONS:

Educational Program Policy

- Governance and Management of the FDC Service Including confidentiality of Records – 8
- Provision of information, Assistance, and training to FDC Educators - 34
- Code of Conduct – 40
- Dealing with complaints – 18
- Monitoring, Support and Supervision of FDC Educators – 21
- Child Safe Code of Conduct

VERSION CONTROL AND LEGISLATION:

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