

Policy Title:	Use of Technology and Social Media		
National Law	Section 167		
National Quality Framework	Regulations 73 & 168		
National Quality Standard	1 & 4		
Last Reviewed	2021	Next Review	Jan 2024

Rationale:

Technology is an integral part of all our lives and can be a positive educational learning tool, its use should be balanced with participation in a variety of other activities. Children need support to guide and teach them about the safety of using technology.

Managing the appropriate use of social media, screen time and other technologies is important if we are to provide children with the skills to engage in critical thinking, explore diverse perspectives and develop good analytical and creative skills.

Our educators will model the responsible use of technology as it supports the program in its daily functions ensuring we maintain attendance records, children's enrolment information and capture photos for the educational program.

Policy statement: The health, safety, and wellbeing of the children in care is to be protected. This policy defines the use of technology and social media within the services and applies to children, educators, and coordination unit staff.

Social media use by staff:

Many people use social media and therefore we need to consider how personal use may expose us to possible claims, legal action and potential loss of reputation. Any information posted on social media sites may become public property and be used in a manner that was not intended. The privacy and protection of children, families and staff is to be upheld when participating in social media sites.

Guidelines:

The use of social media sites in a professional capacity:

- Photos and information about staff, children and families are not to be posted on any personal social media site.
- The OSHC Educator Facebook page is a forum used for sharing professional information between services and the coordination unit. Content posted not in line with the organisation's values will be removed by the program Administrator.
- If expressing views about childcare, be clear that the views are personal and not necessarily the views of the service or other educators.
- Remain mindful of using respectful language and be aware of what constitutes cyber bullying. Cyber bullying includes nasty or threatening messages or photos/videos sent to others with the intention of embarrassing the person involved. It can be via texts, images, or sounds and may be racist, sexist, insulting, unlawful or threatening.

For the use of Personal Devices

Educators must not access personal technology devices (e.g. smart phones, smart watches, iPads, tablets) while interacting with children or contributing to service ratios, these must be kept stored in the locked storeroom and only used in emergencies.

Taking photos and storing images of children

Images of children must only be captured on mobile phone and deleted regularly. Images of children for Facebook, programming, and displays must have parent permission prior to use. Educators are only to use images for work purpose.

Inappropriate professional use of technology or social media by any staff member may constitute a breach of employment and may result in that person facing disciplinary action or, in serious cases, termination of their employment.

Children's personal mobile phones and electronic equipment:

- Children are not to use mobile phones, smart watches, or other devices capable of connecting to the internet whilst in care.
- All devices are kept in children's bags and left in the bag area until the child leaves care. If a child is seen accessing their technology staff will remove it, place it in a safe location and return it to the parent at the end of the session.
- All personal electronic equipment is to be named.
- Equipment can be used by children in quiet times such as the end of the day. They must be in "airplane mode" and not connected to the internet.
- Devices may be used to support individual children, and this is documented on their Medical Management or Individual Support Plan.
- Usage is closely monitored by staff to ensure that the content is 'G'-rated, appropriate, and suitable for the age and stage of development of the child.
- Children are not to use electronic devices to engage in personal attacks, bullying, harassment, or posting private information about others.
- Any breaches of this will be discussed with parents, the child banned from using electronic devices at the service, and depending on the circumstances, the service concerned may exercise its right to suspend the child from care.

Watching television and DVDs

Educators will ensure that the viewing of TV and movies within the service supports children's development and learning opportunities and will only be used as an extension to the daily program. Parent permission needs to be given for PG rated movies.

Procedures:

- Plan what is to be watched and know the program and the characters involved.
- Give children the opportunity to ask questions and help them make sense of what they see as individual children's perceptions of the same information may be very different.
- Be aware of content and ratings, especially in DVDs, and ensure that they are appropriate for the children in care.
- Seek parent's permission if required for PG movies.

Links to other policies or documents

- Child protection
- Complaints and grievances
- Guiding children's behaviour
- Interactions with children
- Maintaining a safe environment
- Partnerships with families
- Privacy, confidentiality and management of records

Sources

- National and Care Services National Law
- Education and Services National Regulations
- Department of Education (Tasmania) "Use of Mobile Phones by Students at School Policy"
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
- www.esafety.gov.au