

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

We recognise both the benefits, and challenges, of using Facebook and social media in the early childhood setting. This policy has been developed to provide employees, families, volunteers and students with standards of use as they engage in conversations or interactions using social media for official, professional and personal use.

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.
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

727	Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider
181-184	Confidentiality and storage of records

RELATED POLICIES

Code of Conduct Policy Cyber Safety Policy Family Communication Policy Health and Safety Policy Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy	Respect for Children Policy Responsible Person Policy Student and Volunteer Workers Policy Supervision Policy Work Health and Safety Policy
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PURPOSE

Being part of our Service entails a position of trust and responsibility. We aim to ensure that our Service, children, educators, and/or families 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, relevant policies, and the code of conduct.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Social media is defined as "forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)" (Merriam-Webster dictionary).

We recognise that there are many advantages in 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.

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

- Social networking sites e.g. Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- Image sharing sites e.g. Instagram, Snapchat, and Imgur.
- Video hosting sites e.g. YouTube and Vimeo.
- Community blogs e.g. Tumblr and Medium.
- Discussion sites e.g. Reddit and Quora.

Service Facebook Account

Our Service has a public Facebook account to share information with our families and community, which is administered by the Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor.

The intent for our Service Facebook page is to:

1. Keep families in touch with what's happening at the Service, including upcoming and special events.
2. Provide educational information to families.

PRIVACY

- All staff and educators must remain aware that they represent and could be identified as an employee of the Service through any online activity.

In regard to the Service Facebook page the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will:

- Ensure personal information about families, children and staff is not posted on-line.
- Regularly scan online content related to the Service to ensure appropriateness.
- Adhere to our Grievance Policy and Procedures to investigate any occurrences where a person working at the Service may:
 - Post photos or information of the Service or children
 - Defame, harass or bully any other person who works at the Service or is connected to the Service.
- Ensure that any staff or educator found guilty of any Facebook misconduct (on both the Service Facebook page and any private page) is aware that this may result in termination of employment.

In regard to all social media, the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff members, volunteers and students will not:

- Access personal Facebook or any other social media accounts whilst educating and caring for children.
- Post any photos taken of the children enrolled at the service on their personal Facebook or any other 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 or derogatory comments or information that could bring their professional standing or that of the Service into disrepute.
- Use their personal camera or phones to take photos or video whilst at the Service.

Personal Social Media Accounts

Staff members are to use their own personal discretion when adding a family of the Service as a 'friend' on Facebook or any other social media. The Service does not recommend that staff add families of the Service to personal social media accounts 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. It is extremely important not to post information about the Service, colleagues, children, or families on personal social media accounts, as this not only contravenes the Service policies and code of conduct, but is considered a breach of the Commonwealth's *Privacy Act 1988* and *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*. 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.

If adding families to personal social media accounts, Educators will adhere to relevant policies, including the code of conduct of the service.

Consequences for inappropriate conduct

For inappropriate conduct to be lawful, there is a need to demonstrate a connection between the behaviour and the employment relationship that:

- Is likely to cause serious damage to the relationship between the employee and the Service,
- Damages or harms the Service's interest or reputation,
- Is incompatible with the employee's duties in the education and care sector.

A person who has been involved in inappropriate conduct may require reprimand as per our Code of Conduct Policy. This may lead to termination of their position.

Source

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

Dictionary by Merriam-Webster: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).

Privacy Act 1988.

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	AUGUST 2019	NEXT REVIEW DATE	AUGUST 2020
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy modified into a 'social media' policy. • Sentences reworded/refined. • Additional information added to points. • Irrelevant information deleted. • Headings modified to reflect inclusion of 'social media' • 'Implementation' modified to include 'social media'. • Rearranged the order of some points for better flow • Points added (Highlighted). • Sources checked for currency. • Unrelated references/sources deleted. • References corrected, added &/or updated, and alphabetised. • Incorrect URLs deleted. • 'Related policies' alphabetised. 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
AUGUST 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes made to outline consequences for inappropriate conduct and compliance with privacy laws 	AUGUST 2019	
OCTOBER 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated references to comply with the revised National Quality Standard 	MAY 2018	
MAY 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major changes to the policy with the additional specifications to ensure a clear and precise understanding of expectations 	MAY 2018	