

POLICY/PROCEDURE NAME & REVIEW PROCESS	TECHNOLOGY and CHILDREN POLICY This policy and procedure has been created to provide all stakeholders with clear guidelines and transparency to our practices and procedures. We welcome feedback and input from all stakeholders at any time and this policy is subject to review based on feedback or due date of annual review.
NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD	QUALITY AREA 1- EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE 1.1 PROGRAM 1.1.1 Approved learning framework. 1.1.2 Child-centred. 1.1.3 Program learning opportunities.
NATIONAL LAW AND REGULATIONS	170-Policies and procedures to be followed 171-Policies and procedures to be kept available 172- Notification of change to policies or procedures
RELATED POLICIES AND RECORDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology user agreement record Technology log record.
SCOPE OF POLICY	This policy applies to all children, educators, families, management, students and volunteers at our service.
AIM OF POLICY	To ensure that our service has strong guidelines, procedures, and practices in place regarding technology and its use in the service, ensuring staff are aware of the importance of safe technology use in order to protect the safety, wellbeing, and protection of all children. Our aim is to provide a clear policy, implement the policy, support practices relating to the policy, train staff regarding the policy and maintain and update the compliance of the policy for all our stakeholders.
SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION	Implementation Computers, tablets, smartphones, apps, and other digital tools are a part of our everyday lives. When used appropriately, technology can help children explore their world, express and make sense of what they know, and interact with other children. Technology tools can also assist families as they support their children's at-home learning. Advantages of Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances socialisation and freedom of expression -Technology allows children to connect with their family, friends, and others in ways that enrich their relationships, especially when using video chat and other real-time interactions. Independence and empowerment- Technology can be a tool for learning as it can enhance children to become independent learners much quicker. Once they learn how to access digital information sources safely, they're able to explore the topics that interest them on their own. Early access to technology teaches the digital literacy skills that children will need for their future success in school and as adults. Problem solving skills and perseverance- Technology often presents children with problems, and helps them learn how to make decisions and solve those problems. Games and apps on tablets or smartphones can help give children the practice they need to find success down the road Enhances Learning -Many technology products promote hand-eye coordination in young children, while others focus on developing their language and problem-solving skills. Imaginative play and emerging creativity are a key part of a under 5-year-olds development. Contrary to popular belief, screen time doesn't have to stifle creativity. In fact, it can, if used appropriately actually enhance this age group's imaginative play. Disadvantages of Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased sedentary time that can lead to overweight or obesity. Impact on ability to focus and concentrate on tasks. Exposure to violence that has been shown to be related to increased bullying in school age years. Marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages. Difficulty in distinguishing between pretend and real life. Exposure to adult situations they may have difficulty processing or understanding. Replacing creative play, which is so critical for growth and development of social and cognitive skills. Problems with sleep.

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- Even having the television as background noise can expose children unknowingly to situations, they find confusing or frightening, especially without an opportunity to talk to a caring adult.

Technology and STEM learning:

STEM' stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Under the National STEM School Education Strategy 2016-2026, STEM education refers collectively to the teaching of the disciplines within its umbrella – science, technology, engineering and mathematics – and also to a cross-disciplinary approach to teaching that increases children's interest in STEM related fields and improves children's problem solving and critical analysis skills. STEM sits within a broader foundational knowledge base and the teaching of STEM is a part, albeit important, of a balanced program of learning.

(Department of Education Australia)

- STEM learning focuses on teaching the next generation the skills and knowledge they need for the future. It's more important than ever that we equip children today with the necessary skills needed for the future. Technology in early childhood education can assist in STEM learning and prepare children for the challenges of the future.

Ways to enhance learning through Technology

- **Interactive Screens and SMART Boards-** This type of technology appeals to children who are visual learners, as well as those that need the hands-on approach in order to learn. The boards are also connected to the internet, meaning the educators can extend on the children's interests and find out more about a topic, or quickly find a video or song that would help their lesson. They're also helpful for children as they can use their hands and fingers in a much more natural way, compared to trying to use a mouse or track pad on a computer, which children can find quite challenging.
- **Hand-held devices- iPad-** Educators may use an iPad for some small group work or to introduce educational games. For example, it could be a matching game, a maths game, or a literacy game that two children could work on together under the watchful eye of an educator.
- **ELLA language program-** ELLA stands for Early Learning Languages Australia. It is an Australian Government initiative to inspire pre-school age children to learn a new language and explore different cultures. The program itself is digital and because it's designed for children completely play-based. It's completely free for services to use and comes with a choice of 13 languages including Mandarin, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese and Vietnamese.
<https://www.ella.edu.au/>
- **Additional needs-** Educators working with young children who have additional needs are discovering that carefully selected computer software and mobile apps can provide many benefits such as improved self-esteem, a longer attention span, and inclusion among other children. Specially selected apps can allow children with additional needs to be able to enhance and assist them with communication delays by teaching speech and language skills or literally communicating for them. Apps can assist children with ADHD to follow tasks and stay focused. Apps can assist children with autism to reinforce their emotional regulation, relationship understanding, and communication skills. They support and provide the tools they need to integrate and develop relationships with others.

Each member of the team plays an important role in the implementation of each policies guidelines, and they are outlined as below but not limited to the following:

The Approved Provider

- Will ensure that educators at the service are issued with electronic devices for the sole use of recording documentation for programming, and or taking images or videos of children for the purpose of documenting children's progress and involvement within the program.
- Will ensure that staff sign service assigned electronic devices out and in from a locked area within the service on the **technology log record** daily and ensure they are returned at the end of each day.
- Will ensure that nominated supervisor monitors electronic devices on a regular basis to ensure that staff are not breaching the policy.

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- Will ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met.
- Ensure they take reasonable steps to ensure that the nominated supervisor, educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures.
- Ensure they provide the nominated supervisor, educators, staff and volunteers the documentation to perform their role, follow policy, procedure, and document according to regulatory and service requirements.
- Will ensure that adequate induction process is provided to all staff to ensure they have time to read and understand policies and procedures and seek further information if unsure.
- Ensure that the nominated supervisor and staff are equipped with ongoing professional development and training they require to comply with this policy
- Will encourage feedback from stakeholders regarding the policy's effectiveness, particularly in relation to identifying and responding to child safety concerns.
- Ensure the policy is kept up to date with current legislation, research and best practice.

The Nominated Supervisor

- Will ensure that they monitor electronic devices on a regular basis to ensure that staff are not breaching the policy.
- Ensure educators understand and keep in mind age-appropriate usage of technology.
- Ensure that technology for under 2-year old's is banned from the service. No child under two will be exposed to technology or screen time in the service.
- Ensure that over 2-year old's and up to 5 years of age should be limited to one hour per day.
- Ensure educators use technology for research and extension of the curriculum, technology will not be used as a means to entertain children whilst educators perform other activities.
- Children will only view G rated materials online.
- Will ensure that any approved downloaded apps do not include advertising.
- Ensure parents/guardians are communicated to regarding the use of technology through the program and online communication.
- Ensure that educators do not view restricted material at any stage when children are present.
- Will adhere to and implement the obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations.
- Ensure they take reasonable steps to ensure that the educators, staff and volunteers follow the policy and procedures.
- Ensure they provide the educators, staff and volunteers the documentation to perform their role, follow policy and procedure and ensure they are checking the documentation according to regulatory and service requirements.
- Ensure that a rigorous recruitment process is completed, and a thorough induction process is provided to all staff to ensure they have time to read and understand policies and procedures and seek further information if unsure.
- Ensure that the staff are supported with ongoing professional development and training they require to comply with this policy.
- Will encourage feedback from stakeholders and staff regarding the policy's effectiveness, particularly in relation to identifying and responding to child safety concerns.
- Ensure the policy is kept up to date with current legislation, research and best practice.
- Conduct regular staff meetings to address policy compliance with legislation, policy implementation, changes to policy and or collect feedback for annual review of policy.

Educators

- Will respect technology equipment at all times and complete a **technology user agreement record** and a **technology log record**.
- Ensure they keep their passwords safe and secure.
- Ensure they do not use service technology for personal usage.
- Ensure that any new apps or programs installed on service technology must be approved by the Nominated Supervisor first before installing them.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will always log out of technology when not in use to ensure no access to technology for children if left unattended. Will actively supervise all children when using technology and not allow them to search the web unattended. Ensure that technology for under 2-year old's is not allowed as per policy. No child under two will be exposed to technology or screen time in the service. Ensure that over 2-year old's and up to 5 years of age should be limited to one hour per day. Ensure technology is used specifically for research and extension of the curriculum, technology will not be used as a means to entertain children whilst educators perform other activities. Children will only view G rated materials online. Educators may not view any restricted material at any stage in the rooms and especially if children are present. Ensure they empower children to use the internet safely by mutually exploring safe sites and explaining why they are safe. Staff must not bring in their own electronic devices to the service for the purpose of taking images or videos this includes iPad, laptops, digital cameras, iPhone, smart watches, and any other form of recording device not listed here. Staff electronic equipment such as iPhone must be kept in designated lockers areas away from children's rooms and may only be accessed in breaks throughout the day. If staff are waiting for urgent calls etc approved provider/ nominated supervisor will allow calls to be made to the service. Will adhere to and implement the obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations. Ensure they take reasonable steps to follow the service policy and procedures and seek advice or further support if unsure. Ensure they complete and document any related records regarding the implementation of this policy and practice requirements of the service. Will attend any ongoing professional development, staff meetings and training they require to comply with this policy and practice requirements of the service. Will provide feedback to the nominated supervisor or approved provider regarding the policy's effectiveness, particularly in relation to identifying and responding to child safety concerns. Will provide feedback regarding policy review when required. <p>Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should monitor children's online activities includes checking that websites are appropriate for a child's use and keeping an eye on the screen. Communicate with educators in the child's room if they have any concerns regarding the use of technology in the service and if unsatisfied speak to the Nominated Supervisor.
REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION	The following procedures outline and support all stakeholders to understand and implement the regulatory guidelines of this policy.
In regard to regulation 170- Policies and procedures to be followed.	<p>Approved Provider will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all staff and volunteers are made aware of Regulatory policies and procedures by ensuring that this forms a part of the induction process. Ensure probationary reviews will be conducted once new staff are appointed at the 3- month and 6-month mark to ensure that they are following policy and procedure and to review and revise regulatory policies. Ensure staff meetings will be conducted on a regular basis to allow for review of policy and procedure and further training and revision of procedural practices in relation to policy and procedure. Ensure annual review and revision of policies and procedures will be conducted, and all educators will be given the opportunity for input.
In regard to Regulation 171- Policies and procedures to be kept available.	<p>Approved Provider will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that policies and procedures are available to all staff and the location and availability will form a part of the induction process. Ensure policies will be available on request for all staff members to have access when required.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure policies will be available when required for staff members to download copies and/or print out if required in order to complete assignments or to form part of their research and/ or update their knowledge. Ensure policies will be available for all stakeholders when requested and when updating.
In regard to Regulation 172- Notification of change to policies or procedures	<p>Approved Provider will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure staff meetings will be conducted on a regular basis to allow for review of policy and procedure, provide further training and allow for input if required in relation to policy and procedure. Ensure stakeholders will be invited to provide feedback for policies and procedures at any time, not just on annual review but will also be invited to add feedback at review time or after an event that may require change to policy or procedure. Ensure policies and procedures will be emailed or put on display in the foyer for stakeholders to have the ability to provide feedback. Ensure feedback will be considered from stakeholders and educators and may result in a change in policy. Ensure policy and procedure may be changed at any time if there has been an incident in the service that has required a change to be implemented for the safety and health of children and or educators. Ensure in the event of a change to a policy after feedback or a situation that occurs, we will provide 14 days' notice to all stakeholders before the change takes effect.
KEY TERMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technology- The definition of technology is the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes or applications. There are many different types of technology - mechanical technology, medical technology, communications technology, electronic technology, and industrial and manufacturing technologies. Though these different types of technology all serve different purposes, range in design, and are applied in different ways, they all have one thing in common: they all solve a problem. The word "technology" brings to mind various devices, such as laptops, phones, and tablets. Technology may also make you think of the internet, data, or advancements in the world of engineering.
WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING SOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. ACEQCA Code of Ethics Department of Education Australian Government Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. Education and Care Services National Regulations. Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. Guide to the National Quality Framework. https://bestappsforkids.com/best-apps-for-special-needs-kids/ https://www.education.gov.au/australian-curriculum/national-stem-education-resources-toolkit/introductory-material-what-stem https://www.ella.edu.au/ National Quality Standard. United Convention on the Rights of the Child

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