

Social Media Policy

We recognise both the benefits, and challenges, of using social media at Activity Centres Inc. 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 application.

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. 162A	Child protection training
S. 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
84	Awareness of child protection law
181	Confidentiality and storage of records
183	Storage of records and other documents

RELATED LEGISLATION

<i>Privacy Act 1988 (the Act)</i>	<i>Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998</i>
<i>Crimes Act 1900</i>	

RELATED POLICIES

Child Protection Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Code of Conduct Policy Communications Policy Grievance and Complaints Management Policy Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy Orientation, Induction & Probation Policy	Privacy and Confidentiality 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
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Related Child Safety Standards	
1	Child Safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
3	Families and Communities are informed and involved
4	Equity is upheld and diversity is taken into account.
5	People working with children are suitable and supported.
6	Processes to respond to complaints of Child abuse are child focused.
7	Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training.
8	Physical and online environments minimize the opportunity for abuse to occur.
9	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improvised.
10	Policies and Procedures document how the organisation is Child Safe

PURPOSE

Being part of Activity Centres Inc (ACI) and actively creating and maintaining a child-safe culture, entails a position of trust and responsibility from all stakeholders. This policy provides guidelines and expectations for all staff and families to ensure child safe practices.

We aim to ensure that our Services, Children, Educators, and/or Families are not compromised in any form on any social media platform and that all social media usage complies with our Organisations Philosophy, relevant Policies, and our Code of Conduct.

Our practices align with the [National Model Code](#) and Guidelines for taking 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, Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Students, Volunteers and Visitors.

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.

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations recognise the importance of safe physical and online environments to promote safety and wellbeing of all children. ACI has the responsibility to ensure Children, Staff and Educators 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, Twitter, Parent Communication Software and LinkedIn
- Image sharing sites e.g., Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest
- Music/dance videos e.g., Tik Tok
- Video hosting sites e.g., YouTube and Vimeo.
- Community blogs e.g., Tumblr and Medium.
- Discussion sites e.g., Reddit and Quora.

NATIONAL MODEL CODE AND Education and Care Services (Supply, Authorisation and Use of Devices)

Order 2025

Our Service implements the current recommended practices released by ACECQA regarding the [National Model Code](#) and associated Guidelines. Our Service will ensure educators, staff, students and visitors always adhere to the following practices 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

- personal electronic devices, including but not limited to phones and smartwatches, that are capable of storing, receiving and/or transmitting images, must not be in the possession of any person while working directly with children within the children's environment
- only electronic devices issued by the Service are used to record and store images and videos of children.
- Service issued devices are securely configured, monitored and maintained to prevent unauthorised access.
- Service electronic devices are not to be taken out of the Service/ away from Service premises except where required for operational activities, for example excursions or transportation.
- procedures are followed regarding safe storage and restricted access of images and videos of children.
- exemptions or prescribed circumstances are authorised, in writing, by the Approved Provider for staff to possess or control a personal device while working directly with children.

SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS/GROUPS

The Service may maintain official social media accounts or communication platforms to engage with families, educators, and the broader community. All Service social media accounts are administered by the Approved Provider and/or Nominated Supervisor.

Any social media platform proposed for use by the Service must receive prior approval from Management. Before approval is granted, there must be a clearly defined purpose for the platform and an identified target audience (e.g. families, educators, or both).

Management will determine whether the platform will operate as a **public** or **private** account based on its intended purpose.

- **Private platforms** may be used for staff communication and parent communication software.
- **Public platforms** may be used for community engagement and marketing. No photographs or images that identify children will be published on public platforms.

The Service's social media platforms may be used to:

- Keep families and/or educators informed about Service news, upcoming events, activities, training opportunities, and professional development.
- Share information about the Service's programs, policies, procedures, and initiatives.
- Encourage positive engagement with families and provide opportunities for feedback on Service policies, procedures, and practices.
- Share evidence-based information and educational resources relevant to children, families, and educators.
- Promote the Service and foster positive community engagement.

NOTE: Official Service social media accounts are to be used solely for Service-related communication. They must not be used for personal comments, opinions, discussions, or any content unrelated to the operation and objectives of the Service.

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.
- Staff and Educators must maintain appropriate privacy of Families, Employees, Students, Children and Volunteers, including when they have obtained permission to publish content to our account, including Parent Communication platforms.
- Our Service will gain implicit and written family permission prior to posting photos of children on any public account
- Passwords will not be shared without authorisation from management.
- Our-Service will remain up to date with any changes to any used Social Media Platform to ensure privacy settings remain up to date.
- Upon resignation of an employee management will ensure access to Service accounts, including all Social Media and email, is restricted immediately. If the Social Media account has one central log in, then the password for that account is changed and supplied to only the Educators authorised to use that account.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/ NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/COORDINATOR WILL:

- ensure that obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations* are met.
- ensure Educators, Staff, Students, Visitors and Volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure.
- Create a Social Media Risk assessment and ensure Educators, Staff, Students, Visitors and Volunteers have read and understand all aspects of the risk assessment
- 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 procedure and are advised on how and where the policy can be accessed.
- obtain parent/guardian written authorisation/consent 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 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 and staff onto secure social media platforms.
- 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 is not posted on-line.
- photos or videos posted on social media of children must be appropriate in nature and must not show children in distress, in a position that may be perceived as sexualised or in a state of undress.
- ensure the highest level of privacy settings are established and maintained on the account.
- ensure all passwords are kept confidential.
- log out of any social media platform when not in use and prior to leaving the Service.
- regularly scan online content related to the Service to ensure appropriateness.
- adhere to our *Grievance and Complaints Policy* and procedures to investigate any occurrences where a person working at the Service may:
 - posts 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 misconduct, on social media platform, is aware that this may result in termination of employment. Police and child protection authorities may be involved in an investigation.

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

- have access to any personal electronic devices used to take photos, record audio or capture video of children who are being educated and cared for at the Service.
- Access any personal social media accounts on any workplace device whilst educating and caring for children or in the presence of children at the service.
- post any photos taken of the children enrolled at the service on any of their personal social media account.
- will not use images of children obtained via the Service's devices, app for learning and observation purposes or social media platforms to publish on their own social media.
- post any information about the Organisation, 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 or broadcast photos or video whilst at the Service.
- Use service issued devices to access any personal Social Media Platforms.

PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

ACI does not recommend or endorse that staff/educators, and Volunteers add families or children (under the age of 18) of any of our Services to personal social media accounts. If they do so, they will still be seen as a representative of the Service and required to uphold the Service's *Code of Conduct* on all posts on personal social media accounts. If staff/educators have a pre-existing relationship with any family/child enrolled at the service, (e.g. family members etc), it is strongly encouraged that this relationship be disclosed to management.

Educators/Staff are also encouraged to keep personal social media accounts on the highest privacy settings of the platform to prevent children 'searching' for them and coming across inappropriate content or content that may breach service's Code of Conduct.

If Staff/Educators choose to add families to personal social media accounts, Educators will adhere to relevant policies, including, but not limited to, this Policy, Safe use of Digital Technology and Online Environments, Child Protection, Child Safe Environment and the code of conduct of ACI.

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 the Organisation's expectation that educators and staff do not accept families as friends or connections on their personal social media accounts.

FAMILIES:

- will adhere to our Organisations *Social Media Policy*.
- will provide written authorisation/consent for the Service to take images or video of their child on Service issued electronic devices and upload to social media platforms.
- will not use personal electronic devices, such as, but not limited to, mobile phones, smart watches or META sunglasses, to take photos, record audio, or capture video of children being educated and cared for at the Service.
- will not use images of children obtained via the Service's app for learning and observation purposes or social media platforms to publish on their own social media.
- are aware they have the choice to withdraw their child's consent to have images or videos posted on social media at any time
- are provided with clear information on how to make a complaint and our complaint handling processes (Grievance and Complaints Policy).

BREACH OF POLICY

Any breach of this policy that places 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 or Volunteers who fail to comply to this policy may face termination of their engagement.

Family members who do not comply with this policy may place their child's enrolment at risk and limit the family members access to the Service.

RESOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [National Model Code for Early Childhood Education and Care](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). [NQF Online Safety Guide](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [Taking Images and Video of Children While Providing Early Childhood Education and Care. Guidelines For The National Model Code.](#)

Australian Government Office of the eSafety commission www.esafety.gov.au/early-years

eSafety [Early Years Checklist](#)

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Embedding the National Child Safe Principles](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [National Model Code for Early Childhood Education and Care.](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). [NQF Online Safety Guide](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [Taking Images or Videos of Children While Providing Early Education and Care. Guidelines for the National Model Code.](#)

Dictionary by Merriam-Webster

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations.](#) (Amended 2023).

eSafety Commissioner: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/esafety-early-years-program-for-educators>

Privacy Act 1988.

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998.

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Rachael Bajo, Jessie McCulloch & Natasha Foenander	Role: Head Office	Date: June 2026
ENDORSED BY 2 PARENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS (initial/date)	H.C & K.K (June 2026)	UPDATES/MODIFICATIONS	- Moved to Childcare desktop policy and structure to suit ACI's expectations
NEXT REVIEW DATE: June 2027			