



## COLLEGE COMMUNITY CHILD CARE CENTRE

### Digital Technologies, Social Media & Internet Postings Policy

#### **RATIONALE & POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:**

College Community Child Care Centre understands the importance of developing practices which respect the privacy and confidentiality of families, children, staff, management and the greater community. It is important therefore to ensure that educators/staff are fully aware of their responsibilities for maintaining strict confidentiality under the Freedom of Information Act (WA) 1992 and that families are informed of their rights and responsibilities in regard to accessing and responding to internet-based interactions. Used responsibly, social media and the internet provide an effective way to keep abreast of new trends and topics, and to share information and perspectives. This policy ensures that no child, family, staff member or management member is compromised in any way at any time.

#### **Philosophy**

We recognise the importance of working in partnership with families to support the uniqueness of each individual child. We recognise the value of educators/staff who conduct themselves in a professional and responsible manner. The service promotes child dignity and provides learning opportunities in relation to Child Protection. The centre will strive to maintain the principles of the Early Years Learning Framework – Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships. The centre strives to maintain best practice within the 7 National Quality Standards.

#### **Legislation and Government Requirements**

Freedom of Information Act (WA) 1992;  
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2012 (WA)  
Education and Care Services National Regulations (WA) 2012

#### **Children's needs**

A safe environment in which to play and learn. Confidentiality, privacy and dignity to be respected.

#### **Families' needs**

A positive, up-to-date connection to their childcare service. Security that private and sensitive information and images are kept confidential. Ability to speak to educators regarding confidential matters that impact on their child's care. Access to their own personal records and to have the right to agree or disagree to their families involvement in digital technology.

#### **Educator/Staff needs**

Personal records, details, appraisals are treated as confidential; clear guidelines regarding what they should/shouldn't disclose about children and families.

#### **Management needs**

To make decisions regarding appropriate postings on any social media site; to withdraw any comment, photo, concept, opinion, link etc on the service site that does not meet the objectives, values or philosophy of the service.

#### **NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK**

**Education and Care Services National Law Act 2012(WA)**

**Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012 (WA)**

**Early Years Learning Framework for Australia**

**National Quality Standards for Early Childhood education and Care Standard 1.1; 2.2.3; 4.2; 5.1; 5.1.2; 6.1; 6.2; 7.1;**

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

This policy sets out the way College Community Child Care Centre will use Information Technology (IT) devices including, but not limited to, computers, laptops, ipads, tablets, television (including smart TVs) and DVD players as an effective means of communicating with families, staff, community and stakeholders. The services' website and Facebook page are an information resource available to prospective families as well as current families and educators. We will ensure that no person is compromised in any way at any time. Social media and internet postings are generally used to: inform and document children's learning; promote the service to the local community; communicate effectively and efficiently in a digital world.

College Community Child Care Centre develops guidelines with educators regarding social media participation connected with their work as early childhood educators.

**The Nominated Supervisor will:**

- Ensure that no confidential information can be gained from the service website.
- Not disclose or publish any information related to educators, children, or families without written consent from that individual or their family.
- Ensure the definitions of acceptable use of technology is consistent across the service and is clearly communicated in the policies.
- Review services infrastructure and technology, checking for appropriate filtering, monitoring, and compliance with data protection laws.
- Review how the service provides regular, quality online safety information to educators, children, and families.

**Educators will:**

- Maintain and enhance the centre's public image and use the internet in a responsible manner.
- Follow guidelines set out regarding their participation with families currently connected with the service, on social media sites such as Facebook and Kindy Hub.
- Always maintain professionalism in all communications (in-person, written or on-line) with the centre community.
- Embed online safety principles into the educational program and practice.
- Reflect and review children's access to technologies (E.g., What children will do, how long they will be allowed to use the devices, and how these might differ in terms of meeting needs of different children within the centre.
- Reflect and review the type of technologies children and educators use, and why these have been chosen.
- Television, iPad, and tablets will be used where relevant to enhance curriculum activities and never used as a substitution for interactions and collaborative learning between educators and children. Educators will sit with children to monitor and discuss any aspects of the content they are viewing.

**Social media**

Social media may include any existing or future internet sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, SMS, Snapchat, Twitter, blogs, Pinterest etc.

- It is not permitted to use photos of children, or any other information that may identify children or families on social media sites unless families have provided specific permission for this to occur. This policy strategy applies to educators, other staff, management committee, families, students on work experience, volunteers or any other person that may have access to children at the service.
- To protect staff/the service from allegations regarding breach of professionalism or confidentiality, College Community Child Care Centre requires that no staff member, seek or befriend any client of the service on any of the above-mentioned social media sites.
- Employees/educators or management committee members are not permitted to discuss the service or its staff on social media sites. Failure to adhere to this policy would be seen as unprofessional behaviour and would be subject to the relevant grievance procedure process.
- The service will include information about social media in the family orientation package, educator/staff/student/volunteer/management committee orientation procedures and will include regular reminders about this policy in service newsletters. In addition to this all persons listed above will be required to sign a *Confidentiality Statement*, which includes a statement about the use of photos and information on social media sites.

## **Internet Postings/Websites**

Internet postings/Websites may include any existing or future internet sites such as the service Website, Industry-based blogs, Community forums, Live chat forums, webinars, e-learning courses etc.

- The service will create and maintain a centre website for the purpose of promoting the service and informing the community.
- The service will encourage families and educators to give feedback regarding the centre website and Facebook page and how they can be improved to meet the needs of the community.

## **E-mail**

E-mail may include any existing or future e-mail services such as, the service e-mail, Gmail, yahoo, live, etc.

- A centre email account will be maintained for the purpose of communicating with families and the greater community.
- The centre email account will only be accessible to the centre Director, Assistant Director, and Chairperson.
- Staff wishing to access the centre email account must seek permission from one of the above-mentioned persons.
- If an individual chooses to provide information to the service via email, that information will remain confidential.
- Information gained by email will only be used by administration staff or management to contact a person or send information about the service and to request feedback on the service.
- All rooms will have staff emails created for use with Kindy Hub where parents and staff can communicate to each other.

## **Communication Software Program**

Kindy Hub Security Policy – Sharing information outside of Kindy hub, whether it be documentation of children's photos is at the discretion of the family. It is prohibited to share or upload group photos to social media without the consent of the children's families.

Employees are prohibited to access any information from kindy hub out of the centre without consent from management. Employees who violate Kindy hubs privacy policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Photographic and Video Images and Recordings**

Photographic and Video Images and Recordings may include any existing or future device such as, personal cameras, drone cameras, mobile phones, i-pad/tablets, child resource cameras, printers, portable scanning and printing devices etc.

- When a child starts at the service, parents are asked to agree in writing to their child being photographed and videoed by educators for involvement and curriculum purposes only. Parental/guardian consent will be given or denied on the child's enrolment form.
- The service will respect the wishes of any parent who does not wish their child to be photographed and ensure this does not occur when ever the child attends the centre.
- Visual images of enrolled children will not be taken, recorded, removed from the service, or used for any purpose without the written consent of the parent/guardian, except where visual images are used within the service for monitoring of an enrolled child, or visual images are taken by an authorised officer acting in the course of his/her duties, in which case only the parent/guardian and authorised staff will have access to the images.
- To protect children's privacy, visual images of children will not be transmitted on kindy hub, internet or by email at any time without parent/guardian consent. This consent is separate to the above-mentioned consent.
- On occasion, the service may wish to use photographs or videos of enrolled children for promotional purposes. This may include newspaper articles, community advertising, training resources etc. Written parent permission will be sought on these occasions for nominated images to be used for this purpose only. These images/recordings may be taken by external photographers, and this will be advised on the written permission form.
- Only service cameras will be used, and these cameras will be kept at the centre. No private cameras, mobile phones or other devices will be used, and all images will be stored on centre computers/USB and/or processed using the centre printers only.

## Responsibilities

- When sharing information via social media, all parties are encouraged to ensure they set high privacy and security settings to reduce the risk of virus', malware or any such concerns occurring.
- All persons using the internet (staff; families, students, volunteers, management, community, industry representatives, regulatory representatives etc) are legally responsible for any postings they are involved with. You may be subject to liability if your posts are found to be defamatory, harassing, or in violation of any applicable law. You may be liable if you make postings which include confidential or copyrighted information (music, videos, text etc) belonging to third parties.
- College Community Child Care Centre may request that you avoid certain subjects or withdraw certain posts from any social media outlet, if it believes that doing so will help ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies.
- Employees of the service must ensure that any social media or internet postings they initiate or respond to do not
  - suggest they are the views of the service
  - cause concern to any stakeholder within the service
  - portray educators in an unprofessional or controversial way – eg: offensive jokes or photographs, excessive alcohol use or the like
  - breach the Educator Code of Conduct
  - breach the Educator Code of Ethics
  - breach any applicable Laws or Regulations
  - violate any other service policy.
- Educators, Families, and any other concerned parties are encouraged to raise technology related issues and concerns directly with management or via an expression of concern form (directed to centre management or the committee) and the actions will be recorded and reviewed accordingly. Policy breaches will be recorded for monitoring and actions will be communicated with parties involved.
- Employees and management of College Community Child Care Centre are aware that violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

The following policies may be linked to this policy:

- Educator, staff and volunteer orientation
- Educator, staff grievances and disputes
- Enrolment and orientation
- Grievances and complaints management
- Management and governance
- Partnerships and communication with families
- Records management
- Recruitment of educators, staff and volunteers
- Community Involvement
- Child Protection/Wellbeing and Protective Environments

## PROCEDURES

The following procedures may be linked to this policy:

- Confidentiality Statement
- Educator/ staff Code of Ethics
- Educator/staff Code of Conduct
- Grievance Procedures
- Orientation Checklists
- Privacy Act Checklist
- Privacy Statement
- Philosophy and Values

## FURTHER SOURCES:

**Child Care Service Handbook 2022;** Reviewed 17.03.2022 from

<https://www.dese.gov.au/early-childhood/resources/child-care-provider-handbook>

**Early Childhood Australia (ECA) (2006) The Code of Ethics.** Reviewed 17.03.2022, from

<http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-publications/eca-code-ethics/>

**Freedom of Information Act 1992** Reviewed 17.03.2022 from

[www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/wa/consol\\_act/foia1992222/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/wa/consol_act/foia1992222/)

**UNICEF (n.d.). Fact sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.** Reviewed 17.03.2022 from

<http://www.unicef.org/montenegro/en/reports/summary-rights-under-convention-rightschild.pdf>

**Child care and social media, is there a risk?** Reviewed 17.03.2022 from

<https://nsw.childcarealliance.org.au/news/435-understanding-social-media-risks>

**Child care Internet Posting Policy** reviewed 17.03.2022 from

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/help/contact-us/social-media-policy>

**Early childhood; getting up to speed –on engaging with families** Reviewed 05.08.2020 from

[www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-12/EngagingWithFamilies%E2%80%93SmartOnline.PDF](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-12/EngagingWithFamilies%E2%80%93SmartOnline.PDF)

**Early Childhood Australia Statement on young children and digital technologies** retrieved 27.04.2022

<http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Digital-policy-statement.pdf>