

## 2.17 Children Accessing the Internet Policy

The service acknowledges that children may access the internet for educational and/or recreational purposes during the operational hours of the program. Therefore, the service takes a proactive approach to educating children on safe and secure internet usage. This policy aims to establish guidelines on access to the internet and/or online social networking with the aim of protecting children from risk of harm.



### Relevant Laws and other Provisions

The laws and other provisions affecting this policy include:

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2010 and Regulations 2011*
  - *Regulation amendments 01 September 2025*
- *Family and Child Commission Act 2014*
- *Child Protection Act 1999 and Regulations 2000*
- *Privacy Act 1988 and Regulations 2013*
- *Online Safety Act 2021 and Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Bill 2024*
- *'My Time, Our Place' Framework for School Age Care in Australia version 2.0*
- *Duty of Care*
- *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice; National Quality Standard 2.2 Each child is protected*
- *Policies: 2.2 – Statement of Commitment to the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and the Protection of Children from Harm, 2.8 – Anti-Bullying, 2.15 – Children's Property and Belongings, 2.18 – Cyberbullying 3.1 – Educational Program Planning, 6.2 – Provision of Resources and Equipment, 9.3 – Communication with Families, 10.12 – Information technology.*



### Procedures

#### Definitions

'Internet' refers to the world wide web of computer systems that facilitates the transmission and exchange of data. Information search engines and web browsers include, but are not limited to, Google, Firefox, and Internet Explorer.

'Artificial Intelligence' refers to technology that enables computers and machines to simulate human learning, comprehension, problem solving, decision making, creativity and autonomy. [Reference: IBM.com] Platforms include, but are not limited to, Open AI ChatGPT, Google Gemini, etc.

'Social Networking Media' refers to any online tools or functions that allow people to communicate or share information via the internet. This includes, but is not limited to, applications such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and X. *The Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Bill 2024 amends the Online Safety Act 2021 and requires 'age-restricted social media platforms' to take reasonable steps to prevent Australians under 16 years from having accounts on their platforms.*

'Mobile device' refers to devices that have non-Wi-Fi internet access such as iPads, tablets, iPods, and mobile phones.

## Service Responsibilities

The service will ensure that all service computers and mobile devices with internet access are monitored by educators to prevent access to inappropriate information and web sites. This includes wireless access. The centre's WiFi password is not to be shared with children.

The service will ensure all educators are aware of how to manage instances of inappropriate use of the internet by children in accordance with relevant aspects of the service's behaviour support guidelines.

In collaboration with the children, the service will develop and implement guidelines for accessing the computers/mobile devices and their internet usage whilst in attendance at the service. This may include the development of 'user agreements,' in collaboration with children and families.

The services will make available to children and family's relevant information about protecting children online and may include such material in service newsletters or other correspondence to children and families. (See the reference list for a variety of resources where suitable and relevant information may be accessed).

The service will have clear guidelines on the use of children's personal belongings, including mobile devices.

## Educator Responsibilities

Educators will ensure their own practices role model appropriate safety measures when researching information, either individually or with the children.

Educators will ensure children are only able to access the internet at the service through authorised computers and/or mobile devices. Educators will encourage children's safe use of the internet through strategies including, but not limited to:

- Monitoring what children are looking at/for when accessing the internet.
- Regular conversations with children about using the internet safely.

Educators are not to let children access Social Media and Chat/Messenger platforms.

## Family Responsibilities

Regular conversations with children about using the internet safely.

Be aware of your child's access to data on devices, whether securely connected through the service or accessible on their own device.

## References

Department of Education and Training. (2015, February). Tip sheet for Parents - Home alone. Retrieved from [deta.gov.au: http://deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/pdfs/tip-sheets/pts-home-alone.pdf](http://deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/pdfs/tip-sheets/pts-home-alone.pdf)

eSafety Commissioner (2024). <https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/issues-and-advice/online-safety-basics>  
<https://www.esafety.gov.au/industry/tech-trends-and-challenges/generative-ai>

ChildSafe Australia (2023). eSafety Online <https://www.childsafe.org.au/help-for-families/e-safety-online/>

The Raising Children Network (2024). Online safety: children 6-8 years <https://raisingchildren.net.au/school-age/media-technology/online-safety/internet-safety-6-8-years>

The American Academy of Paediatrics. Healthychildren.org (2024). How will artificial intelligence affect children? <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/how-will-artificial-intelligence-AI-affect-children.aspx>

<b>DATE DEVELOPED</b>	<b>DATE RATIFIED</b>	<b>DATE REVIEWED</b>	<b>DATE RATIFIED</b>
August 2018	August 2018	May 2021	May 2021
		February 2022	July 2022
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