

Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens

Safe Use of Digital Technology and Interactive Media with Children Policy

CONSIDERATIONS:

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS	1, 2, 3, 6, 5, 7
NATIONAL LAW ACT & NATIONAL REGULATIONS	Law sections: 162A, 165, 167, 168 Regulations: 73-76, 84, 115, 122, 123, 155, 168
OTHER	Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations Statement of Shared Commitment United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics

POLICY STATEMENT:

It is important that as educators and teachers in early childhood programs staff recognise the role of integration of technology and interactive media and the ways in which the program can be enhanced by intentionally leveraging the potential of technology and media for the benefit of all children. Educators and teachers must also actively evaluate the use of material and support the appropriate use of such in the Service environment to ensure that digital safety serves to safeguard young children from potential online risks and harms. This policy provides guidelines for the responsible and ethical use of digital technologies, ensuring a secure and age-appropriate learning environment and applies to all staff.

When using photographs and or videos to document the children's learning in the program, the Kindergarten has procedures in place to ensure this is undertaken with consent of the child's parent/guardian. The Kindergarten has processes in place in relation to the taking, usage, storage and destruction of images and videos of children while providing education and care.

The learning environment supports children's safety and wellbeing, including if and when engaging on online environments. The routine of the program supports children to interact with staff and discuss questions if they need support in relation to safety and the general program also includes supporting children's awareness of safety and emotions/ feelings and ways to seek help.

Where closed-circuit television (CCTV) is operated during program hours, the Kindergarten will advise families and have procedures in place regarding how and when this footage is accessed by relevant people and the storage and destruction of this footage. CCTV will respect children's privacy and not record footage in area's such as the bathroom.

Ensuring physical and online environments promote safety, including cultural safety, and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed is a requirement of the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Child Safe Standard 8).

RELEVANT FORMS/MATERIAL:

- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy

- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Children's Record Keeping Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Child Safeguarding – Prevention and Considerations Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Child Safeguarding – Response and Reporting Process Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Excursion Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Supporting Child Safety, Child Wellbeing and Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Family and Community Participation
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Staff Personal Electronic Device, Mobile Phone, Tablet and Smart Watch Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Interactions with Children Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Programming and Planning Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Safety and Supervision Policy
- Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Student and Volunteer Policy

POLICY SPECIFIC SOURCES:

- Women's and children Health Network, Parenting and Child Health Website Cyber Safety
- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care
- Technology and Interactive Media as Tools in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8 (2012)
- Early Childhood Australia (ECA). (2018). Statement on young children and digital technologies. Canberra, ACT
- Australian Government - eSafety Commissioner (www.esafety.gov.au)
- Australian Government - eSafety Early Years – online safety for under 5's
- Australian Government - eSafety Early Years – Swoosh, Glide and Rule Number 5 (online storybook and song)
- Australian Human Rights Commission (2018). National Principles for Child Safe Organisation
- ACECQA (2025) Child Safety NQF Online Safety Guide
- ACECQA (2025) Child Safety NQF Online Safety – Self assessment and risk assessment tool
- National Model Code For ECEC – Taking Images or Videos of Children Whilst Providing ECEC
- ACECQA (2024) Policy and Procedure Guidelines – Taking Images or Videos of Children While Providing Early Childhood Education and Care, Guidelines for the National Model Code
- ACECQA (2025) Policy and Procedure Guidelines – Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments
(Accessed 2025)

POLICY GENERAL SOURCES:

- Education & Care Services National Law Act
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Australian Government, Department of Education and Training, (2022). Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 For Australia. Commonwealth of Australia
- The State of Queensland (Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority), (2024). Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline (QKLG). Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority: South Brisbane
- The State of Queensland (Queensland Family and Child Commission) 2025 Guidelines for implementing the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards in Queensland

REVIEWED: August 2025

(Child safeguarding review undertaken November 2025)

DATE TO BE REVIEWED: February 2027

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES AND STAFF

BACKGROUND

The integration of technology and interactive media in early childhood programs is able to enhance and leverage further learning in the program.

It is important that as children grow up in a world that is experiencing large growth in the digital age that children are able to access and are introduced to technology and interactive media in a way that supports their learning and understanding of the use of technology.

Teachers and educators are knowledgeable in the type of programs and materials being used in the Service and ensure the appropriate access and inclusion of such information into the program.

Technology tools used in the Service can range from computers, tablets, multi touch screens, interactive whiteboards, mobile devices, smart watches/fitness trackers, cameras, music players, audio recorders, electronic toys, internet, online games and apps, eBook readers, drones, artificial intelligence (AI)-powered tools, CCTV and other analog devices such as tape recorders, DVDs, light tables, projectors and microscopes.

“Technology and media should not replace activities such as creative play, real-life exploration, physical activity, outdoor experiences, conversation and social interactions that are important for children’s development. Technology and media should be used to support learning, not an isolated activity, and to expand young children’s access to new content.” (Guernsey, L.2010a. “Screen, Kids, and the NAEYC Position Statement.” Early Ed Watch(blog), August 2. Washington, DC: New America. Foundation)

“When educators and other adults model appropriate engagement with technologies, such as co-viewing and co-playing, this helps young children understand that digital technologies can be used to facilitate communication within person-to-person relationships.” (Prof Susan Danby et al., 2013 quoted in ECA 2018 Statement on young children and digital technologies)

Teachers and educators, in consultation with the Executive Committee and in consideration of the service philosophy and budget, will make decisions regarding the prioritisation of purchasing further technology tools relative to the context of the service. Where a service has limited accessibility to technology tools children and families can be supported through discussions and recognition of ways in which technology is accessed in other contexts.

The Approved Provider and all staff are committed to implementing the safe use of digital technologies, undertaking effective supervision should children be engaging in online environments and supporting children to have an awareness of online safety.

During the program there will be regular opportunities for children to connect with staff and seek support if they need help or have concerns and a supportive approach will be undertaken in recognising and responding to children’s enquires and concerns.

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Service Manager and staff should have opportunities to discuss and reflect on the implementation of the

	National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, the Universal Principle and Child Safe Standards in Queensland. The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Service Manager, Responsible Person will be aware of and support staff to implement procedures in relation to the following documents: • ACECQA (2025) Child Safety NQF Online Safety Guide, and • ACECQA (2025) Child Safety NQF Online Safety – Self assessment and risk assessment tool. Families must provide consent for images or videos of their child to be taken and/or shared on the digital documentation platform on the child's individual enrolment form. Where families have provided consent, the consent of children should also be sought prior to any images or videos being taken. Staff will discuss with children in an age-appropriate way, the United Nations Rights of the Child and that they are able to provide consent or decline consent for their image / photograph to be taken or for them to be filmed and they can change this decision at any time. Staff will discuss examples and ways in which children may say yes or no to their image being taken. Staff will discuss with children in an age-appropriate way, how they may use service issued devices to take images or videos, ways to check for consent from peers and staff and when to ask staff for help. Where children are using service issued devices for taking images or videos, staff will ensure effective supervision is undertaken.
IMPLEMENTATION	
APPROPRIATE USE AND RISK MANAGING USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND MATERIAL	With the introduction of technology and interactive media into Service programs it is important that teachers and educators are always aware of the material that is being used or accessed on or through these devices. All programs and applications used on devices are to be viewed and tested prior to their use in the environment with the children. This is to ensure that they are appropriate for use in the context of the program. If Internet access is used in the environment at times with the children or the children independently access internet connection, then an internet web filter must be placed on all machines that prohibit access from inappropriate sites. Staff will also consider the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care recommendations on Australia's physical activity for children and young people which states – <i>“Children and young people should not spend more than 2 hours a day using electronic media for entertainment (e.g. computer games, Internet, TV), particularly during daylight hours.”</i> <i>“The impact of technology is mediated by teachers’ use of the same developmentally appropriate principles and practices that guide the use of print materials and all other learning tools and content for young children.”</i> (Plowman L., & Stephen C. 2007 Guided Interaction in PreSchool Settings. <i>Journal of Computer Assisted Learnings</i>” 23 (1) 14 – 26).

INTEGRATION INTO THE PROGRAM	Teachers/educators will take the time to evaluate and observe children and their use of the technology and media introduced into the classroom. It is important that as part of the program the use of such material is evaluated to recognise and identify opportunities or problems that arise from the materials or use of material and make the necessary adaptations to their use. Technology and media are used to promote social interactions between children, peers and teachers/educators and to support other core learning experiences and assist children in further understanding an interest, skill or concept. Technology and media are used as a tool that allows children to further explore, problem solve, investigate and create via a different medium. Skills in the use of media also allow social skills to be developed with turn taking, collaboration with their peers in learning discoveries and also building further relationships with the teacher/educator and the child/ren as they discover together the endless possibilities that this technology can create. At all times children will be supervised by a teacher/educator when engaging with technology in online environments. The staff will review the physical learning environment to ensure that effective supervision is undertaken. Teacher/educators will aim to ensure children have equitable access to technology and interactive media reflective of their age, development and consider how access may support their current interests. For some children attending the Service, it might be their primary point of access to technology and interactive media. Therefore, when (age) appropriate, teachers/educators may help children develop an understanding of the internet and how people use it to generate, store, retrieve and share information. This may also include discussions on cyber-safety as part of the educational program. Teachers/educators understand children learn to use technology in the same way they learn other areas of the curriculum, through play. Digital play might see teachers/educators supporting children in experiencing a range of digital experiences such as making their own videos, using digital microscopes, accessing apps for physical learning experiences, and more. Teachers/educators will consider each child's health, safety and wellbeing by modelling active decision making regarding the amount of time children use technology for e.g. not used for long periods of time, used for a particular purpose then moving on to another experience. Teachers/educators will help children develop self-regulation for using technologies and support them to transition from digital to non-digital learning experiences. Teachers/educators may support children in exploring digital play by showing children how a diverse range of digital resources function and operate. Teachers/educators may seek children's perspectives on the role and use of digital technologies in relation to their own lives, play and learning.
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	Teachers/educators are aware of the importance of e-safety and implement the usage of the “Swoosh, Slide and Rule number 5” Story and song program from the eSafety Commissioner around safe usage of devices and the internet. Teachers/educators will respect families have different perspectives on digital technology and will respect a families’ choice to limit their child’s usage and/or exposure to digital technology in the Service. <i>“Young children have opportunities for play and pedagogy in digital contexts. Play and pedagogy involve children using a range of digital devices for exploration, meaning-making, collaboration and problem-solving. Educators engage in active decision- making about the use and non-use of digital technologies for learning.”</i> (ECA, 2018)
DOCUMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM WHAT STAFF SHOULD KNOW AND DO	Where a service uses a digital platform to document and share children’s learning with families and other educators, at all times educators are to be mindful of the amount of time spent on a device throughout the day. Staff are to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of the Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Safety and Supervision Policy and also the Supervision Guidelines as set out by the individual kindergarten. Program delivery and engagement with children should be the priority for all staff at all times. Families must provide consent for images or videos of their child to be taken and/or shared on the digital documentation platform on the child’s individual enrolment form. Families have the right to withdraw consent at any time and this should be recorded on the enrolment form.
TAKING, USE, STORAGE AND DESTRUCTION OF IMAGERY/ CONTENT OF CHILDREN WHAT STAFF SHOULD KNOW AND DO	All imagery/content featuring children, captured for educational or business-related purposes, must be treated with the highest level of confidentiality. An image or video of a child can only be undertaken using a service issued device when the parent/guardian or authorised nominee has completed this section of the permission form on the individual child’s enrolment form. These devices must meet security standards and be managed in accordance with the Service’s data protection protocols. The use, distribution, or sharing of images or recordings of children outside their original educational intent is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, transferring content to personal accounts, devices or USB, uploading to cloud services, or posting on social media platforms not explicitly authorised for that purpose. Misuse or contextual misrepresentation of such content constitutes a breach of privacy and professional standards. Unauthorised individuals must not have access to any Service device. Where students, allied health or other visitors are attending the service and have a relevant purpose for taking images or videos of children, an additional authorisation for this will be completed by the parent/guardian or authorised nominee for the individual child. Service issued devices must have a password or passcode and be stored securely outside of program hours.

	The images or videos will be kept securely on file by the Kindergarten for the duration that documentation of the child's engagement in the learning program is required to be kept (refer to Lady Gowrie Children's Record Keeping Policy). The images or videos will only be accessed by the parent/guardian's or authorised nominees of the enrolled children, kindergarten staff, the Approved Provider and relevant other stakeholders as applicable for Early Childhood Education and Care, Child Safety or Child Safeguarding legislation. The images or videos are able to be provided in the instance the Kindergarten receives a subpoena. During Kindergarten events • During regular program hours – staff will communicate with families and attendees, that images and videos will only be taken on service issued devices by staff. • During out of hours – staff will communicate with families and attendees, if images and videos are able to be undertaken and if so, where and whom these can be undertaken of or that Kindergarten Service Issued Devices only will be used. Staff will be aware of and promote a child safe culture which upholds each child's dignity and right to choose if their image / video of them is taken or not. Staff will be aware of and not undertake inappropriate images or videos of children and will be supported in this by their line manager or Approved Provider as required. Inappropriate images or videos are any that are not directly relevant to the child's participation in the learning experiences and program. Examples of inappropriate (and potentially illegal) images or videos include where a child is: • not appropriately dressed, for example, in their underwear, in a state of undress, completely undressed or with their genitalia exposed, • in a position that could be perceived as sexualised in nature, and • in distress or anxious/experiencing or demonstrating distress or dysregulation. The Kindergarten reserves the right to monitor technology use, network traffic, and data transmissions for security and compliance purposes. Monitoring activities will be conducted in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.
SERVICE ISSUED DIGITAL DEVICES	• Staff will be aware of and adhere to the Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Supporting Child Safety, Child Wellbeing and Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy and Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens Staff Personal Electronic Device, Mobile Phone, Tablet and Smart Watch Policy. • Staff are expressly prohibited from using personal phones, tablets, or cameras for any purpose related to the collection of imagery of children. Only service-issued digital devices can be used when taking images or videos of children while providing education and care.

WHAT STAFF SHOULD KNOW AND DO	• Personal devices that can take images or videos (such as tablets, phones, digital cameras, and smart watches) and personal storage and file transfer media (such as SD cards, USB drives, hard drives, and cloud storage) cannot be in the possession of any person while providing education and care and working directly with children in centre-based settings which includes kindergartens. • The Kindergarten is encouraged to consider holding an additional service-issued device for use in emergencies which includes if the landline phone is not currently working. • Staff working at a Kindergarten are encouraged to provide the main Kindergarten phone number, should they need to be contacted by family or other relevant group in regards to a family emergency. • The National Model Code Part 3 outlines essential purposes for which use of and or possession of a personal device may be authorised for purposes other than taking images or recording videos of children: ○ communication in an emergency situation involving a lost child, injury to child or staff member, or other serious incident, or in the case of a lockdown or evacuation of the service premises, ○ personal health requirements, e.g. heart or blood sugar level monitoring, ○ disability, e.g. where a personal electronic device is an essential means of communication for an educator or other staff member, ○ family necessity, e.g. a worker with an ill or dying family member ○ technology failure, e.g. when a temporary outage of service-issued electronic devices has occurred, ○ local emergency event occurring, to receive emergency notifications through government warning systems, for example, bushfire evacuation text notification, and ○ when undertaking excursions and additional communication devices support safety and communication whilst on the excursion.
CCTV WHAT THE APPROVED PROVIDER AND STAFF SHOULD KNOW AND DO	Where CCTV is operated during program hours, the Kindergarten will advise families and have procedures in place regarding how and when this footage is accessed by relevant people and the storage and destruction of this footage. CCTV will respect children's privacy and not record footage in areas such as the bathroom. The Kindergarten will advise families, how and where the CCTV footage is stored securely, the length of time which it is stored for and how and when it is destroyed. The Kindergarten will have signage to advise visitors that CCTV is in operation during program hours and with whom they can speak with if they require further information. Where CCTV is only operated outside of program hours in relation to security of the premises, the Kindergarten will ensure signage is in place to acknowledge the site has CCTV which is active.