



SAFE USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND MEDIA POLICY 2025

PURPOSE

This policy outlines the requirements and expectations for the safe use of digital devices, including the taking, storage, and management of images and videos of children, in accordance with:

- The National Law and Children's Services Act (CSA)
- The Child Safe Standards
- The National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children while Providing Early Childhood Education and Care (ACECQA, July 2024)
 - This policy will provide guidelines to ensure that all users of information and communication technology (ICT) at Yackandandah Kindergarten :
- promote a child safe culture when it comes to taking, sharing and storing images or videos of children
- are aware that only those persons authorised by the approved provider are permitted to access ICT at the service
- understand what constitutes illegal and inappropriate use of ICT facilities and avoid such activities.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Use of Service-Issued Devices

- Only service-issued devices may be used to take images or videos of children.
- Service-issued devices must be:
 - Clearly labelled or branded
 - Distinctly identifiable
 - Registered and monitored by the approved provider

2. Restrictions on Personal Devices

- Personal devices that can take images or videos, or store files, are not permitted while providing education and care.
- Exceptions may only be made for essential purposes, authorised in writing by the approved provider, where supervision of children is not impeded.
- Essential purposes include:
 - Emergency communication or incidents involving child or staff safety
 - Health requirements (e.g., monitoring medical devices)
 - Disability-related communication needs
 - Technology failures affecting service-issued devices
 - Family emergencies or local emergency notifications

3. Authorisation and Documentation

- All exceptions must be documented in advance, or retrospectively if urgent.

- Logs/registers must record:
 - Who was authorised
 - The device used
 - Purpose of authorisation
 - Duration and date of use

4. Storage and Retention

- Images and videos of children must be stored securely and access limited to authorised personnel.
- Images and videos no longer required must be permanently deleted or destroyed.
- Family consent must be obtained for all general-purpose photography or filming.

5. Staff Responsibilities

- Staff must comply with all Child Safe Standards, particularly Standards 9 and 11.
- Staff must be aware of:
 - Their obligations under the National Model Code
 - The consequences of using personal devices for taking, sending, or storing images/videos of children
 - Personal devices may only be used during breaks, planning, or administrative tasks, and must not be capable of taking or storing images/videos of children.

6. Service Compliance Requirements

- Policies and procedures must align with the National Model Code and be reviewed regularly.
- Risk assessments must identify risks of child harm related to digital devices.
- Risk management plans must address the safe use of service-issued devices.
- Sufficient service-issued devices must be available for excursions, outings, and regular programs.
- Storage solutions must secure both service-issued and personal devices when not in use.
- Staff must have individual login credentials for all service-issued devices and online platforms.

7. Consequences of Non-Compliance

Failure to comply may result in:

- Regulatory action, including fines (up to \$57,400–\$61,053 depending on service type)
- Suspension or cancellation of service approval
- Breach of Child Safe Standards

8. Restrictions on Photography or Filming by Families

To protect the privacy, safety, and rights of all children and families attending Yackandandah Kindergarten: Families and visitors are not permitted to take photographs or record videos on kindergarten premises during regular hours, special events, excursions, or incursions unless:

- Explicit permission has been granted in advance by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor, and
- Written consent has been obtained from the parents or guardians of all children who may be captured in the image or video.

This includes:

- Photos/videos taken on smartphones, tablets, cameras, or any other recording device.
- Photos/videos taken during events such as graduations, open days, birthday celebrations, or classroom visits.

Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis for family-inclusive events (e.g. end-of-year concerts), and these will be communicated in advance with clear conditions.

Yackandandah Kindergarten is committed to:
professional, ethical and responsible use of ICT at the service

providing a safe workplace for management, educators, staff and others using the service's ICT facilities and information sharing platforms

- the rights of all children to feel safe, and always be safe
- safeguarding the privacy and confidentiality of information received, transmitted or stored electronically ensuring that the use of the service's ICT facilities complies with all service policies and relevant government legislation
- providing management, educators and staff with online information, resources and communication tools to support the effective operation of the service.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the approved provider or persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, Any third-party contractors delivering programs or activities directly to children at Yackandandah Kindergarten. This policy does not apply to children. Where services are using ICT within their educational programs, they should develop a separate policy concerning the use of ICT by children (*refer to eSafety Policy*).

It applies to all devices used to capture images or videos of children, including: phones, tablets, cameras, smart watches, wearables, SD cards, USB drives, and hard drives.

BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION:

The increasing use of digital technology in early childhood education and care (ECEC) presents both opportunities and responsibilities for services. Digital devices, including cameras, tablets, and smart devices, can support learning, communication, and documentation of children's experiences. However, they also present potential risks to children's privacy, safety, and wellbeing if not managed responsibly.

In recognition of these risks, the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) released the National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children while Providing Early Childhood Education and Care in July 2024. While previously voluntary, compliance with the National Model Code is now mandatory in Victoria for all approved education and care services.

- The National Model Code sets out clear expectations for:
- The use of service-issued devices for capturing images or videos of children.
- The restriction of personal devices while providing education and care.
- Strict storage, retention, and deletion requirements for images and videos.
- Documentation and authorisation processes for exceptional circumstances.
- In addition to the National Model Code, services must comply with:
- The Education and Care Services National Law and Children's Services Act (CSA).
- The Education and Care Services National Regulations (Reg 168) and Children's Services Regulations (Reg 112).

- Child Safe Standards, which establish a framework for creating safe physical and online environments for children, including the safe use of digital technologies.

This policy is designed to ensure that all staff, volunteers, students, and visiting professionals understand and comply with these requirements, promoting a culture of safety, professionalism, and respect for children's privacy while using digital devices in the service environment.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

This policy is informed by and aligns with the following legislation, regulations, and standards, ensuring compliance with national and state requirements for child safety, privacy, and responsible use of digital technologies:

1. Education and Care Services National Law (National Law)
 - Establishes the framework for service approval, regulation, and compliance of early childhood education and care services in Australia.
 - Requires services to operate in a way that ensures the safety, health, and wellbeing of children (Section 51).
2. Children's Services Act 2020 (CSA), Victoria
 - Provides the legislative framework for the operation and regulation of children's services in Victoria.
 - Requires approved providers to ensure services comply with child safe standards and operate in the best interest of children (Section 50).
3. Education and Care Services National Regulations (Regulation 168)
 - Specifies mandatory policies and procedures that services must have in place, including safe use of digital devices, supervision, and risk management practices.
4. Children's Services Regulations (Regulation 112), Victoria
 - Outlines service requirements specific to Victorian children's services, including policies and procedures for child safety and digital device usage.
5. Child Safe Standards, Victoria
 - Standard 9: Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in online and physical environments without compromising children's rights to privacy, learning, and social connections.
 - Standard 11: Policies and procedures are documented, implemented, and regularly reviewed, ensuring staff and volunteers understand and follow child safety expectations.
6. National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children while Providing Early Childhood Education and Care (ACECQA, July 2024)
 - Provides mandatory guidance on the use of service-issued devices, restrictions on personal devices, storage and retention of images, and authorisation for essential exceptions.
 - Services must comply with the National Model Code from 26 September 2025.
7. Privacy and Information Handling Legislation

Services must ensure personal information, including images and videos of children, is collected, used, stored, and disclosed in accordance with relevant privacy legislation and the Family consent provided.

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: www.legislation.vic.gov.au
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation: www.legislation.gov.au

DEFINITIONS

Approved Provider

The individual or organisation legally responsible for the operation of an early childhood education and care service, accountable for ensuring compliance with the National Law, CSA, Child Safe Standards, and the National Model Code.

Child

Any person attending the service who is receiving education and care, from birth up to school age.

Digital Device

Any electronic device capable of capturing, storing, or transferring images or videos, including but not limited to:

- Service-issued or personal phones, tablets, cameras
- Smart watches or wearable devices with recording functionality
- SD cards, USB drives, hard drives, or other storage media

Service-Issued Device

A device provided, registered, and monitored by the service for the purpose of capturing images or videos of children, distinct from personal devices and clearly labelled or branded.

Personal Device

Any privately-owned electronic device capable of capturing or storing images or videos, including phones, tablets, cameras, smart watches, and other wearable devices, as well as storage media such as SD cards, USB drives, or hard drives.

Essential Purpose

A limited, pre-approved reason for using a personal device while providing education and care, such as emergency communication, health monitoring, technology failures, or family necessity, where supervision of children is not impeded.

Images or Videos of Children

Any photograph, video, or digital recording of children attending the service, regardless of format, captured for educational, developmental, or administrative purposes.

Child Safe Standards

A set of mandatory standards in Victoria that aim to protect children from abuse, including standards specifically addressing online safety, digital device use, and risk management.

Authorisation

Written or documented approval by the approved provider permitting limited, essential use of personal devices in accordance with the National Model Code.

Risk Assessment

A documented process identifying potential risks of harm to children, including those associated with the use of digital devices, and outlining strategies to mitigate these risks.

SOURCES

- **Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).** (2024). *National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children while Providing Early Childhood Education and Care.* <https://www.acecqa.gov.au>
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic). <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>
- **Children’s Services Act 1996 (Vic).** <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Reg 168). <https://www.legislation.gov.au>
- Children’s Services Regulations 2020 (Reg 112). <https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au>
- **Victorian Child Safe Standards.** (2022). *Protecting Children from Abuse in Early Childhood Education and Care Services.* <https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe>
- **Department of Education, Victoria.** (2025). *Statement of Regulatory Expectations – National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children.* <https://www.education.vic.gov.au>
- **ACECQA Policy Guidelines.** Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments in Early Childhood Education and Care. <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources>
- **Australian Privacy Principles (APPs).** Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC). *Privacy and Data Protection Guidelines for Services Handling Children’s Information.* <https://www.oaic.gov.au>

RELATED POLICIES

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy / Child Safe Environment Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- ICT / Technology Use Policy
- Photography and Media Consent Policy
- Risk Management and Incident Reporting Policy
- Excursion and Incursion Policy
- Cyber Safety / Online Safety Policy

Attachments

- Attachment 1: Authorisation and Documentation
- Attachment 2: Procedures for use of ICT at the service
- Attachment 3: General media / photography consent form
- Attachment 4: Authorised Use of Personal Device Form

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Yackandandah Kindergarten on [15/09/2025].

REVIEW DATE: [15]/09/2026]

ATTACHMENT 2: PROCEDURES FOR USE OF ICT AT THE SERVICE

Email usage

- Content of emails and email addresses must always be checked before sending.
- When sending emails to multiple recipients, care should be taken to avoid the inappropriate disclosure of email addresses to a whole group of recipients; blind copying (BCC) should be used where appropriate.
- Always include a subject description in the subject line.
- Create an email signature that identifies employee name, title, service name, service phone number and address
- Be cautious about opening files or launching programs that have been received as an attachment via email from the email itself. Instead, save an attachment to disk and scan with anti-virus software before opening, and keep an eye out for unusual filenames.
- Never open emails if unsure of the sender.
- Check email accounts on a regular basis and forward relevant emails to the approved provider or appropriate committee members/staff.
- Remove correspondence that is no longer required from the computer quarterly.
- Respond to emails as soon as is practicable.
- Be suspicious of phishing titles.

Digital storage of personal and health information

- Digital records containing personal, sensitive and/or health information, or photographs of children must be password protected and stored securely so that privacy and confidentiality is maintained. This information must not be removed from the service without authorisation, as security of the information could be at risk ([refer to Privacy and Confidentiality Policy](#)).
- Digital records containing personal, sensitive and/or health information, or photographs of children may need to be removed from the service from time-to-time for various reasons, including for:
 - excursions and service events
 - offsite storage, where there is not enough space at the service premises to store the records.

ATTACHMENT 3. GENERAL MEDIA / PHOTOGRAPHY CONSENT FORM

Child's Full Name: _____ DOB: _____

Group: _____

Yackandandah Kindergarten may capture photographs, videos, or other digital media of children to:

- Document learning experiences and developmental progress
- Share learning stories with families
- Include in newsletters, reports, or classroom displays
- Promote the kindergarten and its programs on social media or the kindergarten website (only with parental permission)

Please indicate your consent by ticking the boxes below:

1. I **give permission** for my child to be photographed/recorded for **internal documentation** only (e.g., learning stories, classroom displays).

Yes

No

2. I **give permission** for my child's photographs/videos to be used in **external communications (e.g., newsletters, website, social media, promotional materials)**.

Yes

No

3. I **give permission** for my child's name to be used alongside **media externally**.

Yes

No

Note: If no boxes are ticked for external use, your child's media will only be used internally within the service.

This consent is valid while your child is enrolled at Yackandandah Kindergarten unless you choose to withdraw it in writing.

PRIVACY STATEMENT

All media will be stored securely, and access is limited to authorised personnel. Yackandandah Kindergarten complies with the **National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children, Child Safe Standards**, and relevant **privacy legislation**.

full Name: _____ Relationship to Child: _____

Contact Number: _____ Email: _____

CONSENT DECLARATION

I have read and understood the purpose of this consent and the information provided above. I give permission for my child's photographs/videos to be used as indicated.

Parent / Guardian Signature:

Date: _____

ATTACHMENT 4: AUTHORISED USE OF PERSONAL DEVICE FORM

Section 1: Personal Details

Staff Member Name:

Position:

Personal Device Type (e.g., Smartphone, Tablet):

Date of use:

Section 2: Purpose

This form grants permission for the above-named staff member to use their personal device to take photos or videos of children for educational and documentation purposes at Yackandandah Kindergarten .

Section 3: Guidelines

1. Consent:

- Photos and videos of children can only be taken if explicit written consent has been obtained from the parents or guardians of each child.

2. Usage:

- Personal devices may only be used for taking photos or videos during scheduled activities and must be put away when not in use.
- Photos and videos must be used solely for the purposes outlined in the consent forms (e.g., educational documentation, sharing with parents).

3. Privacy and Security:

- Photos and videos must be stored securely and must not be shared on any personal social media accounts or with unauthorised individuals.
- Devices must be password-protected and encrypted to ensure the safety of the content.

4. Deletion and Retention:

- Photos and videos must be transferred to Yackandandah Kindergarten secure storage within 24 hours and deleted from the personal device immediately after transfer.
- Photos and videos must be retained and disposed of in accordance with Yackandandah Kindergarten [Information Technology and Communication Policy](#)

5. Professional Conduct:

- Staff must maintain a professional demeanour while using personal devices.
- Authorised use of personal device forms must be on file and accessible at all times.
- Devices should not be used for personal matters during work hours, unless authorised.

Section 5: Acknowledgement and Agreement

I, _____ (Staff Member Name), acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agree to comply with the guidelines outlined in this form. I understand the importance of protecting the privacy and security of the children in my care and the potential repercussions of failing to adhere to these guidelines.

Staff Member Signature:

| Date:

Approved Provide/Nominated Supervisor Name:

Approved Provide/Nominated Supervisor Signature:

| Date