Internet and Electronic Devices Policy

Introduction

Computers and Mobile phones at Child Side will be used for a specific purpose or reason, integrated with children's current learning experiences and for authentic purposes as expressed by children and adults**.**

Scope and Application

This policy applies to all employees, parents and children of Child Side School. This policy will be reviewed and amended in accordance with Child Side School Policy on Policies and Policy Guidelines and Procedures Contents Schedule.

Please note the use of the word child/children in this policy refers to students in the context of the school environment.

Related Legislation/Guidelines

- Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (WA)
- Commonwealth Privacy Act
- School Education Act 2000

Related Policies

- Anti Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Assessment and Reporting Policy
- Anti-Bullying Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Curriculum Evaluation Policy
- Guiding Children's Behaviour Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Use of Children's Photographs and Video Images Policy

Related Documents

- Internet and Electronic Devices Procedure

Policy Statement

At Child Side School we see computers as another tool for learning, as with other tools, the computer needs to be used selectively and for the appropriate job with adult assistance and interaction with child safety and welfare being a primary consideration. Furthermore, we acknowledge that competency and understanding ICT (Information Communication Technology) is a critical competency in contemporary education.

Mobile phones are required to be used by staff for a variety of purposes including recording observational and education data, communication and emergency purposes as well as updating parents on the health status of children.

Children do not require mobile phones at school nor on excursions unless authorised by the Senior Educator in conjunction with the cluster Educator and parents.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Internet and Electronic Devices Procedure
Appendix 2	Security Devices and Software Information

Version Management

VERSION	DATE REVIEWED	DATE RATIFIED	CHANGES MADE	AUTHOR OF CHANGES	NEXT REVIEW DATE
1	June 2011	10/8/2011	Minor	LO	
2	June 2014	25/6/2014	Name changes	KM	
3	Feb 2015	25/2/2015	Year level changes eg 3-7 to 3-6	KM	
4	March 2015	27/5/2015	In reference to cyber safety and physical environment set up	Staff on SDD day	
5	Dec 2015	9/12/2015	Actions in relation to children's safety Commissioner added	KM	
6	Oct 2018	20/3/2019	Update format to include related legislation, policies and procedures` Include YAC BYOD requirement	LF & KM	Term 1 - 2022
7	Sept 2021	20/07/2022	Changed title to include devices and content including reference to usage by sfaff and children in statement and procedures. Added information regarding school devices, safety and storage.	LF	Term 3 - 2025
8	Nov 2023	15/11/2023	Added reference in procedures to 3 school Ipads allocated to clusters for educators to take images and videos of children for evidence of learning	LF	Term 4 - 2026

Internet and Electronic Devices Procedure

Our Philosophy

Despite the current popular high regard and urgency for children to use computers from an early age, there is contradictory evidence to the long-term benefits for children's learning (see reference list below for starters). Many highly regarded educational researchers and theorists such as Jane Healy and Howard Gardner are questioning the way we use computers in schools and their value for money (including the high need for maintenance, constant updating, commercial software products and human resources attached to them), given all the other resources needed to create a stimulating, multi-sensory learning environment indoors and outdoors for children. We do not wish for computers to come at the expense of other more relevant tools and resources and learning experiences offered to children, especially in the early childhood phase of schooling.

At Child Side School we see computers as another tool for learning, just like a hammer or a paintbrush and as with other tools, the computer needs to be used selectively and for the appropriate job with adult assistance and interaction.

It is not to be used to keep children busy playing games or surfing the internet for no legitimate reason. Children's time is far better used to interact with others, interact with books, explore the outdoors and tinker with other materials and resources, especially in the early childhood phase of schooling. Computers are of high interest and motivation for children but careful observation can show children merely pushing buttons and playing reactive games, rather than reading, thinking or processing information or using any 'habits of mind' (such as the concern for evidence using their 'filters'; finding patterns or relationships; seeing multiple perspectives; hypothesizing and finding a range of possibilities; asking themselves what does this information/evidence matter and to whom? Or how they can use this information/evidence/process to express, share, clarify, confirm, contradict, communicate what they already know or have found out?)

Computers are an amazing open-ended resource/tool when used wisely and with deliberation, purpose and care. Adult interaction and interest is essential for demonstrating functions and purposes/possibilities of computers and modelling 'habits of mind' and developing 'filters'. Research into brain development cautions against the wide-spread use of the internet as a means of collecting information for children in the early years and even middle years of schooling. Adult interaction is essential, even with the appropriate commercial 'filters' that schools use to censor certain things available on the internet for children.

All parents are encouraged to think carefully about their own personal computer/play station/game policy at home and to regularly ask themselves what their children are learning (especially what are the 'messages' for children behind many of the games). They are also encouraged to regularly interact with their children when they are on the computer or play station at home and to help their children develop 'filters' to understand and process these 'messages' and ideas. Parents are encouraged to question the intent behind the programme or game and to consciously decide whether they think it is appropriate for their child/ren, (children will show a high interest and motivation regardless of the content, intent or message behind the game or programme, therefore it will need to be the adult's decision with appropriate discussion with the child.)

Computer Use

1. Children will only use computers with adult knowledge and supervision.

2. Children in the YAC class have their own laptops in accordance with our BYOD requirements. Their use of the computer is regularly checked by the Educator and any safety issues discussed with the children by the Educator.

3. The physical environment is set up so that screens are visible to the educator at all times. Computers are always used in public places and in an open and transparent manner whereby cyber safety can be monitored by several adults. This applies to anyone on the school site.

4. Children will need to negotiate with adults and offer their evidence for choosing the computer as the most appropriate tool for their task (with help and support from adults of course). As part of this process, children may be required to draw, write, plan, discuss their idea/reasons before using the computer for their next stage to collect data/information, confirm, clarify or contradict ideas/evidence to provide multiple perspectives and alternatives/possibilities. This is part of the learning process of 'theory-repair' where children can use the computer/internet/emails to help them form/reform/deepen/modify their ideas and theories. This is an extremely complex process with which children will need adult guidance, support and interest.

5. Afterwards children may also be required to 'do' something with the idea or 'evidence'/information they got off the computer/internet; such as set up an experiment, design and create something, write, draw, discuss, display, print photos for the journals….

6. Children will be shown the appropriate computer skills and processes when they ask or when the adult sees a need or when it is deemed developmentally appropriate by the adult. Word processing skills can be learnt early on, but for what purpose? Why expect children to do something today with difficulty that they will 'master' much easier and quicker when they are ready later on?

7. Programs and apps will need careful selection and discussion amongst adult educators towards their intent, use and purpose.

8. If we are expecting children to be thinkers, the adults (educators and parents) will also be required to be thoughtful and make conscious decisions about computers and their use, and to discuss these with children.

School Devices

The school has a lockable ITC cabinet in the MAG building for safe storage of all school owned and leased devices.

School Laptops and Tablets are available for children to use under the direction of the Cluster Continuity Educator. Children are required to sign devices in and out of the allocated log book each time they are used.

All laptops have firewall protection and students have access through a student portal that is monitored by the school ITC contractor.

The school ITC contractor provides up-to-date advice, support and services to assist in the provision and monitoring of the most appropriate devices, technologies and security for the school setting.

One school Ipad has been allocated to each Cluster Continuity Educator (CC Educator) for the sole purpose of recording photographs and video images of children as evidence of learning. The other educators and assistants will also have access to the Ipads however, the children are not permitted to have use of these Ipads. For safety and security reasons the CC Educator will download the images from the Ipad to the school server on a regular basis during the term.

Safety

Children need to be explicitly taught protective behaviours and codes of conduct while using the internet both at home and school. These need constant revisiting and regular monitoring (especially as

their brains mature and their interests change). Children need to understand the limitations of the internet as well as its 'global' value.

Security Devices and Software
Child Side currently have the following security devices and software in place to help prevent a cybersecurity attack and to protect students and teachers from external exposures; (see attached for further information)
- Enterprise Grade Fortigate Firewall
- Enterprise Garde Comodo Anti-Virus
- Windows 2019 domain network

Cyber bullying

In the event that a cyber bullying complaint is made to the "Children's eSafety Commissioner', there is a process that must be followed by schools as listed below:

'The Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner – resolving complaints with schools'

What information we will give you?
When we notify a complaint to a school principal, we may provide information about:
  a) The name of the student who is the target of the cyber bullying
  b) A summary of the cyber bullying material
  c) Suggested options to help resolve the complaint in accordance with your school policies
  d) Action taken by us to date with respect to the complaint

We will also advise you of any conditions that apply to the use of the information supplied by us (see below).

What actions should schools take?
If we notify you about a cyber bullying complaint concerning children in your school, you can help resolve the complaint by undertaking to do the following (to the extent that you are capable of doing so):
  a) Acknowledge receipt of the notification within 24 hours to an email address provided by us
  b) Inform us of the types of actions the school proposes to take and the time period for that action to be taken by email within 5 working days of the notification
  c) Meet any conditions placed on information that has been disclosed
  d) Inform us of the outcomes of the action you have taken within 3 weeks from receipt of the notification
  e) Talk to us if you feel that you are unable to resolve the complaint and/or that you have a serious concern that the bullying will continue so we can discuss any further assistance we may be able to provide.

Disclosure of information – conditions
When we disclose information to you, amongst other things we may ask you to:
  1. Only discuss the information with the children involved and – with the student's consent – their parents or guardians.
  2. Only disclose the information to third parties with the consent of the affected children or as required by law.
  3. Comply with applicable privacy laws and policies in relation to the personal information disclosed.

Mobile Phones

Use of Mobile Phones by Children

Children are **not** to bring mobile phones to school nor on excursions. Parents are asked not to send one in with their child and regularly check that they do not bring them to school.   If for some reason a child is required to bring a mobile phone to school it is to be kept in the office and collected at the end of the day.

Some children may require a mobile phone to be used in school as a special needs tool for educational assistance. In this instance the child will need approval from the Senior Educator, cluster educator and parents to use the mobile phone in the classroom.

Parents are asked to contact the school if they need to contact their child for a specific reason so we can make arrangements.

Use of Mobile Phones by Staff

Mobile phones are required to be used by staff for a variety of purposes including recording observational and education data, communication and emergency purposes as well as updating parents on the health status of children.