

ESAFETY FOR CHILDREN

QUALITY AREA 2 | ELAA VERSION 1.4



PURPOSE

This policy provides guidelines for Denzil Don Kindergarten to:

- provide a safe online environment for all children which ensures their safety, health and wellbeing
- support young children to develop an understanding of the digital world and engaging in the digital world in safe and age-appropriate ways
- incorporate digital technology into early learning environment in an age and developmentally appropriate and safe way
- support and communicate with families about safe online practices at home and in the community.



POLICY STATEMENT

VALUES

Denzil Don Kindergarten is committed to:

- the rights of all children to feel safe, and be safe at all times
- providing a safe environment through the creation and maintenance of a child safe culture, and this extends to the safe use of digital technologies and online environments
- fostering opportunities for each child to participate in the digital environment, express their views and to learn safely
- always acting in the best interests of each child with zero tolerance of online abuse
- supporting families in creating a safe on-line environment at home.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all service staff, students, volunteers, parents/carers, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Denzil Don Kindergarten.

RESPONSIBILITIES	Approved provider and persons with management or control	Nominated supervisor and persons in day-to-day charge	All service staff	Parents/carers	Contractors, volunteers and students
R indicates legislation requirement, and should not be deleted					
Ensuring the online environment is used in accordance with <i>Code of Conduct, Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing, Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments, Privacy and Confidentiality and Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy</i>	R	R	√		√

All staff participate in professional learning about online safety (such as eSafety's professional learning modules) (<i>refer to Sources</i>), enabling them to identify and mitigate the risks associated with being online	√	√	√		√
Engaging in professional learning to build capacity and support the implementation of online safety education.	√	√	√		√
Ensuring that all service staff are aware of and comply with <i>Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments</i> , and <i>Privacy and Confidentiality policies</i>	R	R			
Undertaking a risk assessment of online tools, platforms, Smart Toys, and search engines and apps before children's use	R	R	√		√
Undertaking a risk assessment to identify if children's personal devices (including wearable devices) can be used at the service and in what circumstances.	R	R	√		√
Considering risk management plans when engaging with third party contractors to assess whether, and the extent to which, the engagement of third-party contractors poses risks of child abuse and harm	R	R	√		√
Ensuring safety procedures are developed and implemented when using digital communication platforms (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) with children and their families	R	R	√		√
Ensuring that only service-issued digital devices should ever be used to take photos or record videos of children	R	√	√		√
Ensuring there are procedures and processes around the capturing, storing and sharing of children's images and videos (<i>refer to Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments and Privacy and Confidentiality policy</i>)	R	R	√	√	√
Creating a shared understanding between Denzil Don Kindergarten, families, and all service staff about digital technology use, by adults, in front of children	√	√	√	√	√
Ensuring that appropriate filtering and monitoring are in place for all devices used at the service	R	R	√		√
Reviewing online safety education annually to identify strengths and weaknesses and update to ensure relevance to online safety issues, risks, and harms	R	√	√	√	√
Providing families with information on where to go for help with online safety issues, including the eSafety Commissioner (<i>refer to Sources</i>)	√	√	√		√
Regularly discussing concepts of 'being online' or 'the internet' and online safety with children (<i>refer to Sources</i>)		√	√	√	√
Providing children with the opportunity to engage in digital play through communicating, creating and consuming digital content in safe and age-appropriate ways	√	√	√	√	√
Providing proactive supervision and monitoring when children are using digital technology (<i>refer to Supervision of Children policy</i>)	R	√	√	√	√

Developing and implementing a digital learning environment and opportunities that are accessible to and relevant for all age groups	√	√	√		
Using digital technologies to promote social interactions between children, peers and teacher/educators	√	√	√		
Teaching digital citizenship (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) and digital/media literacy (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) to support critical thinking		√	√		√
Developing social and emotional learning skills to support children' understanding and management of emotions, respectful online relationships and resilience		√	√		√
Providing opportunities for children to explore and experiment with the functions of a diverse range of digital technologies alongside adult modelling and instruction in digital technology use		√	√		√
Considering the needs of all children including those with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, LGBTQI students, those from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, children experiencing family breakdown or in out of home care and others who may be more vulnerable and susceptible to online harms	R	√	√		√
Modelling self-regulated (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) digital technology use with children and families that recognises the importance of sustained social interactions between children and adults		√	√		√
Respecting children and family's diversity and striving to meet their needs for online safety education inclusive of gender, age, culture, ability, appearance, socioeconomic status, family background, geographical location, and access	R	R	√	√	√
Ensuring processes are in place to ensure children and parents/carers who speak languages other than English understand this policy	R	√			
Upholding children's rights to provision, participation and protection in digital environments	R	√	√		√
Teaching children they have the right to feel safe and say 'no' to anything that makes them feel unsure, uncomfortable, or unsafe	√	√	√		√
Identifying and responding to online safety risks, like grooming (being subjected to manipulative behaviours), cyberbullying, excessive use of devices and screen time, and inappropriate images <i>refer to Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing Policy</i>	R	R	R		R
Being alert to potential signs of exposure to inappropriate material or online harm (e.g. changes in behaviour, secrecy)	R	R	√		√
Ensuring children know what to do if they encounter inappropriate materials online	R	√	√		√
Encouraging children to talk to a trusted adult if they see or experience something online that makes them feel uncomfortable (<i>refer to Sources</i>)	√	√	√		√

Teaching children not to give out personal information such as their name, birthdate, address and image, online or that of others	✓	✓	✓		✓
Implementing the uses of technologies in everyday life and use real or imaginary technologies as props in children's play		✓	✓		✓
Supporting the use of digital technologies in the curriculum as tools for designing, drawing, editing, reflecting and composing		✓	✓		✓
Modelling internet use with children for learning purposes and provide opportunities for assessing the quality and relevance of information.		✓	✓		✓
Modelling active decision making regarding digital technology use with, by and for young children that provides a balance of digital and non-digital experiences and activities at the service		✓	✓		✓
Providing digital technology experiences for young children that promote movement opportunities		✓	✓		✓
Ensuring that screen-based digital technology use while sitting is only for short periods and does not replace periods of active physical movement		✓	✓		✓
Helping children develop self-regulation (<i>refer to Definitions</i>) for using digital technologies and support them to transition from digital to non-digital activities		✓	✓		✓
Encouraging the use of digital technologies in the curriculum for children to access images and information, explore diverse perspectives and make sense of their world		✓	✓		✓
Teaching children skills and techniques that encourage them to use technologies to explore new information and represent their ideas.		✓	✓		✓
Developing strategies for families to communicate negative experiences or concerns regarding online issues	R	R			
Supporting families to understand that exposure to disturbing or arousing content and screens in the hour before sleep time decreases the length and quality of children's sleep.	✓	✓	✓		
Directing families towards government and/or not-for-profit organisations for advice and resources on controls and the selection of digital media, content, apps and games that are appropriate for use by young children (<i>refer to Sources</i>)	✓	✓	✓		
Providing families with information about online safety and risks in the online environment, such as online grooming, cyber bullying and sexting.	R	R	R		✓



BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

BACKGROUND

Young children are growing up in a technological world and need to be supported to understand how technology works and the impact it has on their lives. Technology is now used by young children in early childhood services, and at home for gaming, socialising and learning. When used wisely technology can support children's learning and relationships. Enjoyable and engaging shared experiences that optimise the

potential for children's learning and development can support children's relationships both with adults and their peers.

Creating a safe online environment for children is essential to ensure they can access digital technologies and online learning opportunities without risk. Children have the right to quality education and care in a secure environment, and this extends to the digital world. Approved providers and staff play a critical role in protecting, empowering, and educating children about online safety to prevent child maltreatment and abuse. With the rapid development of new technologies, it is vital to stay informed about potential risks, such as gaps in cybersecurity that could allow hackers to access devices and compromise children's safety. Supporting educators and children to understand both the benefits and dangers of digital technologies, and taking proactive steps to address emerging risks, is key to fostering a child safe culture and ensuring continuous improvement in online safety practices.

Educators are accustomed to working in partnership with families in many areas of children's development. Now that young children are growing up in digital contexts, it's also important for educators and families to work in partnership regarding the use of digital technologies with, by and for young children. An educator's role is not necessarily to teach children about the technology itself, but to create learning environments where educators and children think, talk and learn about technology and online safety together.

The Early Years Learning Framework was developed to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five years. The Framework assists early childhood teachers and educators' in providing young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning. Outcome 4 of the Framework talks about how children are confident and involved learners. It encourages early learning services to introduce children to appropriate tools, technologies and media and provide the children with skills, knowledge and techniques to enhance their learning. Outcome 4 also states that children should experiment with different types of technologies to investigate, and problem solve.

Outcome 5 of the Framework talks about how children are effective communicators and provides guidance to early childhood teacher and educators in supporting children to use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking.

That being the case, the early childhood sector plays an important role in supporting children's learning and development in relation to technology and staying safe online. Importantly, young children need to be provided the opportunity to learn about online safety and use technology in appropriate ways.

Young children and their families participate in digital contexts in different ways according to their access to digital technologies, the internet, and the views they hold about the role digital technology plays in their lives. Research indicates that internet access and digital technology is influenced by socioeconomic resources, geographic location, gender and age (Judge, Puckett & Cabuk, 2004). Families' beliefs and attitudes about digital technology also influence the access their children have to different types of digital technologies (Blackwell, Lauricella, Wartella, Robb & Schomburg, 2013). Therefore, the experience of growing up in digital contexts is not universally the same, as not every child and family will use, value or understand digital technologies in the same way. However, all children have the right to actively participate online, this includes the right to be heard, the right to be respected and the right to feel safe.

The Victorian Regulatory Authority requires approved providers to comply with the National Model Code. The National Model Code is crucial for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services to ensure the safety and privacy of children. Under the Code, only service-issued electronic devices are used for taking photos, thereby minimising the risk of unauthorised distribution of images. The Code requires clear guidelines to be developed regarding carrying personal devices for specific essential purposes ensuring that any exceptions are justified and controlled. Additionally, implementing strict controls for storing and retaining images or recordings of children is vital to protect their privacy and prevent misuse of sensitive information. Adhering to these guidelines not only safeguards children but also fosters trust and transparency between ECEC services and families.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Child Safe Standards
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
- Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children Health and Safety and Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Online Safety Act 2021
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

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

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For regularly used terms, see the Definitions File located online: <https://denzildonkinder.org.au/policies/> OR in the Policies Folder in the kindergarten office.

Co-playing: when two or more children and/or an adult and child(ren) engage in play together, communicating about their actions, about the content, or interacting in any way.

Co-viewing: when two or more people view the same content together, providing opportunity for conversation and communication about the content they are viewing.

Digital citizenship: citizenship in digital contexts recognises that young children are active participants in their communities now and into the future

Digital communication platforms: video teleconferencing software program such as Zoom, Teams, Webex Meetings, Skype

Digital documentation: recording and analysing children's engagement and learning using digital tools. This can include photos, text and video and may be communicated via an online platform.

Digital literacy: the ability to identify and use technology confidently, creatively and critically to meet the demands and challenges of living, learning and working with digital technologies like internet platforms, social media, and mobile devices.

eSafety Commissioner: Australia's national independent regulator for online safety. purpose is to help safeguard Australians at risk from online harms and to promote safer, more positive online experiences

Interactive media: refers to digital and analog materials, including software programs, applications (apps), broadcast and streaming media, some children's television programming, e-books, the Internet, and other forms of content designed to facilitate active and creative use by young children and to encourage social engagement with other children and adults.

Screen time: A general term that includes any time a child engages with an electronic screen, including (but not limited to) watching television, engaging with educational games or creating digital books.

Self-regulation: the capacity for children (and adults) to regulate their behaviour in response to their emotions and thinking.

Smart toys: a toy that connects to the internet, often have a microphone and/or camera, and tries to mimic human intelligence. Children can ask them questions, and they respond like a chatbot.

Wearable technologies: Digital technologies that can be worn, e.g. watches, fitness tracking devices, jewellery and clothes made with electronic textiles.



SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

SOURCES

- ACECQA: [Consent and children's rights](#)
- ACECQA: [Early Year Learning and Development Framework](#)
- ACECQA: [Empowering children under 5 by asking them to give consent for photos or videos](#)
- ACECQA: [National Model Code - Taking images in Early Childhood Education and Care](#)
- ACECQA: [NQF Online Safety Guide Self and Risk Assessment Tool](#)
- ACECQA: [Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework](#)
- Early Childhood Australia: [Statement on young children and digital technology](#)
- eSafety Commissioner: [eSafety's professional learning modules](#)
- eSafety Commissioner: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>
- eSafety Commissioner: [Online Safety Agreement](#)
- eSafety Commissioner: [Online Safety Agreement](#)
- eSafety Commissioner: [Talking about child sexual abuse online with 0- to 12-year-olds](#)
- The eSafety Guide: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/esafety-guide>
- The Playing IT Safe Framework and Alignment: <https://playingitsafe.org.au/>

RELATED POLICIES

- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing
- Complaints
- Educational Program
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Inclusion and Equity
- Interactions with Children
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Supervision of Children
- Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments



EVALUATION

To assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the approved provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notifying all stakeholders affected by this policy at least 14 days before making any significant changes to this policy or its procedures, unless a lesser period is necessary due to risk ([Regulation 172 \(2\)](#)).



ATTACHMENTS

- NIL



AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the approved provider of Denzil Don Kindergarten on 25/11/2025.

REVIEW DATE: 07 / NOVEMBER / 2027
