

Kindergarten Programs

1. Purpose and Intent

The City of Casey is committed to ensuring all children attending a City of Casey managed kindergarten service are provided with a safe and secure environment that supports their health and wellbeing and adheres to National Regulations. This guideline outlines the responsibilities of the service when using digital technology to document and share children's experiences and provide learning and development opportunities within the program.

2. Scope

This guideline will apply to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Responsible Person in Day-to-Day Charge, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents, children and others attending the programs, activities and services managed by the City of Casey.

3. Definitions

Key Term	Definition
App	An abbreviation of the word application which refers to programs that can be downloaded or installed on devices.
Approved Provider	An individual or organisation, such as City of Casey, that has completed an application form and been approved by the Regulatory Authority as fit and proper (in accordance with Sections 12, 13 and 14 of the National Law) to operate one or more education and care services.
Device	Any electronic piece of equipment that can take images or videos, and store or transfer media, including but not limited to: • Phones • Tablets • Digital cameras • Smart watches with camera/recording functionality • Wearables such as camera glasses • SD cards, USB drives and Hard drives.
Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)	Generative AI refers to any form of AI that generates new content and information including text, images, code and audio in response to user prompts. It is a technology characterised by its ability to perform complex tasks that historically only a human could do, such as reasoning, learning, problem-solving, and decision-making.

Nominated Supervisor	A person who is the Responsible Person in Day-to-Day Charge and has been nominated by the Approved Provider (City of Casey) of the service under Part 3 of the Act to be the Nominated Supervisor of that service, and who has consented to that nomination. The Nominated Supervisor has day-to-day responsibility for the service in accordance with the National Regulations. All services must have a Nominated Supervisor.
Online activities	A video call or webinar session.
Person with Management and Control	Individuals responsible for managing the delivery of a service or those who have significant influence over its activities. PMCs have specific legal obligations for ensuring compliance within early childhood education and care providers.
Personal or private devices	An electronic device that is privately owned and operated by an individual, rather than a company-owned device which has been provided to an employee or a service.
Safe Search	Safe Search is a feature in search engines such as Google or Bing that acts as an automated filter to block potentially offensive content appearing in search results.

4. Background

Digital technology can enhance the provision of Kindergarten Programs in many ways, including enriching learning experiences, enhancing engagement with the service, and documenting and information sharing with parents and families.

These four major themes are critical for safe and successful engagement with technology:

- Ethical and professional conduct.
- Child protection.
- Privacy, confidentiality and security.
- Family engagement.

Educators also utilise external digital platforms to manage children's enrolment records and document children's learning. The City of Casey has robust processes in place to ensure digital platforms are secure and meet relevant privacy, confidentiality and security legislation. The following platforms are utilised by the City of Casey:

- EnrolNow - Educators use secure logins to access and update records for a children's enrolment in kindergarten programs. Educators access individual records and reports including attendance data. The City of Casey retains records from EnrolNow to respond to Freedom of Information requests and meet legislative archive requirements.
- StoryPark - Educators and families use secure logins to access children's documentation online and communicate with each other via the StoryPark app. The documents may include learning opportunities facilitated by educators, and images of children while learning through play. The City of Casey retains a backup of StoryPark to respond to Freedom of Information requests and meet legislative archive requirements.
- Microsoft Teams - Microsoft Teams is a communication and collaboration platform that combines workplace chat, video meetings, file storage (including collaboration on files), and app integration. Microsoft Teams can be used by kindergarten educators to communicate with each other and can be used to connect with community members, children and families.
- SharePoint Online - SharePoint Online is a cloud-based service that helps organisations share and manage content, knowledge, and apps. SharePoint Online can be used by kindergarten

educators to store kindergarten documents related to program, planning or children's learning which are not required to be stored in Enrolment Records.

5. Responsibilities for this guideline

Child Youth and Family Management, Person with Management or Control or the Approved Provider	• Provide strong leadership that supports a culture of child safety in the everyday practice of City of Casey employees. • Provide educators with clear guidelines, policies and procedures in relation to all matters specified in Regulation 168(2). • In partnership with the City of Casey Information Technology (IT) department, ensure digital platforms approved for educator's use comply with all relevant state and federal legislation, and all service guidelines. • Ensure access to children's documentation on digital platforms is limited to authorised family members, staff and educators only. • Embed a culture of awareness and understanding of information and technology security issues at the service. • Adhere to the City of Casey's <i>Privacy Policy</i>, <i>Data and Information Management Policy</i> and <i>Data Breach Policy</i>. • Ensure the use of digital technologies in kindergarten services reflects responsible and ethical use to support children's learning and development or documentation of learning. • Coordinate the Kindergarten Leadership Governance Group – Personal Electronic Device Exemptions. • Ensure that City of Casey devices provided to the service are secure and password protected.
Educators and kindergarten staff	Privacy, Confidentiality and Device Management • Never carry or wear any personal electronic device while providing education and care and working directly with children, in line with the National Model Code. This includes: • Phones • Tablets • Digital cameras • Smart watches • Wearables such as camera glasses • SD cards, USB drives and Hard drives. • Ensure privately owned devices, including wearable devices (e.g. Apple Watch), are not carried or used in the kindergarten room or yard, and are inaccessible to children during the kindergarten program. • Store all personal electronic and media storage devices with their personal belongings away from the kindergarten room or yard. • Only use City of Casey owned devices (iPad or laptop) to access children's documentation or enrolment data. • Only use City of Casey owned devices (iPad, laptop, or camera) to document, photograph, film, store, and upload information or images of the child and family. • Only use City of Casey owned devices (iPad, laptop, smart TV, camera) as tools to enhance learning in the educational program.

- Ensure anyone working at the service, or attending the service to work directly with children, utilises devices that are:
 - Issued by their business or institution.
 - Used only for work purposes (and not personal use).
- Adhere to the City of Casey's Mobile Device Policy and Cyber Security Policy.
- Keep passwords secure and log off after using or stepping away from their company device and service devices.
- Take responsibility to protect and maintain privacy in accordance with the City of Casey *Privacy Policy* and the Child, Youth & Family *Privacy and Confidentiality Guidelines* when collecting and producing personal information.
- Protect personal information from misuse, loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure and ensure professional ethical and responsible use of the available technology.
- Safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of information received, transmitted or stored electronically.
- Adhere to the City of Casey *Data and Information Management Policy* regarding the storage, archiving or disposal of information, images, recordings or videos of children.
- Ensure that City of Casey owned devices are stored securely when not in use/out of hours, away from other users of the service (e.g. in a safe/locked filing cabinet).
- Ensure that all images of children are deleted off City of Casey devices and platforms such as SharePoint at the end of the kindergarten year.
- Notify the Team Leader of any data or privacy breaches immediately.

Digital technologies enhancing educational programs

- Provide adequate supervision of children when accessing digital devices provided by City of Casey to enhance learning during the program (e.g. digital cameras, iPads, voice recorders, etc.).
- Ensure educators abide by recommendations from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing of limiting screen usage to less than 1 hour a day for children aged between 3 - 5.
- Complete *Attachment 1: Device Risk Assessment and Agreement* for any private digital technology devices provided by families for their child's use during the educational program (e.g. communication device, continuous glucose monitoring device, hearing aid) in addition to a Medical Management Plan if required.
- Only utilise online content that has been viewed and assessed prior to introducing to children. This includes content via apps, streaming services or other digital content (e.g. YouTube Kids, ABC Kids Listen, Spotify, Apple Music, Storybox Library, Epic Books, Live streams, etc.) used in children's programs, as well as any advertising that may be present.
- Ensure that Safe Search is on for all devices used in the service.

	• Ensure visitors, students and volunteers do not participate in any online activities or content with children attending a City of Casey children's service. • Be mindful of what others can see when sharing screens. • Conduct online engagement in accordance with any consent conditions outlined in <i>Attachment 1: Device Risk Assessment and Agreement</i>. • Share resources with families to promote e-safety awareness as needed. Digital Documentation of Children • Adhere to conditions of consent provided by parents on their <i>Child's Enrolment Record</i> and the relevant consent forms, including <i>Attachment 1: Device Risk Assessment and Agreement</i>. • Never take, document, or share images of children participating in personal routines (toileting, nappy changing, changing clothes). • Where possible and practicable, ask children for consent before capturing and sharing photos and videos of them, to foster a child's sense of agency and empowerment • Never post group photos on StoryPark. • When sharing photos of individual children via StoryPark, consider the benefits and risks of sharing the image and how it represents the child. • Consider inclusive use of technology for children and families with diverse needs and family structures, including culturally and linguistically diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. Use of AI • Ensure all educators use AI generative tools in line with the City of Casey's <i>Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy</i>. • Ensure that educators using AI generative tools to support their writing of program or children's documentation use Microsoft 365 Copilot, on their Casey issued device. • Ensure that private, sensitive, or commercial information is not entered into AI generative tools. This includes, but is not limited to, child, family and employee personal details, photos, financial data, Council intellectual property (i.e. plans, proposals, documentation and processes) and information relating to any sensitive Council business. • Ensure that any output generated by AI tools is thoroughly reviewed and quality-checked before being used or shared. • Ensure that output generated by AI tools for children's individual documentation is edited and reflective of the child's experience rather than a general account.
Parents/Families	• Adhere to the Parent Consent Conditions in the <i>Child's Enrolment Record</i> related to Digital Documentation of Children and Filming and Photography consents. • Not take photos or videos of children in the service, including in the background, and including via apps such as FaceTime. • Not send their child to the service with any device that takes, stores or transmits images or recordings.

	Use of private devices to support inclusion and participation in the educational program • Inform educators if their child requires a personal technology device to support their inclusion and participation in the educational program. • Ensure that private devices that have voice recording, video or photography applications disabled. • Ensure that any private devices have adequate protection accessories applied (e.g. screen protector, case or cover). • Hand device/s to educators at beginning of kindergarten session, if required. • Complete a record of agreement for any private digital technology devices provided by families for their child's use during the educational program.
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6. Restriction on personal electronic devices in centre-based services

The Victorian Government has implemented important measures to improve child safety in early childhood education and care services. This includes the restriction of personal electronic devices for anyone providing early childhood education and care or working with children in early childhood education and care settings.

City of Casey staff are not permitted to carry personal electronic or media storage devices while providing education and care. This is in line with the [National Model Code](#).

The restrictions mean that:

- Only company issued devices can be used to take images or videos of children.
- Personal devices (see definitions table) that take or store photos or videos **cannot be carried** while working directly with children.
- All staff must comply with the legislated storage and retention of images and videos of children.

Personal electronic or media storage devices are not permitted while providing education and care and working directly with children. This is in line with the [National Model Code](#).

The restrictions apply to all City of Casey staff, and:

- Teachers and students, including agency casual and agency staff.
- Students and representatives of tertiary providers attending the service as part of a practicum.
- Volunteers, including parent volunteers, providing education and care or working directly with children.
- Third-party contractors delivering programs (including allied health) or incursion activities to children in a service.
- Allied health or inclusion professionals attending a service to observe, assess or work with a child at the service.
- Mentors or coaches attending the service to support teachers or educators working with children or providing education and care.
- Preschool field officers.
- Primary school teachers attending a service as part of a school transition program.

The restrictions do not apply to:

- Parents and carers doing drop-off or pick-up.
- Victorian Regulatory Authority Authorised Officers, police and officers of other regulators, such as environmental health officers
- Third-party contractors who are attending the service but not working with children or providing education or care (for example, maintenance contractors).

Exemptions

The City of Casey, as an approved provider, can give exemptions to these restrictions for limited essential purposes, such as:

- Emergency communication during excursions and regular outings (for example, for when groups of children and educators get split up).
- Emergency communication when children are transported or travel on transport arranged by the service.
- Communication in an emergency 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 (for example, heart or blood sugar level monitoring).
- Disability (for example, where a personal electronic device is an essential means of communication for an educator or other staff member).
- Family necessity (for example, a worker with an ill family member).
- Technology failure (for example, when a temporary outage of service-issued electronic devices has occurred).
- A local emergency event occurring, to receive emergency notifications through government warning systems (for example, bushfire evacuation text notification).

The City of Casey has established a Kindergarten Leadership Governance Group to assess and respond to requests for an exemption. Educators and staff who meet the exemption criteria are required to take the following steps:

- For excursions, regular outings, and evacuation drills out of the licensed space, use the *Excursion, Regular Outing and Evacuation Risk Assessment* document.
- For communication in the case of an emergency, serious incident, lockdown, evacuation, or technology failure, contact the Kindergarten Team Leader to advise as soon as possible.
- For personal health requirements, disability, or family necessity, complete *Attachment 2: Request for an Exemption*.

It is worth noting that an exemption will only be provided where the use of a personal device is essential, and another option (such as contact via the centre phone) is insufficient.

The City of Casey encourages parents and guardians to enter the kindergarten room free from engaging with devices to safe guard all children within our care.

7. Associated documents and attachments

This guideline should be read in conjunction with:

- Privacy and Confidentiality Guidelines
- Child Safe Environment guidelines
- Attachment 1 – Device Risk Assessment and Agreement
- Attachment 2 – Request for an Exemption
- City of Casey Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy
- City of Casey's Data and Information Management Policy
- City of Casey's Data Breach Policy.
- City of Casey Mobile Device Policy.
- City of Casey Cyber Security Policy.

8. Relevant legislation

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012
- Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Safe Standards Compliance and Enforcement) Amendment Act 2021

- Child, Youth and Families Act 2005
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Early Childhood Legislation Amendment (Child Safety) Bill 2025
- [Centre-based services: child safety and personal electronic devices | vic.gov.au](https://www.vic.gov.au/centre-based-services-child-safety-and-personal-electronic-devices)
- [National Model Code – Taking images in early childhood education and care | ACECQA](https://www.acecqa.com.au/national-model-code-taking-images-in-early-childhood-education-and-care)

9. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

All children or young people who attend services, programs, and events delivered by, and spaces owned or managed by the City of Casey, have the right to feel and be safe. The wellbeing and safety of children and young people in our care will always be our priority.

Council has zero-tolerance of child abuse and is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation where all children and young people are valued and protected from abuse, harm and neglect.

The City of Casey is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where protecting children and young people from abuse, harm and neglect is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of Council, its employees, contractors and volunteers.

10. Monitoring, evaluation and review

The City of Casey will ensure:

- Regular monitoring of the implementation of this guideline and its associated documents including training and compliance.
- This guideline and its associated documents are kept up to date with current legislation, policy and best practice.
- Review and evaluation of this guideline and its associated documents as part of the service's review cycle, or as required.

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11. Document History

Date changed	Change Type