

Social Media and Digital Technology Policy

Purpose

This policy relates to Peak staff, families and children accessing and using the internet, social networking platforms and applications on any device such as desktop computers, mobile phones and tablets.

At Peak we value the role that Digital Technology has in enhancing our daily learning program. We also value the use of Social Media to communicate with parents and the community about our service. We believe children’s learning experiences can be extended by using digital technology such as laptops, mobile phones and computers to complement our other activities. Children may be assisted to research on the internet, use audio and visual programs and apps and to take photos and videos of their learning.

We recognise the importance of keeping children safe while using digital technology and safeguarding their right to privacy. We will ensure that our service, children, educators and families are not compromised on any form of social networking or digital platforms but that social media and digital technology is used to enhance our service and provide opportunities to the children to assist in their learning, development and entertainment.

Considerations

Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard/s	Other Service policies/documentation	Other
Law: Section 168 Regulations: 181, 183, 184 Child safe Standards	Standards 4.2, 6.2 Elements 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 6.2.3	- Use of Photographic and Video Images of Children Policy - Student device agreement - Staff and family codes of conduct (pending) - Communication with Families, Confidentiality, Governance and Management, Staffing Policies.	- NSW Department of Education BYOD policy and student Guidelines - My Time Our Place - Parent Handbook - Staff Handbook

Procedures

Children’s use of devices:

- Peak encourages active play, sports and social interaction above all. For this reason, we discourage the use of technology devices unless it is for homework or learning purposes. Peak staff will provide opportunities for children to use computers, tablets and the centre phone under close supervision during programmed activities.
- For some children with additional needs, the use of devices for screen time is an appropriate strategy. In consultation with the child’s family, individual children may be given time on the centre or their own device. This should not exceed 30 minutes in total each day.

- All devices accessible to the children will have parental controls enabled to safeguard the children from exposure to inappropriate internet content.
- Should a child be inadvertently exposed to inappropriate content, centre staff will respond promptly and the child's family will be informed.
- Some schools provide homework in a digital form. In centres where this is the case, children may use their own devices, school devices and centre devices at scheduled homework time only, and under close educator supervision.
- Children who bring their own device to Peak will be required to complete a device agreement with staff. Parents will be asked to provide permission for their child to use their device at Peak and to reinforce the terms of this agreement.
- Children will not be permitted to use their own mobile phone devices in the service. These are to remain in the child's school bag at all times.
- Children are asked to communicate with their parents, when necessary, by requesting that centre staff use the Peak phone to call or text on their behalf. This is at the discretion of the supervisor and parents.

Use of children's images:

- Please refer to Peak's **Use of Photographic and Video Images of Children Policy** for further guidance on use of children's images.
- Families will be requested on enrolment to indicate, through a privacy agreement, permission for their child's image to be used internally by the service and/or externally for advertising and social media use. If a parent has not indicated agreement the service will act as if they do not wish images of their child to be used by the service.
- When a family has given permission for their child's image to be used by the service, the child shall have the final say as to whether they wish any particular image to be used. Children can also decide they do not wish any image to be used, even if permission has already been given by a parent. In all instances the child's permission shall be sought prior to the use of any image and they shall be informed it is perfectly reasonable to say 'No'.

Staff use of devices and social networking:

- While staff are encouraged to leave their mobile phones in the staff room, there are times where these are needed for communication. Centre supervisors will advise individual staff members if they are required to keep their phones on them during their shift.
- In the case where an educator is required to keep their phone on them, this is to be used solely for communication within the centre.
- Staff who can access a social networking site via their mobile phones are not to do so during their shifts at the service and are not to use their camera or video phones to take

photos/pictures while at the service unless approval has been granted by a supervisor. This permission may be granted for use in Story Park observations. In this instance, once the images have been uploaded to Story Park, all images on the staff members device must be deleted.

- No information about what happens at the service should be posted on a personal social networking website, nor should any photos taken at the service or on an excursion be put on a social networking forum. If a staff member puts photos of a child or children enrolled at the service on a social networking website, families will immediately be contacted and the staff member asked to remove it immediately. If necessary, the social networking website will be contacted to delete the photos. The staff member will face an inquiry into their actions and possibly face termination of employment.
- Please be aware that social networking websites are not a private means of communication but can be accessed by the public, therefore, it is important not to share private information about service families or other staff on social networking websites. A staff member doing so will face an inquiry into the situation by management and any involved party and depending on the severity of the situation may face possible termination of employment.
- Should harassment of any kind take place on a social networking site, such as, but not limited to, sexual or verbal harassment, staff will face an inquiry into their actions and depending on the severity of the situation may face possible termination of employment.
- Should a family member related to the service harass a staff member via a social networking website, management will conduct an inquiry into their actions and depending on the severity of the situation face possible termination of their child's place at the service.
- This policy also complies with state and national laws regarding social networking websites. Should a staff member break the law on a social networking website, such as, but not limited to, defamation, the service will contact the police and other relevant authorities.
- The service should review which photographs and images exist on the service's social media sites every 2 years. Images of children that are more than 2 years old should be considered for removal.
- Use of devices by students on placement or volunteers requires prior service approval. The use of images of children at the service by students requires the approval of the relevant child's guardian. Images can only be used for assessment purposes.

Peak's Facebook & Instagram site

- Only an authorised staff member or member of management can add or amend information on the Peak Sports and Learning's Facebook site without seeking prior approval. The authorised staff member or management person can also provide permission to other staff to add or amend information on the service's social media sites where necessary.

Version Control Table

Version Control	Date Released	Next Review	Approved by	Amendment
1	October 2019	October 2020	Directors	Created using consultation with staff and families
2	March 2020	February 2022	Directors	Moved to new document review timeline.
3	February 2022	February 2024	Directors	