



## 1.12 Use of Bermagui Preschool Devices

### Written By

Narelle Myers

### Introduction

Bermagui Preschool takes the safe and responsible use of devices and digital technologies, student safety and wellbeing, and the development of social skills and positive behaviour, very seriously. This policy provides general guidance to our educators and staff on the use of devices and digital technology at Bermagui Preschool. It is the role and responsibility of our Preschool to make informed, intentional and appropriate choices about if, how and when technology is used.

While we acknowledge that we live in a technology-rich world where devices are an important communication tool, research has found that excessive use can be disruptive in classrooms and open to misuse at school. The unregulated presence of devices in classrooms can undermine students' capacity to think, learn, remember, pay attention and regulate emotion. Despite the abundance of digital technology present in everyday life, our Preschool also acknowledges that not every child, and their family, will access, use, value or understand digital technology in the same way. As such, there is no clear response on the role or optimal use of technology by, or for, young children while at Preschool. However, it is agreed that at Bermagui Preschool, technology for children under the age of 2, is actively discouraged and deliberately avoided. In addition, Bermagui Preschool will not replace activities such as creative play, outdoor experiences and face to face social interactions with peers and adults, with digital activities. Priority will be given for opportunities for children, families, staff and other members of the broader community to communicate with each other face-to-face or be involved physically.

This policy acknowledges that technology is increasingly affecting how students learn and communicate from an early age. Device use to enhance learning will be permitted for the specific purpose of offering age appropriate development. Digital technology will be recognised by Bermagui Preschool as a tool that is valuable when used intentionally with children to extend and support active, hands-on, creative, and authentic engagement with those around them and with their world. Educators must consider the use of digital and electronic materials against the use of natural and traditional materials and objects. Passive use of devices will not be permitted, and a maximum limit of 5mins for preschoolers and 1 hour for educators for the purpose of documenting may be permitted. For a small number of students with particular health and wellbeing needs, an exception to the policy may also be granted to extend the amount of use.

### Aim

Bermagui Preschool aims to ensure that the preschool, children, staff and families use devices in an educational and safe way. This policy provides guidelines for use of devices at Bermagui Preschool.

Bermagui Preschool devices may include any devices, applications, software and networks owned by Bermagui Preschool. This includes tablets, laptops, mobile phones, notebooks, printers, scanners, cameras, USB memory sticks, email and internet use.

The policy covers people using the Bermagui Preschools devices, including but not limited to:

- Employees
- Children
- Volunteers
- Board of Directors
- Contractors

## Strategies

With approval from the Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person, the use of digital technologies by Bermagui Preschool will:

- be age appropriate, active and engaging
- meet the play interests of children
- create opportunities for children to use different modes of communication such as video, audio, images and text
- invoke exploratory play and offer an understanding of the role, use and presence of technology in the modern world
- The use of devices and digital technologies by Bermagui Preschool will be permitted:
- as a tool for communicating and connecting with students, educators, community groups and organisations off site
- to connect to and communicate with parents/guardians
- for improved efficiencies in meeting the increases on educators and staff to deliver administrative and reporting requirements
- for the professional development of Bermagui Preschool educators and staff .

All use by staff and children will be undertaken with online and cyber safety being paramount, and with an emphasis on social responsibility (self-respect and respect for others).

When using devices, Bermagui Preschool staff should:

- Read, agree to and sign Bermagui Preschools Use of Devices Agreement
- Refer and abide by Bermagui Preschool Policies while using the devices including Confidentiality Policy and Social Media Policy.
- Use Bermagui Preschools devices and internet only for work and educational purposes. Users should remember that Bermagui Preschool devices are provided for business purposes and to enhance effectiveness and efficiency at work.
- Only use Bermagui Preschool account details for logging on to a device and the Internet and will never disclose these details to others. Staff should understand that the use of a personal account at Preschool is not permitted.
- Only connect devices to the Preschool wireless system and understand that the use of a phone or other external device to gain wireless access independently needs authorisation by the Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person.
- Agree to not hack or bypass any hardware and software security implemented by the Preschool.
- Agree to not use any device to knowingly search for, link to, access or send anything that is offensive, pornographic, threatening, abusive, defamatory, or considered bullying behaviour.
- Agree to be cyber-safe by not giving out any personal information about myself or others to anyone.

- Not record or distribute information including taking photos or recording video without the express written permission of each individual, including parent/carer for minors.
- Agree to report any inappropriate behaviour and material to the Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person.
- Understand that my activity on the Internet maybe recorded and these records may be used in investigations, court proceedings or for other legal reasons.
- Care for all devices I use and I will not interfere with or damage equipment.
- Maintain Bermagui Preschool devices including keeping clean, backups and updating virus protection, software and security.
- Acknowledge that Bermagui Preschool cannot be held responsible for any damage to or theft of devices that are taken home and any insurance required is independent of the Preschool. Staff will take responsibility for the repair or replacement of any devices they have damaged or lost.
- Ensure devices are fully charged using Bermagui Preschool chargers.
- Agree that the use of any device during school activities is at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person.
- Agree that the use of personal phones or any other devices is not permitted unless Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible Person gives specific direction to use one.
- Agree that a gaming device is not permitted to be brought to Preschool.
- Assume that the comments that they post may be available to persons other than those for whom the communication was intended. Re-read and reconsider what is being said before posting, emailing or electronically transmitting it.
- Be certain not to disclose their own and other people's personal information or publish images of others without permission. Recognise that a person may be readily identifiable even when not named.
- Not accept children and families as friends on Social Media due to it being a breach of expected professional conduct unless they already know them in a personal capacity before their child starts at Preschool. Staff should avoid personal communication, including on social networking sites, with the children and parents with whom they act in a professional capacity.
- Be aware that a breach of this contract may result in disciplinary action in line with the Bermagui Preschools disciplinary policy.

When using devices at Bermagui Preschool, staff must not:

- Imply they are authorised to speak for the preschool nor for the Approved Provider unless they have permission or instruction to do so;
- Use the preschool's email or any logos or branding pertaining to the preschool when conducting personal business or expressing personal views;
- Use the identity or likeness of another employee, customer, supplier or business partner, etc;
- Publish or report on conversations or information that is deemed confidential or classified or deals with matters that are internal in nature;
- Use or disclose any information (including photographs or videos) relating to children and families, other staff or anyone connected with the preschool, obtained through their employment at the preschool;
- Make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to a staff or committee member's reputation or bring the preschool into disrepute. This includes any comments that are defamatory, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, insulting, obscene or in any other way harmful.

### **Harassment, bullying and discrimination**

Abusive, harassing, threatening or defaming postings which are in breach of any of the preschool's policies may result in disciplinary action being taken, even if such comments are made using private social media networks outside of working hours. All staff and others connected with the preschool are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity, and ensure their behaviour both online and while at the preschool does not constitute unlawful discrimination, bullying or harassment in any form.

### **Access to social media at preschool**

The preschool's computers and other communication devices are for work purposes only, and not for conducting personal business or for participating on social media websites during working hours or otherwise. Staff are not to use their personal mobiles, computers or other electronic devices to access social media in any form during rostered work hours except during lunch breaks.

### **Photographs**

- Staff are not to use their personal cameras, mobile phones or other electronic devices to take photographs while at the preschool or on excursion. The requirements of this policy are to be met at all times with regard to this usage.
- No photographs taken at preschool can be used on social media without permission and consultation from the families and Nominated Supervisor.
- Older children should be asked by staff for consent before taking or using the child's photos.
- Photographs can only be used for the purpose of authorised preschool documentation. At the end of each year, all photos should be backed up onto the shared drive at preschool.
- Parents are advised that they do not have a right to photograph anyone else's child or to upload photos of anyone else's children.

### **Identifying inappropriate use:**

- Staff who notice inappropriate or unlawful content online in any way relating to the preschool, or content that may be in breach of this policy, should inform the Nominated Supervisor immediately.
- Any staff member whose actions are deemed to be in breach of this policy could face disciplinary action.
- Where necessary, disciplinary action will be determined by the Approved Provider according to the circumstances of the case. Counselling, mediation, retraining and the issue of written warnings may be considered by the Approved Provider as possible remedies. In severe circumstances, failure to act in accordance to this policy could result in termination of employment.

### **Resources & References**

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/help/contact-us/social-media-policy>

**Relevant Documentation**

Links to other policies and forms

- 4.18 Child protection
- 2.02 Staff Employment
- 3.01 Enrolment and Orientation
- 2.06 Confidentiality
- 1.08 Publicity and Media
- 1.11 Social Media
- 7.20 Use of Devices Agreement Form

**Date Adopted:**

July 2020

**Review Date:**

July 2023