BERMAGUI PRESCHOOL

1.11 Photography, Digital Media, Social Media and Online Safety Policy

Bermagui Preschool recognises that the safety, rights and best interests of children are the paramount consideration in all decisions, actions and practices undertaken by the service.

This policy has been developed by Bermagui Preschool in consultation with the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators and families.

Date Approved: November 2026 **Review Date:** November 2029

Aim

This policy establishes clear requirements for the safe, respectful and appropriate use of photography, video, digital images, digital technologies, social media and online environments at Bermagui Preschool.

The Preschool recognises that photography and digital media can support children's learning, documentation, communication with families and celebration of children's experiences. These practices must always be balanced with children's rights to privacy, dignity, safety, participation and respectful representation.

The Preschool is committed to ensuring that children's images, information and digital identities are protected from misuse, inappropriate sharing, unauthorised access and other online safety risks.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- Approved Provider;
- Nominated Supervisor and Responsible Persons;
- educators and staff;
- students and volunteers;
- contractors and other persons engaged or appointed by the Preschool;
- children;
- families; and
- visitors, where relevant to their activities at the Preschool.

The policy applies to:

- photographs and video recordings of children;
- digital images and learning documentation;
- digital devices and technology used by the Preschool;
- online platforms used by the Preschool;
- newsletters, websites and other publications;
- social media;
- external media;
- artificial intelligence and digitally altered images;
- drones and other image-capturing technologies; and
- the storage, use, sharing and destruction of images and recordings.

The requirements applying to a person will depend on their role and whether they are working directly with children.

The Preschool's Safe and Responsible Use of Digital Devices and Technologies Policy provides additional requirements relating to the use and management of digital devices at the Preschool.

Statement of Commitment

Bermagui Preschool is committed to providing a child safe environment where every child is respected, valued, listened to and protected from harm.

The Preschool will:

- place children's safety, rights and best interests above all other considerations;
- protect children's privacy and dignity;
- recognise children as capable and active participants whose views and preferences are considered;
- ensure children's images and information are collected, used and shared ethically and responsibly;
- provide children with safe and respectful opportunities to participate in digital documentation;
- ensure families are informed about how photographs, recordings and digital information may be used;
- obtain appropriate authorisation before collecting, using or storing images of children;
- limit access to children's images and information to authorised persons;
- maintain secure systems for the storage and management of digital information;
- respond promptly to concerns or breaches involving photography, recording, digital technology or online activity; and
- comply with applicable child safety, privacy and digital technology requirements.

The Preschool has zero tolerance for the use of children's images, information or digital identities in a manner that compromises their safety, rights, dignity or privacy.

Children's Participation and Choice

Children's views and preferences will be respected when photographs, videos or other digital documentation are taken.

Educators will:

- provide children with age-appropriate information about photography and recording;
- support children to express whether they wish to participate;
- respect a child's preference not to participate wherever reasonably practicable;
- avoid pressuring or requiring a child to participate in photography or recording; and
- ensure photography or recording does not interfere with children's play, learning, relationships or wellbeing.

A child's participation in photography or digital documentation will not affect their access to the educational program, relationships with educators or participation in Preschool experiences.

Photography and Video Recording

Photographs and videos may be taken for approved Preschool purposes, including:

- documenting children's learning and development;
- learning documentation and portfolios;
- communicating with families;
- documenting Preschool experiences and events;
- displays within the Preschool;
- approved newsletters and publications; and
- approved Preschool promotional or community communication.

Educators will ensure that photographs and videos:

- represent children respectfully and positively;
- protect children's dignity and privacy;
- are appropriate to the context;
- are taken only for an authorised purpose;
- do not unnecessarily identify children;
- do not include inappropriate or sensitive information;
- do not expose children to unnecessary risk;
- do not interfere with children's participation, play or wellbeing; and
- are stored and managed in accordance with this policy and the Preschool's record-keeping requirements.

Photographs or recordings must never be taken in circumstances where a child's privacy or dignity could reasonably be compromised.

Consent and Authorisation

The Preschool will obtain informed written authorisation from a child's parent or guardian before taking, using or storing photographs, videos or digital images of the child, in accordance with applicable legislation and Preschool procedures. Authorisation will identify the purposes for which images may be used.

Depending on the Preschool's consent arrangements, purposes may include:

- learning documentation;
- communication with families;
- Preschool displays;
- newsletters;
- website content;
- approved social media;
- approved community publications; and
- promotional material.

Consent will be purpose specific. An image authorised for one purpose must not automatically be used for another purpose where that use falls outside the scope of the original authorisation.

Families may withdraw consent at any time. The Preschool will update its records and cease future use of the child's images for the relevant purpose, subject to any legal or record-keeping requirements that may apply. Where practicable, existing publicly available material will be removed when consent is withdrawn. A child will not be disadvantaged because their family chooses not to provide consent.

Digital Documentation and Children's Learning

Digital photographs, videos and other digital documentation may form part of children's learning documentation and educational programs in accordance with the approved learning framework and the Preschool's educational program.

Educators will ensure digital documentation:

- reflects children's strengths, interests, ideas and learning;
- represents children authentically and respectfully;
- protects children's privacy and confidentiality;
- is relevant to the educational program;
- is shared only with authorised persons;
- does not unnecessarily identify children; and
- does not compare children or negatively label a child's identity, abilities or experiences.

Digital documentation must not be created or used simply for entertainment or promotional purposes where this is inconsistent with the child's rights, dignity or wellbeing.

Personal Devices

Bermagui Preschool complies with the NSW requirements relating to personal devices capable of capturing, storing or transmitting images of children.

A personal device includes devices such as:

- mobile phones;
- tablet computers;
- cameras;
- smartwatches;
- camera-enabled wearable devices;
- USB drives;
- memory cards;
- hard drives; and
- other devices capable of capturing, storing or transmitting images.

Persons working directly with children must comply with the applicable restrictions on personal devices. Personal devices must not be used to photograph, video or otherwise capture images of children while providing education and care. Personal devices must not be used to store or transmit photographs, videos or other digital information relating to children.

Only service-supplied or appropriately service-authorised devices may be used to capture, store or transmit images of children for approved Preschool purposes. Where a service-authorised device is used, it must be used in accordance with the Preschool's policies, procedures and security requirements.

The Preschool will ensure that service-supplied and service-authorised devices are appropriately managed and configured to protect child safety and information security.

Storage, Security and Destruction of Images

Images and recordings of children must only be stored on Preschool-approved systems, devices or platforms. Images must not be:

- stored on personal devices;
- transferred to personal email accounts;
- uploaded to personal cloud storage;
- copied to personal USB drives or memory cards;
- retained on unauthorised devices; or
- shared with unauthorised persons.

Access to children's images and digital records will be limited to persons who are authorised to access the information for legitimate Preschool purposes.

The Preschool will take reasonable steps to protect digital information from:

- unauthorised access;
- accidental loss;
- unauthorised copying;
- inappropriate disclosure;
- misuse; and
- unauthorised alteration or destruction.

Images and recordings will be retained and destroyed in accordance with the Preschool's Record Keeping Policy, applicable record-keeping requirements and the purpose for which they were collected. Where an image is no longer required and is not subject to a legal or record-keeping requirement, it will be securely deleted or destroyed.

Preschool Digital Platforms

Only Preschool-approved digital platforms may be used to communicate or share information about children and their learning.

The Preschool will ensure that approved platforms are used in accordance with:

- this policy;
- the Preschool's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy;
- the Safe and Responsible Use of Digital Devices and Technologies Policy;
- applicable privacy requirements;
- the platform's security and access arrangements; and
- the consent provided by families.

Educators and staff must not use personal social media, personal messaging applications or personal email accounts to communicate information about individual children or to share children's images for Preschool purposes.

Social Media and Online Sharing

The Preschool may use approved social media and online platforms to communicate with families and the broader community where this supports the Preschool's approved communication purposes. Only authorised Preschool accounts and platforms may be used to share information on behalf of Bermagui Preschool.

Before sharing an image or information online, the Preschool will consider:

- whether appropriate consent has been provided;
- whether the child is represented respectfully;
- whether the child's privacy and dignity are protected;
- whether identifying information can be minimised;
- whether the content is appropriate for public or family viewing;
- whether the content is consistent with the Preschool's values and child safe commitments; and
- whether the proposed use is necessary and appropriate.

Educators, staff, volunteers, students, contractors and other persons working at the Preschool must not share photographs, videos or identifying information about children through personal social media accounts.

Families and visitors must follow the Preschool's expectations regarding photography and recording and must not share images containing other children without appropriate consent.

Online Communication with Children and Families

Persons acting on behalf of the Preschool must not communicate with children through personal social media accounts, personal messaging applications, gaming platforms or other personal online services.

Communication with families about Preschool matters must occur through approved Preschool communication channels.

Online communication must:

- be professional and respectful;
- have a legitimate Preschool purpose;
- protect children's privacy and confidentiality;
- avoid unnecessary personal information;
- maintain professional boundaries; and
- comply with the Preschool's Code of Conduct and relevant policies.

Any inappropriate online contact, communication or conduct involving a child must be reported immediately in accordance with the Preschool's child protection and complaints procedures.

External Media and Public Communications

Requests from external media organisations, journalists, photographers or other third parties to photograph, film, interview or collect information about children, families, educators or the Preschool community must be referred to the Approved Provider or authorised representative. External media involvement will only occur with appropriate authorisation.

Any approved media activity must:

- prioritise children's safety, rights, wellbeing, privacy and dignity;
- comply with this policy;
- comply with applicable consent requirements;
- use children's images, voices and personal information respectfully;
- avoid unnecessary identifying information; and
- reflect the Preschool's commitment to child safe practice.

Children and families will not be required to participate in media activities. Participation is voluntary and appropriate informed consent must be obtained before a child's image, voice or personal information is shared externally.

Artificial Intelligence and Digitally Altered Images

The Preschool recognises that artificial intelligence (AI), image-generation and digital editing technologies create additional risks to children's privacy, identity and safety.

Children's:

- photographs;
- videos;
- voice recordings;
- personal information;
- identifying details; and
- other information that could identify a child

must not be uploaded into publicly available or unauthorised generative AI or image-processing platforms.

Children's images must not be altered, generated or manipulated in a way that:

- misrepresents the child's appearance or identity;
- creates a false representation of the child;
- misrepresents the child's learning or experiences;
- places the child at risk;
- undermines the child's dignity or privacy; or
- creates inappropriate or misleading content.

AI must not be used to create a realistic image of an identifiable child without specific authorisation and approval.

Any approved use of AI involving children's information or images must:

- have a legitimate and clearly identified purpose;
- protect children's privacy and dignity;
- comply with consent and authorisation requirements;
- comply with applicable privacy and information security requirements;
- use only an authorised platform;
- minimise the amount of personal information provided; and
- be authorised by the Approved Provider or authorised representative.

Drones and Other Image-Capturing Technologies

Privately owned or unauthorised drones are not permitted to be operated over, within or adjacent to the Preschool premises or during Preschool activities.

External drone operators must not capture photographs or video of children, educators, families, visitors or the Preschool environment without prior written approval from the Approved Provider.

Any approved drone use on behalf of the Preschool must:

- be authorised by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor;
- have an appropriate risk assessment completed;
- comply with applicable Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) requirements;
- comply with applicable privacy requirements;
- comply with this policy; and
- only occur where appropriate consent and authorisation have been obtained.

Any unauthorised drone activity observed over, within or near the Preschool premises, or during Preschool activities, must be reported immediately to the Nominated Supervisor.

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will ensure that unauthorised drone activity is reported to NSW Police and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) for assessment and appropriate follow-up. Police must be contacted where there are concerns about children's safety, suspected unlawful activity or other potential threats. Reports to CASA will be made where the drone activity may involve unsafe or non-compliant aviation practices.

All observations of unauthorised drone activity must be documented using the Preschool's hazard, near-miss or incident reporting procedures. Where no actual incident, injury or harm has occurred, the matter will be recorded as a near miss or hazard. If the activity results in an actual incident, injury, trauma, privacy breach or other adverse event, it must be escalated and recorded as an incident in accordance with the Preschool's incident reporting procedures.

Where an incident or circumstances meet the notification requirements under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, the Approved Provider will notify the NSW Regulatory Authority within the required timeframe.

The Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor will ensure that appropriate follow-up action is taken, including cooperating with any Police, CASA or regulatory investigations and implementing any necessary measures to protect the safety, privacy and wellbeing of children, educators, families and visitors.

Optical Surveillance and CCTV

Bermagui Preschool does not currently operate CCTV or other optical surveillance devices. Any future proposal to introduce CCTV or another optical surveillance device must be approved by the Approved Provider and supported by:

- a documented assessment of the need and risks;
- appropriate consultation;
- consideration of children's privacy and dignity;
- compliance with applicable legislation;
- appropriate policy and procedures;
- secure storage and access arrangements; and
- appropriate notification and authorisation.

No optical surveillance device may be introduced without prior approval and compliance with applicable regulatory requirements.

Children and Digital Devices

The Preschool will support children to engage with digital technologies in ways that are appropriate to their age, development, learning needs and wellbeing.

Where children use digital devices, educators will:

- provide appropriate supervision;
- select developmentally appropriate content and applications;
- protect children's privacy and personal information;
- support safe and respectful digital behaviour;
- limit access to inappropriate content;
- use digital technologies to support, rather than replace, meaningful interactions and play; and
- follow the Preschool's Safe and Responsible Use of Digital Devices and Technologies Policy.

Children will not be required to use digital devices as a condition of participating in the educational program.

Child Safety and Reporting Concerns

Any concern relating to inappropriate photography, recording, use of a personal device, sharing of images, online communication or other digital conduct involving a child must be reported immediately to the Nominated Supervisor or another appropriate person in accordance with the Preschool's child protection procedures.

This includes concerns involving:

- educators or staff;
- volunteers;
- students;
- contractors;
- families;
- visitors; or
- other adults.

The Preschool will respond to concerns in accordance with relevant legislation, child protection requirements, complaints procedures and the Preschool's Code of Conduct. The Preschool will not investigate concerns beyond its role where the matter should be referred to a relevant authority.

Responsibilities

Approved Provider

The Approved Provider is responsible for:

- ensuring this policy is implemented and reviewed;
- ensuring the Preschool has procedures for the safe use of digital technologies and online environments;
- ensuring appropriate consent and authorisation processes are maintained;
- ensuring applicable personal-device requirements are implemented;
- ensuring risks associated with photography, digital media and online environments are identified and managed;
- ensuring appropriate systems are in place for the secure storage and management of digital information;
- authorising the use of service-supplied or service-authorised devices;
- responding appropriately to concerns and breaches; and
- ensuring the service complies with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements.

Nominated Supervisor

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- implementing this policy;
- ensuring educators and staff understand their responsibilities;
- monitoring compliance;
- ensuring appropriate authorisations are obtained;
- ensuring concerns and breaches are reported and managed;
- ensuring students, volunteers and visitors understand the requirements relevant to their role; and
- referring serious concerns to the Approved Provider and/or relevant authorities as required.

Educators and Staff

Educators and staff are responsible for:

- following this policy and related procedures;
- protecting children's privacy, dignity and safety;
- using only authorised devices and platforms;
- obtaining appropriate approval before taking or sharing images;
- respecting children's preferences regarding photography;
- maintaining appropriate professional boundaries online and offline;
- securely managing images and digital information; and
- reporting concerns, breaches or inappropriate use of images or technology.

Students and Volunteers

Students and volunteers must:

- follow this policy and the Preschool's Code of Conduct;
- comply with personal-device requirements;
- never photograph or record children using a personal device;
- maintain confidentiality;
- maintain professional boundaries;
- not share information or images about children online;
- use only authorised devices and systems; and
- immediately report any concern or breach to an educator or the Nominated Supervisor.

Families and Visitors

Families and visitors are expected to:

- respect the privacy and dignity of all children;
- follow Preschool requirements regarding photography and recording;
- comply with directions from Preschool staff;
- avoid photographing or recording children other than their own child where this has not been authorised;
- not share images containing other children without appropriate consent; and
- not post or share confidential information about children, families or the Preschool.

Breaches of this Policy

Any suspected or confirmed breach of this policy will be taken seriously.

The Preschool may:

- immediately require the person to stop the activity;
- require deletion or removal of unauthorised images where appropriate;
- restrict or withdraw access to Preschool devices or systems;
- notify the Approved Provider;
- follow the Preschool's complaints, incident and child protection procedures;
- notify the Regulatory Authority or another relevant authority where required; and
- take appropriate employment, placement, volunteer or visitor action.

Where a breach involves possible harm to a child, the Preschool will prioritise the child's safety and follow applicable child protection and reporting requirements.

Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Paramountcy in Child Safe Practice Policy
- Safe and Responsible Use of Digital Devices and Technologies Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Record Keeping Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Interactions with Children Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Complaints, Feedback and Grievances Policy
- Students, Volunteers, Visitors and Work Experience Agreement
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Emergency Procedures Policy

National Quality Standard

This policy supports the following areas of the National Quality Standard:

- Quality Area 2 – Children's Health and Safety: Children are protected from risks associated with photography, digital technologies and online environments, with particular reference to Element 2.2.3 – Child Safety and Protection.
- Quality Area 5 – Relationships with Children: Children's privacy, dignity, rights and preferences are respected, particularly Element 5.1.2 – Dignity and rights of the child.
- Quality Area 6 – Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities: Families are informed and involved in decisions regarding the use of their children's images and information, particularly Element 6.1.2 – Parent views are respected.
- Quality Area 7 – Governance and Leadership: Effective policies, procedures and risk management systems support a child safe service, particularly Element 7.1.2 – Management systems.

Relevant Legislation and Regulatory Requirements

This policy is informed by and should be implemented consistently with the following legislation and regulatory requirements, as applicable:

Education and Care Services National Law (NSW)

- Section 162A – Child protection training
- Section 166 – Offence to use inappropriate discipline
- Section 167 – Protection from harm and hazards
- Part 6A – Devices in education and care services, including requirements relating to personal devices, service-supplied devices and service-authorised devices.

Education and Care Services National Regulations

- Regulation 73 – Educational program
- Regulation 74 – Record of child assessments
- Regulation 75 – Information about the educational program to be kept available
- Regulation 76 – Information about educational program to be given to parents
- Regulation 84 – Awareness of child protection law
- Regulation 155 – Interactions with children
- Regulation 156 – Relationships in groups
- Regulation 168 – Education and care service must have policies and procedures
- Regulation 168(2)(h) – Providing a child safe environment
- Regulation 168(2)(ha) – Safe use of digital technologies and online environments, including the taking, use, storage and destruction of images and videos, parental authorisation, optical surveillance devices, service-issued digital devices and children's use of digital devices.
- Regulation 181 – Confidentiality of records
- Other applicable record-keeping and privacy provisions of the National Regulations.

Other relevant legislation and frameworks

- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) and Australian Privacy Principles, where applicable
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW), where applicable
- Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)
- Civil Aviation Safety Act 1988 (Cth) and applicable Civil Aviation Safety Regulations and CASA requirements for drone operations
- Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)
- NSW Child Safe Standards
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) V2.0

Resources and References

- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) – National Quality Framework
- ACECQA – Guide to the National Quality Framework
- ACECQA – National Quality Standard
- ACECQA – NQF Child Safety resources
- ACECQA – NQF Online Safety Guide
- ACECQA – National Model Code: Taking images in early childhood education and care
- NSW Department of Education – Early Childhood Education and Care child safety resources
- NSW Department of Education – Personal device requirements for education and care services
- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) – Australian Privacy Principles
- eSafety Commissioner – Online safety resources
- Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) – Drone safety requirements
- Early Childhood Australia – Code of Ethics

Version History

V1.0 – First Published: Pre-2019

V2.0 – Reviewed: August 2026

Comprehensive review and update to reflect current child safety, photography and digital technology requirements, including personal device restrictions, consent, social media, online safety, AI, drones and secure management of children's images and information. References, legislation, NQS links and related policies updated.

V3.0 – Reviewed: November 2026

Information regarding protocols for drones updated.