BOOSH
Beecroft Out Of School Hours

Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments

Policy Statement

The BOOSH Centre is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and play-based environment where children's wellbeing is protected at all times, including in their use of digital technologies and online environments. Our intent is to ensure that technology use within the service is purposeful, supervised, and consistent with our educational philosophy, which prioritises face-to-face interactions and physical play experiences.

The service will uphold high standards of safety, privacy, and professionalism in managing technology. This includes regulating access to devices, ensuring secure storage of digital media, preventing inappropriate or unsafe use, and establishing clear expectations for staff, families, and visitors.

The safety and welfare of all children is of paramount importance. In all operations, decision-making, and service delivery, the safety, rights, and best interests of the children are the paramount consideration. In the event of any conflict of interest between the service, the Approved Provider, and the rights of a child, the rights and best interests of the child must always prevail.

Background

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place for the safe use of digital technologies and online environments at the service.

Legislative Requirements

This policy is consistent with the legislative requirements detailed in, but not limited to, the following *Education and Care Services National Law* and *Regulations* and the *Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Amendment Act 2025 (NSW)*:

Section/Regulation	**Description**
Section 3A	Paramountcy Principle
Section 5AA	Inappropriate Conduct
Section 162A	Child protection training
Section 165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
Section 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Regulation 84	Awareness of child protection law

Regulation 115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
Regulation 122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
Regulation 123	Educator to child ratios – centre-based services
Regulation 165	Record of visitors
Regulation 166	Children not to be alone with visitors
Regulation 168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
Regulation 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
Regulation 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
Regulation 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
Regulation 175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
Regulation 176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

National Quality Standard - Elements used to inform our policy

4.2.2 - Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.

5.1.2 – The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

7.1.2 - Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service.

Links to other policies

- Child Protection
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Governance and management
- Providing a Child Safe Environment
- Staffing

Procedures

Educational Program

- The BOOSH Centre acknowledges that digital technologies can play a role in an effective educational program but believe it is the role of the service to

predominantly facilitate a program based on play that contains minimal access to digital technologies and online environments.

- Access to digital technologies may be provided where appropriate, such as:
    - As part of specifically programmed activities
    - To facilitate understanding or knowledge gathering
    - To assist completion of homework
    - Where deemed appropriate by the Nominated Supervisor or Educational Leader

Digital Technology Use and Personal Devices

Children

- Children may access digital technologies (iPads) owned by the service as part of programmed or staff-supervised and children-led activities.
- Devices are stored securely when not in use and require staff permission for access.
- All use of devices by children is under direct staff supervision**.**
- Personal devices (including but not limited to; phones, tablets, smart watches) are not permitted to be used by children during care hours. Smart watches may be worn by children but are not permitted to be connected to the internet or mobile network.
- Follow all staff instructions and centre procedures for using devices whilst at the centre.
- Handle all centre devices carefully and appropriately.

Staff

- Personal devices that are capable of photography (including but not limited to; phones, tablets, smart watches) are not permitted to be used by Staff during care hours, except as outlined below. Smart watches that are not capable of taking, storing, or sharing photography may be worn by staff but are not permitted to be connected to the internet or mobile network.
- Personal devices (including smartphones, tablets, and smartwatches with camera/recording capabilities) must be switched off or silenced and stored in the designated office cupboard for the duration of the staff member's shift. Under no circumstances are personal devices to be carried or used while working directly with children or included in ratios.
- Emergency Communication: To ensure staff remain contactable for urgent family or personal matters, calls may be routed through the BOOSH landline or the Director's service mobile. The Director will ensure any urgent messages are conveyed to the staff member immediately, or arrange for the staff member to be stepped out of ratio to return the call in the office.
- Staff are required to use service-issued mobile phones or iPads as the primary communication and documentation tools during all excursions and regular outings.
- Excursion Split-Group Protocol: In the event that an excursion group must split into smaller cohorts and the number of service-issued devices is insufficient to provide one per group:

    - A staff member may be authorized to carry a personal device strictly for emergency communication between groups. * Use of the device for any other purpose (including photography, social media, or personal calls) remains strictly prohibited.
    - Mandatory Authorization: Any use of a personal device under this protocol requires formal approval in writing from the Nominated Supervisor prior to the excursion. This authorization must be documented in the Personal Device Register.
- Any person engaged by the service and involved with the provision of education and care to the children is also required to follow these procedures and will be informed before engaging with the service. This includes but is not limited to; volunteers, external providers of incursion activities, support workers and therapists.

Personal device register

- A personal device register will be maintained for all devices authorised by the Nominated Supervisor for possession or control of staff for the purposes of:
    - providing support or assistance with the relevant person's disability or health needs; or
    - safety or the provision of education and care to the children if a Service-Supplied Device ceases working; or
    - use in an emergency; or
    - work health and safety.
- This register must contain:
    - The service's name and address
    - The staff's full name, address, and date of birth
    - Reason for authorisation
    - Period of time of authorisation
- The personal device register will now include a specific category for 'Excursion Split-Group Emergency Communication'. For each instance, the register must record:
    - The specific date and destination of the excursion.
    - The name of the staff member granted temporary authorization. * The written signature of the Nominated Supervisor (Mel) or BOOSH Convenor authorizing the use for that specific event.

Service-Supplied Devices

- The service will supply a range of devices to be used by staff for the purpose of providing education and care to the children and the operation of the service.
- All devices capable of capturing, storing, or transferring images will have these features password protected in a way that prevents the unauthorised sharing of media.
- A register will be maintained for these devices which contains the following information for each individual device:
    - Date of supply
    - Type, make/model, and serial number
    - Name and signature of person authorising

- Acknowledgement that it has been configured to operate in line with the 'Safe use of digital technologies and online environments' policy and procedures.
- If relevant, the name and signature of staff revoking the device and date that this occurred.

Supervision and Content Controls

- Staff position themselves so that screens are visible and can be checked regularly
- Children are directed to use devices in a single location or within an area that is easily supervised by staff.
- Staff engage with children during use, asking questions and offering guidance.
- Usage is time-limited and rotated to ensure equitable access.
- All devices to be used by children will have content restrictions, allowing only specific websites and applications to be accessed that have been pre-approved by the Nominated Supervisor. This will ensure that all content is:
  - Age-appropriate
  - Inclusive and culturally respectful content
  - Educational or recreational value
  - Free of violence, discrimination, gambling, or advertising
- Children may not access; search engines unsupervised or unfiltered content.

Photography and Media Storage

- Only service-supplied iPads and mobile phones are used to capture photographs or videos of children.
- Staff only take photographs with prior parental/guardian consent provided through the enrolment process.
- All media is stored securely on:
  - iCloud with two-factor authentication
  - Service-supplied devices and external hard drives
- Access to stored images is restricted to authorised staff.
- Media files (photos/videos) are reviewed regularly this will occur:
  - Weekly – where photos and other media are reviewed and used for purposes of documenting the education and care of the children, programming reflection and documentation, and sharing appropriate media with families through newsletters or other means. Photos and media taken that week and not needed for these purposes will be deleted from all devices.
  - Each term – all media containing images of children is reviewed again and any that is not deemed necessary to the ongoing documentation requirements of the service will be deleted from all devices.

Surveillance Devices

- The service does not use or contain CCTV or other optical surveillance devices.

Staff Training and Responsibilities

Staff must:

- Supervise children's digital use directly at all times.
- Ensure content aligns with program goals and is appropriate.
- Follow all protocols for photography, media storage and content filtering.
- Report any breaches, unsafe incidents or digital concerns to the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person.

Training Practices:

- All staff are informed of these procedures as part of their training period and this training is reviewed before completion of the training period.
- Safe and appropriate technology use is reviewed during monthly staff meetings.
- Refresher training is provided in response to new technologies or policy updates.

Monitoring Data Transfers

To ensure all digital content remains secure and appropriate:

- Devices will be routinely checked for unauthorised downloads, app use, or image transfers.
- iPads will be restricted to prevent AirDrop, external messaging, and unapproved app installations.
- Photos or files may only be transferred to approved storage locations (iCloud, hard drives, and service computers) by authorised staff.
- Staff are not permitted to use personal email, social media, or messaging apps to transfer or share images or documents.

Family Engagement

- Families are informed of digital technology use during enrolment and have access to the relevant policy and procedures documents.
- Written consent is obtained for use of photos/videos within the centre during the enrolment process and this may be updated by families at any time.
- Written consent is obtained for electronic sharing of photos/videos during the enrolment process and this may be updated by families at any time.
- A child has the right to decide if they do not wish any photos or any individual photo to be used, even if permission is granted from families.
- Families are not permitted to access any centre devices whilst at the service except for the iPad assigned to sign in/sign-out which is to be directly supervised by an assigned staff throughout sessions.
- Families and visitors are not permitted to take photos of the service or at any time whilst in the service, this is outlined in the Code of Conduct (Parents, Guardians, Visitors, and Volunteers) procedures.
- Families and visitors are also not permitted to video record or use video calling such as face time whilst in the service.

- Staff are required to identify people who are in breach of this rule and ensure they delete any photo taken and report to the Nominated Supervisor any inappropriate or suspicious behaviour.

Social Media

- Unless by prior approval from the Nominated Supervisor, no private or identifying information about what happens at the service should be posted on a social networking website, nor should any photos taken at the service or on an excursion be put on a social networking website.
- If an employee puts photos of a child or children enrolled at the service on a social networking website:
    - Families will immediately be contacted.
    - If possible, the social networking website will be contacted to delete the photos.
    - The employee will face an inquiry into their actions and will receive retraining in centre policies and procedures.
    - The employee faces possible termination of employment if the breach is deemed to be severe.
- Should an employee engage in harassment towards other employees, centre families/children via a social networking site or post derogatory remarks about The BOOSH Centre on a social networking site the employee 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 connected to the service harass an employee via a social networking site or post derogatory remarks about The BOOSH Centre on a social networking site, management will conduct an inquiry into their actions and depending on the severity of the situation the family will face possible termination of their child's place at our service. If a family has a grievance with the centre they should follow the *Management of Complaints* Policy and Procedures.
- Only the Nominated Supervisor, employees acting under direct instruction from the Nominated Supervisor or The BOOSH Centre Convenor are authorised to make entries on social networks or media comments on behalf of The BOOSH Centre.

Facebook groups

- Closed Facebook groups for current employees exist and are used to disseminate information to employees regarding rosters, swapping shifts, programming and any other day to day information pertinent to their jobs.
- No photos of children or identifying information regarding children are to be posted on this page.
- Only the Nominated Supervisor, Assistant Director or Educational Leader can invite employees to join these closed group pages.
- When an employee resigns, the Nominated Supervisor removes this employee from the pages once their exit interview has been completed.

Date Endorsed 25 April 2026

Signed by 

Khuong Lac – Beecroft PS P&C President

Signed by 

Danielle Moncrieff – BOOSH Convenor/P&C Vice President

Next Review: April 2027 (or as required by legislation)