

Digital Device and Social Media Use Policy:

POLICY STATEMENT:

Grays Point Activity Centre (GPAC) is committed to ensure that children, Educators, and families are able to use social media and digital devices in a cyber safe environment whilst at the Centre. Social media and associated technology are used to enhance our Service and provide opportunities to the children to assist in their learning, development, play, projects and entertainment.

Our aim is to encourage all children to use and access information and communication technologies to express ideas, access images and information, and explore diverse perspectives, engaging these tools for designing, drawing, editing, and composing (“My Time, Our Place” Outcome 5). We believe that any use of social media must not place at risk the safety, health or wellbeing of children, Educators, families or visitors at the Service and we are not compromised on any form of social networking platform, related website, video, sound, or image recording (“My Time, Our Place” Outcome 1).

This Policy relates to accessing and using social networking platforms, applications use and all digital devices including, but not limited to, gaming consoles, iPads, desktop computers, laptops, mobile devices, and smart watches.

PROCEDURES:

Unacceptable use of social media and devices:

Unacceptable social media behaviour refers to anything on social media that:

- Has the potential to bring the Service or the school age care sector into disrepute.
- Discloses or discusses the Service’s confidential information and or use Personal Information.
- Could be viewed as derogatory towards, or disparaging of Staff, families, management, visitors, children or support agencies.

⇒ **Digital Devices:**

Children:

- Children in Years 5 or 6 during Term or any child in Vacation Care, holidays or Pupil Free Day are obligated to sign a contract that informs them of their responsibilities when managing devices at the Service. These children wishing to use their iPad, phone, tablet or portable device whilst in care at GPAC must read and sign the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Agreement in the company of a parent or caregiver.
- Children will not be permitted to use their own devices in the Service unless permission has been gained from staff prior and it is for a specific purpose.
- Devices are not to be used to take any video, pictures, or sound recordings.
- Children will not be able to connect their device to a power supply whilst at the Service.

- Children are responsible to take care of their devices and all devices must be clearly labelled for their identification.
- Children are not to share their device or password with other children.
- Devices are to be secured when not in use.
- Devices are to be taken home at the end of the day and not left on the Services premises.
- Children are not to use messenger Services or make phone calls without prior consent of an Educator.
- Children must leave mobile phones or phone capable smart watches, either in school bags or in the office always unless specific permission to use the mobile phone has been granted by the Educators. GPAC takes no responsibility for lost, broken or missing items.

Families:

- Caregivers will need to read and sign the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Agreement if their child is in year 5 or 6 and/or attends Vacation Care or Pupil Free Day and they wish to use their device.
- Caregivers will talk to their children about the use of their digital devices and explain the consequences of misuse.
- Caregivers are responsible for insuring their child's device for loss, theft or damage. The Service accepts no responsibility for the loss, damage or theft of any device brought into the Service.
- Caregivers are responsible for ensuring all content on their child/rens devices are appropriate and compliant with regulations and copyright law
- If you need to contact your child, please contact the Service directly and not the child's device.
- May not use a personal camera, smart device or mobile phone to take photographs at the Service or during excursions. If they require a device they may ask permission to use the Centre's.

Staff:

- Personal devices are not to be used during face to face hours for social interactions and use is limited to actions approved by the Responsible Person.
- Not use a personal camera or mobile phone to take photographs or video at the Service or during excursions.
- Staff are not to use their digital devices to take photos/pictures while at the Service unless approval has been granted by a Responsible Person. Devices are to be left in Educators lockers upon commencement of their shift.
- Staff reserves the right to delete inappropriate content from children's devices including, but not limited to, images, text and links and staff will notify caregivers if this action is taken.
- The Centre Manager or Office Administrator is responsible for updating the Service's website, however, must not post names or recognisable photographs of staff, children, visitors or family members on the website without written permission.
- Consider the content and message of movies, television programs, electronic games and other devices and discuss these with children when deciding what is acceptable for them to engage with. Ensure that pirated DVDs or electronic games must not be used, as this is an illegal activity. Ensure that only G and PG ratings are used in the Service or on excursions.
- Not be responsible for children's lost games or other equipment.

- Educators will ensure children in Years 5 or 6 during Term or any child in Vacation Care, holidays or Pupil Free Day wishing to use their iPad, phone, tablet or portable device whilst in care at GPAC have read and signed the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Agreement in the company of a parent or caregiver, before granting a child access to their device.
- Use of devices by students on placement or volunteers requires prior Service approval. The Services device will be used to take photos and approved images will be sent via email to the student or volunteer. 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 and need to be deleted from email and devices after their intended use.

⇒ **Social Media:**

Definition:

Social media: Interactive platforms and applications through which individuals and communities create and share user-generated content using accessible publishing technologies. Social media is distinct from traditional media, such as newspapers, television, and film.

Social media may include (although is not limited to):

- Social Networking Sites (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, Instagram, LinkedIn, Bebo, Yammer)
- Video and Photo Sharing Websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube, Snap Chat, Tiktok)
- Blogs, including Corporate Blogs and Personal Blogs
- Blogs hosted by Media Outlets
- Micro-Blogging (e.g. Twitter)
- Wikis and Online Collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia)
- Forums, Discussion Boards and Groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool)
- Vod and Podcasting
- Online Multiplayer Gaming Platforms (e.g. World of War Craft, Second Life, Roblox, Minecraft, Among Us etc)
- Instant Messaging (including SMS)
- Geo-Spatial Tagging (Foursquare)

Children:

- 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'.
- Children will not use any social media, video/photo upload app or anything connected to the internet without staff consent.
- Must not use social media to harass or bully others.

Families:

- Families will be requested to sign permission regarding to the use of their child's image (still or motion) by the Service. If a parent has not signed an agreement the Service will act as if they do not wish images of their child to be used by the Service.
- Current families can join the closed Facebook 'GraysPoint ActivityCentre' page.
- Families provide written permission upon enrolment allowing the Service to publish photographs and videos showcasing the children and the week's events and activities on the Services closed Facebook page.
- When participating on the Service's social media platforms, caregivers will not post spam, advertising, or commercial content (without prior consent from the Service management). Ensure that any content posted meets relevant copyright guidelines.
- Do not post anything that is abusive, profane, or defamatory toward a person, entity, belief or symbol.
- The Service reserves the right to delete any content that does not comply with Service Policy.
- The Service can block you off their site or Social media or turn off or delete comments.
- Our social media platforms are not for grievances and complaints. Please use the Services grievance procedure to lodge any complaints you may have.

Staff:

- Only an authorised staff member or member of management can add or amend information on the Service's social media sites 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.
- Staff members will only post photographs or videos taken at the Service or on an excursion of the child/ren in the closed Facebook 'GraysPoint ActivityCentre' page that is accessible to current families and staff at GPAC. Written permission is granted upon enrolment and is the only platform staff are able to publish these photographs and videos showcasing the weeks events and activities of the child/ren at GPAC.
- Staff members can engage in the closed group 'GPAC Educator' Facebook page that is accessible only to staff members currently working at GPAC. Information that can be shared on this platform is only in relation to events, birthdays, staff events, professional development and or reminders. Staff members will not post names or discuss information regarding families and/or children on the Facebook page. This page is purely to stay connected outside of work hours and to be used in a professional manner.
- Unless by prior approval from management/Nominated Supervisor, no 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 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.
- We respect the right of staff to participate in public and political debate in their private lives. In doing so, staff must behave in a way that does not call into question their capacity to act apolitically and impartially in their work.

- Our social media platforms are not for grievances and complaints. Please use the Services grievance procedure to lodge any complaints you may have.
- Staff should only interact with children and families on social media via the Service's social media account, never from personal accounts.
- Staff who can access their personal social networking site via their mobile phones are not to do so during their shifts at the Service. Not post photographs or videos taken at the Service or on an excursion on a social networking site.
- Not post information about the Service, staff, management, families, visitors, or any matters relating to the Service on a social networking site.

⇒ **Breaches of Policy:**

Children:

- If children are found to be misusing their devices as per the Policy, the device may be taken away by an Educator for the remainder of the session/day and returned to the authorised nominee on collection of the child.
- If continued misuse occurs or a case of extremely inappropriate content being accessed, then Behaviour Guidance Policy and Code of Conduct Expectation Charter will be adhered to, and suspension or termination of care could be considered depending on the severity and at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor.

Families:

- 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 and entire families place at the Service.

Staff:

- 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.
- 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.
- Serious breaches may also result in legal action being taken by the Service.

CONSIDERATIONS:



Education and Care Services National Regulations	National Quality Standard	Other Service Policies/documentation	Other
12, 73, 76, 84, 86, 87, 115, 122, 123, 149, 155, 156, 162A, 165, 167, 168, 170, 171, 172, 175, 176, 181, 183, 184	1.1, 1.1.2, 2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.3, 4.2.1, 4.1.1, 5.1, 5.1.2, 6.2, 6.2.3, 7.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour Guidance • Child Protection Policy • Providing a Child Safe Environment • Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy • Enrolment and Orientation Policy • Confidentiality • Governance and Management • Staffing Policies • Management of Complaints Grievance Handling Policy • Code of Conduct Expectation Charter • Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Time, Our Place. • BYOD Device Student Agreement • https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/our-reports-and-reviews/mobile-devices-in-schools • Australian Government eSafety Commissioner • Centre of Education Statistics and Evaluation (2018) <i>Impact of mobile digital devices in schools</i> • eSafety Commissioner • NSW Department of Education <i>Review into the non-education use of mobile devices in NSW. (2018).</i>

ENDORSEMENT BY THE SERVICE:

Approval date: _____ 27 August 2025 _____
Date for review: _____ March 2027 _____

Revised November 2020 KK and KG Revised February 2021 Jas H-D and KG Revised April 2024, August 2025 KG reviewed to align following the public consultation process for the national Child Safety Review, the Decision Regulation Impact Statement (DRIS) was released on 22 August 2025