

Digital Technology and Communication Policy

Date: March 2001, Revised 1/11/05, Revised 5/07/07, Revised, 7/02/2011, Revised 18/01/16, Revised 25/6/20

Approved by Management Committee _____ **Date** _____

Aim

To extend children's learning and communication experiences, maximising opportunities for learning through the use of digital technology.

To define guidelines for all educators, families and children on the use of media and digital technologies. Digital technology is used to showcase their creations and communicate with peers, the UPCCC community, parents and the wider community.

Background

It is recognised that the digital context that children grow up in continues to evolve and even very young children are exposed to and use digital technologies in their everyday life.

The Department of Health's National Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines states;

- Infants (Birth to one year) should not spend any time watching television or using other electronic media.
- Toddlers younger than 2 years, screen time should be no more than 1 hour in total throughout the 24-hour period- less is better.
- Pre-schoolers (aged 3-5 years), screen time should be no more than 1 hour in total throughout the 24-hour period -less is better.

Media is used to present a wider view of topics than staff are able to convey, including experiences and perspectives from different cultural, linguistic, social and family backgrounds.

UPCCC Centre documentation is provided in paper form through Individual Educational Records and Program documents. UPCCC Google Classrooms has been created in 2020 in response to social distancing restrictions in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. UPCCC families and staff communicate face to face and via email. UPCCC has a Facebook page where photos and documentation are provided for families in relation to children's learning and Centre news.

Policy Statement

Digital technologies such as the interactive whiteboard, videos and computers are used to improve and enhance learning and teaching, and conduct the business and function of UPCCC.

Educators will ensure engagement with digital technologies reflects the values of the Centre and will be used respectfully and responsibly. Materials displaying violence, guns, violent language or sexual references are prohibited to be shown in the Centre.

Educators will exercise good judgement when using e-mail and digital technologies, following the principles of ethical behaviour.

Educators will consider their professional reputation and that of UPCCC before posting any offensive, indiscrete or inappropriate material on any social media outlet.

Related Documents

Privacy Policy

Supervision Policy

Curriculum Planning and Review Policy

Implementation

- Educators will provide learning opportunities for children to be creators of media rather than consumers of media. Some forms of media are passive, to be viewed with little to no interaction. Educators will provide interactive, creative and communication tools that are open ended and support children's creativity
- Children will not have independent access to the internet. Educators will ensure that devices are only used under the direct supervision for a specified purpose and timeframe and within the context of the daily program
- Educators will ensure that sedentary screen-based digital technology use is only for short periods in line with government/health guidelines and does not replace periods of active movement. Educators will take into consideration children's use of digital technology in the home environment and plan accordingly to ensure screen time guidelines are adhered to
- All activities and resources offered as part of the program, individual children will be able to choose whether or not they want to be involved. Children who chose to engage in viewing media or the use of the interactive whiteboard will be restricted to 15 minutes screen time per day.
- Applications such as Google and YouTube are resources used to enhance programs as they can bring the world into the classroom and support children's understanding of concepts
- All online programs, DVDs and forms of digital technology will be assessed by educators for age appropriateness
- Parents will be informed of what online tools, publications and social media outlets are used. This includes the purpose and benefits of the tool, if and how personal information is stored and who is able to access it
- Educators must ensure they comply with individual children's permission in regards to photos and videos being used on internet sites, such as Google Classrooms and UPCCC Facebook page
- Educators will seek children's perspectives regarding the role of digital technologies in their own lives, play and learning
- Educators will conduct research on materials in advance, to ensure that there is no risk posed to children being exposed to inappropriate material and that only quality material is chosen
- Educators will report any situation that they become aware of that represents an inappropriate use of electronic communication and social networking sites
- Educators will critically reflect on their use of technology regularly to ensure that its use leads to quality learning and outcomes for children.

Electronic Media

Audio tapes, CDs, DVDs and applications such as Google and YouTube videos are used in rooms to enhance learning.

This may include:

- Music, singing, drama, dance
- To support listening skills
- For appreciation and enjoyment
- As background for quiet activities

NB: Where families provide electronic media from home, they should ensure content is appropriate and discuss this with staff

Digital Technology

At times, online videos, programs and DVDs will be displayed on the interactive whiteboard and laptops to enhance the learning program and to support the children's interests. Children will always have alternate activities available to choose from when an online program is offered.

Where the program is being viewed for its educational content or as part of the program focus the children will be involved in lead-up and follow up activities.

In the Preschool and Toddler sections, computers are used by staff and children for educational purposes in order to enhance the program.

- Educators will ensure that quality material is used to enhance learning, development and wellbeing
- Educators may use internet resources such as Search facilities and YouTube when researching information with the children to support topics of interest however, all content will be previewed before use with the children
- Children will not have independent access to the Internet. Educators will ensure that devices are only used under direct supervision for a specified purpose, timeframe and within the context of the daily program

Staff

- Mobile phones should not be used for personal reasons while working directly with children, unless previously arranged with the Director for the day
- Staff will ensure when using personal wearable technologies (watches, fitness tracking devices) and electronic devices, such as iPads, phones, laptops, memory sticks, etc., that there is no risk posed to children being exposed to inappropriate material
- Educators will report any issues they notice or parent concerns relating to social media immediately to the Director
- Educators will provide the Director with materials which would be useful for the UPCCC website, Facebook page and Google Classrooms

Documentation/Communication

- The centre will ensure that employees have relevant skills to access technology, keep records of children's progress and to produce documentation
- The centre will assist existing educators to access in-service training where they need to improve computer literacy as identified during the appraisal process
- The centre will undertake to tailor communication to suit individual families' needs which may include direct contact, phone contact, or emails as an alternate to hard copies depending upon needs
- Educators will ensure to back up documentation to guard against loss of information
- Educators will guard the privacy of children and families at all times. Any data, such as observations, summaries, room programs taken home to work must remain confidential. Where possible no photos of children will be taken home. Personal information such as contact phone numbers, full names and date of births are not be removed from the Centre.
- The Educational Leader will ensure that prior to documentation being sent to parents, all documentation will be proof-read to maintain a professional standard with respect to spelling, grammar etc.

References

Australian Government, Depart of Health (2019) Retrieved from <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pubhlth-strateg-phys-act-guidelines#npa05> accessed on 9/06/2020

Australian Government. E-Safety Commissioner. E-Safety Early Years Professional Learning. Retrieved from <https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/training-for-professionals/early-years> accessed on 9/06/2020

Website Australian Communications and media Authority, Use of electronic Media and communications, early Childhood to Teenage Years, PDF, (2010) Retrieved from: <https://www.aracy.org.au/publications->

[resources/command/download_file/id/169/filename/Young_Children_and_the_Media.pdf](#) accessed on 25/06/2020

Early Childhood Australia (ECA). Digital business kit: Educative Role of Digital Technologies. Retrieved from: <https://vimeo.com/98902463> accessed on 9/06/2020

Early Childhood Australia, Everyday learning Series. (2015). Technology: Our Tool not our master.

Early Childhood Australia, Statement on young children and digital technologies. (2018) Retrieved from: <http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Digital-policy-statement.pdf> accessed on 9/06/2020

Policy Review Date: May 2023