



### PURPOSE

This policy will provide a clear set of guidelines and procedures to ensure:

- the safe and appropriate use of social media within Highvale Preschool
- the safe and appropriate use of photographs, and videos within Highvale Preschool

### VALUES

Highvale Preschool has a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that all children are safe whilst in their care. The use of social media and photographs is used widely within the community and Highvale Preschool recognises that, at times, these may be a detrimental to the safety of children and their families. Therefore, Highvale Preschool is committed to:

- maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of children attending Highvale Preschool, and the families of children who attend.
- ensuring the online safety of children and families of children who attend Highvale Preschool

### SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Centre Supervisors, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Highvale Preschool, including during offsite excursions, after hours activities

### BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

#### BACKGROUND

Highvale Preschool's website is maintained to inform families about the services provided by the preschool. Highvale Preschool respects the privacy of staff, children and families.

Highvale Preschool develops guidelines with staff in regard to social media participation connected with their work as early childhood educators.

Social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+, YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram and blogging represent a growing form of communication, and can play an important role in maintaining relationships with families, educators and the local community in today's climate.

However, it is also an area in which rules and boundaries are constantly being tested and we must be mindful of the effects of the use of social media on children and families within our preschool community, particularly in relation to privacy and confidentiality.

#### LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- *Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)*
- *Working with Children Regulations 2006 (Vic)*
- *Child Safe Standards 2016*
- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*

#### SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES



### Sources

- Department of Health and Human Services website <<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards>>
- Working with Children (WWC) Check: [www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren)
- Office of the Australian Information Commissioner -- [www.privacy.gov.au](http://www.privacy.gov.au)
- Early Childhood Australia - [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au)

### Related Policies

- Code of Conduct Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Information and Technology Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy

### PROCEDURES

#### THE APPROVED PROVIDER AND PERSONS WITH MANAGEMENT OR CONTROL ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Developing and reviewing this policy.
- Authorising any changes to this policy.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented.
- Monitoring complaints and incidents regarding this policy.

#### THE NOMINATED SUPERVISOR AND PERSONS IN DAY-TO-DAY CHARGE AND ALL EDUCATORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- must ensure that, where photos are taken with intention of use the website, that families of the children have consented to photos being taken of their child. (Permission will be regarded as given as per the permission form parents sign at the commencement of the year)
- Maintain an appropriate level of professionalism on private social networking pages
- Be aware that prospective users of the service may access your personal/private social networking pages, so inappropriate comments, language and/or information posted by you may have a negative impact on Highvale Preschool
- If any stakeholder of Highvale Preschool becomes aware of social networking activity that may be deemed to be distasteful or lacking good judgement, the Committee of Management should be notified
- Ensuring that any photographs taken by media outlets (Local newspapers) only includes children who have parental consent to be included in such photographs

#### ALL PARENTS/GUARDIANS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

- Parents are reminded that some families feel very strongly about their child appearing on any form of social media or even in others personal photographs. We ask that you respect others privacy and exclude other children from photographs please.
- Photographs or videos taken of any child (other than their own) whilst on the preschool premises must not be uploaded to any social media. (Including, but not limited to, Facebook, YouTube and Instagram). This includes special events inside and outside preschool hours
- Photographs or videos taken of any staff member whilst on the preschool premises must not be uploaded to any social media without permission. This also includes special events inside and outside preschool hours

# SOCIAL MEDIA AND PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY

## BEST PRACTICE – QUALITY AREA 7



- Parents/Carers/Family members are only to photograph or video their own child/children. No other child may be photographed or videoed without the permission of the child's/children's parent or legal guardian

### **VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS, WHILE AT THE SERVICE, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FOLLOWING THIS POLICY AND ITS PROCEDURE**

### **BREACH OF POLICY**

All reports of cyber bullying and other misuse of technology will be investigated fully and may result in a notification to Police or appropriate governing bodies where the preschool is obliged to do so. Users must be aware that in certain circumstances where a crime has been committed, they may be subject to a criminal investigation by Police over which the preschool has no control. Any concerns or suspicions over the breach of this policy should be brought to the immediate attention of the committee of management via email, telephone or conversation in person. It will be dealt with at the discretion of the Committee of Management.

### **EVALUATION:**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness,
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures (Regulation 172(2)).

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1: Guidelines for Employees

Attachment 2: Guidelines for Families

Attachment 3: Procedure for failure to adhere to policy

### **AUTHORISATION:**

Adopted by Highvale Preschool Association Inc on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

**REVIEW DATE:** September 2026



### ATTACHMENT 1.

#### Guidelines for Employees

To avoid possible professional conflicts of interest and or blurred lines of responsibility Highvale Preschool as the employer requests that employees decline any request from families to become a Facebook (or the like) friend whilst that family has a child/ren enrolled at Highvale Preschool. The exception to this is any 'friends' that were already 'friends' prior to the family's child starting at Highvale Preschool.

In addition to the above paragraph, Highvale Preschool requests that employees observe the following guidelines if at any time it is necessary to refer to their place of employment, its programmes or activities, its families and children, and/or other employees, in a blog or on a website:

- Employees must be respectful in all communications and blogs related to or referencing Highvale Preschool, its families and children and/or other employees.
- Employees must not use obscenities, profanity or vulgar language
- Employees must not use blogs or personal websites to disparage Highvale Preschool, families and children or other employees.
- Employees must not use blogs or personal websites to harass, bully or intimidate other employees, families or children. Behaviours that constitute harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, comments that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, colour or disability; sexually suggestive, humiliating or demeaning comments; and threats to stalk, haze or physically injure another employee or family or child.
- Employees must not post pictures/video of families or children or other employees on websites without prior consent
- Employees must not refer to names of children, families or colleagues in reference to comments on their place of work without prior consent

*NB Any employee found to be in violation of any portion of this Privacy Online Policy could be subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.*



### Attachment 2:

#### GUIDELINES FOR FAMILIES of enrolled children

In general Highvale Preschool views social networking sites [MySpace, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube etc], personal Web sites and Weblogs positively and respects the right of families to use them as a medium of self- expression.

If a family member chooses to identify himself or herself as an associate of Highvale Preschool on such Internet venues, some readers of such sites or blogs may view the associate as a representative or spokesperson of Highvale Preschool.

Highvale Preschool requests that families observe the following guidelines when referring to Highvale Preschool, its programmes or activities, its families and children, and /or employees in a blog or on a website:

- Families are reminded that internet sites such as Facebook etc. are a public domain.
- Families are requested to be respectful in all communications and blogs related to or referencing Highvale Preschool, its activities, families and children and /or employees.
- Families are requested not to post pictures/video of families or children or employees of Highvale Preschool on a website without obtaining prior written permission
- Families are requested not to use obscenities, profanity or vulgar language in relation to Highvale Preschool, its activities or employees
- Families are requested not to use blogs or personal websites to harass, bully or intimidate Highvale Preschool employees or other families or children. Behaviours that constitute harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, comments that are derogatory with respect to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, colour or disability; sexually suggestive, humiliating or demeaning comments and threats to stalk, haze or physically injure an employee or another family or child.



### Attachment 3:

#### Procedure for failure to adhere to policy

Failure to adhere to the Social Media and Photography Policy could place families and children at risk. Highvale Preschool acknowledges that although this may rarely happen within our setting, we must for the safety of children and families have a procedure to follow should breaches of this policy

Steps to follow:

If someone is observed or reported for having breached this policy they should report the breach to the President via [President@highvalekinder.org.au](mailto:President@highvalekinder.org.au) or to staff members.

The following procedure should then be followed:

1. Person/persons breaching policy will be approached by a Committee of Management member or staff member and reminded of the policy guidelines.
2. If posting has been on social media a request will be made for the immediate removal of the photograph/s
3. Within 48 hours of the breach, this policy and a copy of their signed Letter of Acknowledgement will be forwarded to family as a reminder of their obligations
4. A second breach of this policy will be followed by a written warning to family
5. Any further breaches will not be tolerated and appropriate action will be discussed by Committee of Management and family informed of the outcome