



Mawson Lakes Preschool

Children's use of personal devices

Purpose

This policy outlines the roles and responsibilities of the use of mobile phones and other personal digital devices that children may bring to Mawson Lakes Preschool. Personal devices include but are not limited to smartwatches, mobile phones, iPads, and tablets.

This policy applies while children are attending Mawson Lakes Preschool or an authorised activity, such as an excursion, during preschool hours and events.

During sessions at Mawson Lakes Preschool, children are not permitted to access or use any mobile phones or other personal devices. Families are strongly encouraged to leave children's personal devices at home when they are attending preschool.

If children do bring or wear a personal device to Mawson Lakes Preschool, educators will take the child's device and store it securely in the Director's office for the day. The device will then be returned to the parent/caregiver at the end of the session and reminded of the policy.

Rationale

We understand that some families may choose to give their children a personal device and that they can have many positive uses, including connecting with family and friends, entertainment and play, and safety in public places. However, at preschool children will get the most out of their learning when they can fully participate in learning and play without distractions from their own or others' digital devices.

Preschool provides invaluable opportunities for children to learn how to interact and play with peers, self-regulate in a new environment and routine, and prepare for their transition to school. Children at Mawson Lakes Preschool are encouraged to explore a wide range of hands-on learning spaces, such as our sand and water play areas.

Preschool is an important time where children are able to develop relationships with trusted adults and learn about adults who can be trusted outside their family network. For many children preschool is their first experience in an unfamiliar and new environment, so it is important children develop a bond with educators and feel comfortable to ask for help.

Building trusting relationships with adults allows children to feel safe, secure and comfortable in their environment and become more confident communicators. It gives children the opportunities to develop their ability to ask questions and to be able to gain assistance from an educator when they feel unsafe or need help.

Many smart devices now have the capability to make and receive phone calls and capture and store images. These functions can be activated by the accidental touch of a button. All children have the right to a safe preschool environment where they are free from the risk of being photographed, filmed, or audio recorded without express parental consent in controlled circumstances.

Roles and responsibilities

The director will make sure;

- this policy is clearly communicated and accessible to all children, staff, and families,
- there is a process for regular review of the policy,
- secure storage is provided for children's personal devices,
- enforce the policy and responses to instances of non-compliance,
- to report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legislative requirements,
- to consider parent requests for exemptions from the policy on a case-by-case basis in exceptional circumstances (such as if a child uses a Augmentative and alternative communication device or medical device.).
- make sure that any approved exemptions are appropriately documented, and staff are informed about children's exemptions.

Preschool staff will make sure;

- to maintain a safe and productive environment for learning and play.
- to respond to instances of non-compliance in line with this policy.

- to report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legislative requirements.
- that any personal devices taken from children are carefully and securely stored and returned to the relevant parent/caregiver.

Children will;

- follow instructions from the their educators,
- tell an educator if they are unwell or if something has made them feel upset or unsafe, so that staff can provide support and contact parents where appropriate,
- use kind words when speaking and playing with others.

Parents will;

- support the preschool's implementation of this policy and leave children's personal devices at home from preschool wherever possible,
- use the preschool's formal communication channels in all instances to communicate with the preschool,
- encourage their child to always report to a staff member in the first instance if they become unwell, or they feel upset or unsafe, so that preschool staff can support them,
- recognise the important role they play in supporting their child to use personal devices in a safe, responsible, and respectful way,
- respect others' rights to privacy and not take photos, film, or audio records of people without their knowledge or permission,
- have conversations at home regarding the expectations of personal devices at kindy and to make sure children are aware they are only for home use.

References

National Quality Standard 2.1 (2011)

[Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety | ACECQA](#)

National Quality Standard 5.1 (2011)

[Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children | ACECQA](#)