

MOBILE DEVICE USAGE POLICY & PROCEDURE

Policy Statement

At Fun 4 U Helensburgh, we are committed to providing a safe, supportive, and engaging environment for all children in our care. The purpose of this policy (Reg 168) is to ensure that the use of mobile devices, including mobile phones and smartwatches, does not compromise children's safety, wellbeing, or ability to connect meaningfully with others during our Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) programs. We aim to create an environment where children can build friendships, engage in play and leisure experiences, and develop essential social and emotional skills without the distractions or risks posed by mobile technologies. This policy also supports our role in reinforcing safe digital habits and aligns with the child-safe values embedded in our service culture (168 (h)).

Background

In response to increased concerns raised by educators, researchers, and parents about the non-educational use of mobile devices, we are implementing a proactive approach to managing digital technology during our program hours. Recent studies, including those from the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) and the [2024 Review into the Non-Educational Use of Mobile Devices in NSW Schools](#), highlight the negative impacts of device use on children's attention, learning, behaviour, and wellbeing. Issues such as cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content, and reduced social interaction are increasingly recognised as key concerns.

In support of the National Quality Framework (NQF) and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, our service is guided by the ['My Time, Our Place Framework'](#), which recognises that children's emotional safety and sense of belonging are foundational to their wellbeing. Mobile devices can create barriers to inclusive, respectful, and safe social environments, particularly when used inappropriately or without supervision.

Our Mobile Device Usage Policy will ensure:

- Children’s physical and emotional safety is maintained at all times
- Cyber safety risks are minimised
- Face-to-face interactions and play are prioritised
- Children are supported to develop responsible and respectful digital habits

This policy reflects our shared responsibility with families and schools to support safe technology use and model positive digital citizenship, whilst also understanding and implementing the child protection laws in all aspects of our service (Reg. 84).

Legislative Requirements and links to the National Quality Framework

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is respected.
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
QUALITY AREA 4: STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS		
4.2.2	Professional standards	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.
QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
84	Awareness of child protection law
149	Volunteers and students
155	Interactions with children
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
168 (h)	Providing a child safe environment, including matters relating to; (i) the promotion of a culture of child safety and wellbeing within the service; and

	(ii) the safe use of online environments at the service;
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

Definitions of Key Terms used in the Policy

TERM	MEANING	SOURCE
ACECQA – Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority	The independent national authority that works with all regulatory authorities to administer the National Quality Framework, including the provision of guidance, resources, and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.	ACEQA
Bullying	Is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening. Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records). Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.	Review into the non-educational use of mobile devices in NSW schools – report
Cyberbullying	Cyberbullying can be described as any repeated harassment, insults and humiliation that occurs through electronic mediums such as email, smartphones, social networking sites, instant messaging programs, chat rooms, web-sites and through the playing of online games. Cyberbullying is not one isolated nasty comment or post but a repeated action.	Review into the non-educational use of mobile devices in NSW schools – report
Cybersafety	The safe, responsible and informed use of digital media and technology. It is about keeping information safe and secure but also about being responsible with that information and being respectful of other people online.	Review into the non-educational use of mobile devices in NSW schools – report
Mobile Digital Device	A hand-held electronic device that can generate, receive, store, process and send digital information, including photos and videos. For the purposes of this review, mobile digital devices include smartphones, smartwatches and mobile tablets but not laptops.	Review into the non-educational use of mobile devices in NSW schools – report

Implementation of the Principles that Inform the Policy

We recognise that some families may provide mobile devices to their children for safety and communication purposes, particularly during their journey to and from school. Additionally, some schools implement Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) programs, meaning children may carry devices as part of their school day. However, during our OSHC hours, mobile devices are not to be used. Our program offers a wide range of engaging activities that encourage social interaction, creative play, and physical movement—without the need for personal technology (Reg 155).

Children who have a diagnosed disability or medical condition requiring the use of a mobile device as part of their support plan will be granted an exemption. In these cases, families must submit a formal request to the OSHC Coordinator or Approved Provider, and the exemption must be clearly recorded in the child's enrolment documentation. Fun 4 U Helensburgh encourages open communication about digital safety and supports parents to discuss healthy technology boundaries with their children.

Children's Mobile Devices

i) Arrival and Storage:

- All children must alert staff if they have a mobile phone, smartwatch (with call/text functions), or other digital communication devices upon arrival.
- A decision will be made in conjunction with the child's family if the turned off devices will be stored in a secure, clearly labelled storage container, accessible only to staff or in the child's school bag.
- Devices will be returned to children at the end of the session before sign-out.

ii) Usage Restrictions:

- Children are not permitted to use mobile devices during OSHC hours unless written permission has been provided by a parent/guardian for medical or exceptional circumstances (e.g. diabetes monitoring).
- Devices with cameras or recording features are not to be used under any circumstance.
- No games, videos, or messaging apps/devices are to be accessed.

Staff's Mobile Devices (Including Permanent, Part Time, Casuals, Volunteers & Students (Reg. 149))

i) Personal Devices:

- Staff and educators must keep personal phones and smartwatches stored in their bag or the designated area in the office and must remain out of sight during their entire shift while children are present.
- Personal phones must not be used in the presence of children unless in emergencies.
- Taking photos or videos of children on personal devices is strictly prohibited and the individual will be removed and reported to the relevant authority immediately as per the *Child Protection Policy*.

ii). Service Devices:

- Only authorised service-issued devices (e.g. iPads, phones) may be used for program documentation, communication, or emergency contact.
- Devices are protected by passwords and will always remain on staff at all times or stored securely when not in use during the hours of our service.

Parents's & Care Givers Mobile Devices

To maintain a child safe environment and protect the privacy and safety of all children, families and staff, parents, guardians and authorised persons are not permitted to use personal mobile devices while inside the OSHC Service during drop-off and collection times.

- The use of mobile phones, smart watches, or any personal device capable of taking photos, videos or audio recordings is prohibited within the service premises.
- This includes making phone calls, texting, browsing, or using social media while in the service environment.
- Devices must be put away prior to entering the service and remain unused until the parent or authorised person has exited the premises.
- This requirement supports the protection of children's privacy, reduces the risk of unauthorised images or recordings, and ensures full attention is given to safe arrival and departure procedures.

Where a parent or authorised person needs to use their mobile device in an emergency, they are required to step outside the service premises.

Failure to comply with this requirement may result in a reminder of the policy and, if ongoing, further action in line with service procedures.

The Approved Provider/Management/Nominated Supervisor/Educators Will Ensure

The Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, and all educators are responsible for upholding the Mobile Device Usage Policy to ensure a safe, respectful, and distraction-free environment for all children and young persons at Fun 4 U. They will ensure:

- Children, families, and carers understand and follow the Mobile Device Usage Policy while attending our OSHC. (Reg.170)
- Any external communication initiated by a child is made only under staff supervision and through the OSHC service-issued phone.
- Fun 4 U's phone number is available to parents and carers as the primary contact point during operating hours.
- Children are not permitted to use mobile devices while attending the OSHC program, including during excursions or incursions.
- If smartwatches are permitted to be worn, they must be switched to 'aeroplane mode' to disable messages, calls, and other notifications that may distract or disrupt.
- Fun 4 U assumes no responsibility for personal mobile devices brought by children, including if they are lost, stolen, or damaged during attendance.
- All mobile devices must be clearly labelled with the child's full name to avoid confusion or misplacement.
- If a child requires the use of a mobile device to support a diagnosed medical condition or disability, consultation must occur between management and the child's family. Any approved use must be formally documented in the child's enrolment record, with clear usage guidelines.
- All staff are required to read, understand and uphold this policy to the highest standards.
- Frequent reminders are given to all staff at Fun 4 U during beginning of shift huddles and team meetings.
- Respectful communication and digital safety are promoted in line with our *Providing a Child Safe Environment, Staff Code of Conduct, and Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environment policies.*

Cyber Safety Education

1. Children will participate in age-appropriate discussions and activities about:
 - Online safety and respectful digital behaviour
 - The importance of switching off and engaging in real-world play
 - The risks of sharing personal information online
 - What is cyberbullying and cybersafety
2. Resources from the [eSafety Commissioner](#) will be incorporated into programming as part of our ongoing commitment to child safety.

Breach of policy

What is a breach of policy?

A breach is any action or inaction by any individual within the Service, including children and young people, that fails to comply with any part of the policy.

Managing a breach of the Mobile Device Policy

Management will address any breaches of this policy in a fair, impartial, and supportive manner. In the event of a child or young person breaching Fun 4 U's Mobile Device Usage Policy by being found to be using their mobile device;

- The device will be immediately collected by an educator and stored.
- The child will be reminded of the policy and the importance of shared, safe play spaces.
- An incident report will be made and the family will be informed at pick-up.
- Repeated breaches may result in a parent meeting or further action as determined by the coordinator.

- Should the device be used for intentional misuse purposes of online bullying or imaged-based abuse, the incident will be documented following the 'Child Protection Procedure' and Consulting with NSW Government Communities and Justice – Child Protection Services to ensure appropriate procedures are followed and that the chain of evidence is preserved.

In the event staff breaching Fun 4 U's Mobile Device Usage Policy by being found to be using their mobile device;

- Any breach of this policy by staff will be addressed according to the *Staff Code of Conduct Policy* and may result in formal disciplinary action.
- Should the device be used for intentional misuse purposes of online bullying or imaged-based abuse, the incident will be documented following the 'Child Protection Procedure' and Consulting with NSW Government Communities and Justice – Child Protection Services to ensure appropriate procedures are followed and that the chain of evidence is preserved. This also includes removing the staff member from the floor and preventing contact with children or young people until the external investigation is complete.

Monitoring Evaluation and Review

Fun 4 U, we proactively monitor updates from ACECQA and Childcare Centre Desktop to ensure our Mobile Device Usage Policy remains current and compliant. The policy is reviewed at least annually, in consultation with families, staff, educators, and management, to reflect best practices and evolving regulatory requirements. In addition to this, our policies are made readily available to families on our Facebook page and next to our sign in and out register we have a folder with a QR code to each policy. (Reg 171 & 172)

Links to other policies

Related Polices	Child Care Centre Desktop Polices
Child Protection Policy Interactions with Children Policy Privacy Collection Statement Providing a Child Safe Environment Policy Safe use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy Staff Code of Conduct Policy	Mobile Device Usage Policy Child Safe Environment Policy Safe use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy

Sources

- Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). NQF Online Safety. (2025) [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- Australian Government Department of Education (2022). [My Time, Our Place- Framework for School Age Care in Australia. V2.0](#)
- Australian Government eSafety Commissioner [Cyberbullying | What is cyberbullying? | eSafety Commissioner](#)
- Australian Human Rights Commission (2020). *Child Safe Organisations*. <https://childdsafe.humanrights.gov.au/>
- Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. [ECA Code of Ethics - Early Childhood Australia Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023).
- [eSafety Commissioner](#)
- NSW Department of Education [Review into the non-education use of mobile devices in NSW](#). (2024).

Record of services’ compliance (Reg 167)

Date Created: August 2025

Date Reviewed by Fun 4 U: 04/08/2025

Childcare Centre Desktop Policy Update: July 2024

This Policy Follows ACEQA: [Digital technology and children | ACECQA](#)



PHONE-FREE ZONE

- 🚫 NO MOBILE PHONE USE
- 🚫 NO PHOTOS OR VIDEOS

Please keep phones in your bag or pocket
and give your full attention when signing children
in/out.

Thank you for helping keep our children safe 🧡

Fun 4 U