Early Years Policy – eSafety for Children

Attachment 1 – Digital Communication Platform Safety Guidelines and Consent Form

Using digital communication platforms can be a great way for children to learn and explore, but it can also put them at risk. It’s important for early childhood teachers and educators to understand the risks associated with children using the internet. The eSafety Commissioner provides early years professional learning and resources to help services in keeping children while safe online: [www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au)

Prior to using a digital communication platform (Zoom, Teams etc):

* Educators to complete eSafety learning module (see References in the Early Years Policy – eSafety for Children)
* Educators to email digital communication platform guidelines and gain written consent from families
* Educators be familiar with using digital communication platform and its functions.

Guidelines for educators

1. Be the host and have full control throughout the session
2. Two staff to be present online at all times
3. Dress appropriately and ensure background is presentable and professional
4. Ensure the use of the “waiting room” function, to monitor attendees
5. Decline or remove unauthorised participants immediately
6. Adhere to the Early Years Policy - Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing and Council’s Employee Code of Conduct at all times
7. Use the service’s digital communication platform at all times with families (no personal accounts)
8. Use a different meeting ID for each session, to reduce the risk of hacking attempts

Guidelines for families

1. The educator is the host of the [insert name of the digital communication platform e.g. teams, zoom etc] session and will have control of the meeting throughout the session
2. All participants must join with the child’s first and last name for identification purposes
3. A parent/guardian to be present online at all times
4. All participants to dress appropriately
5. Unauthorised participants will be immediately by removed by the host
6. Keep private information for 1:1 discussions with the educator. If you wish to speak about a private matter, you can contact the educator via email or call to make a time to discuss the matter
7. We ask families not to record, take photos during [insert name of the digital communication platform] sessions or share [insert name of the digital communication platform] links with others
8. We encourage families to read the eSafety Commissioner’s [*Swoosh, Glide and Rule Number 5 picture book*](https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/children-under-5/picture-book-and-song) with their child/ren as part of our commitment to keep children safe while online

Consent

I [insert parent’s full name ] consent for [insert child’s full name ] to participate in [insert name of the digital communication platform ] with Macedon Ranges Shire Council’s Early Years Educators. I have read, understood and will adhere to the above guidelines.

Signature: Date: