**Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Data Integrity Policy**

This policy will provide guidelines to ensure that all users of social media and information & communication technology (ICT) at The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten on behalf The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten

* understand and follow procedures to ensure the safe and appropriate use of ICT at the service, including maintaining secure storage of information
* take responsibility to protect and maintain privacy in accordance with the centre’s Privacy and Confidentiality of Record Keeping Policy
* are aware that only those persons authorised by the Approved Provider (Committee of Management) are permitted to access ICT at the centre
* understand what constitutes illegal and inappropriate use of ICT facilities and avoid such activities.

**Rationale:**

The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten is committed to:

* professional, ethical and responsible use of ICT at the service
* providing a safe workplace for management, educators, staff and others using the service’s ICT facilities
* safeguarding the privacy and confidentiality of information received, transmitted or stored electronically
* ensuring that the use of the service’s ICT facilities complies with all service policies and relevant government legislation
* providing management, educators and staff with online information, resources and communication tools to support the effective operation of the service.

**Statement:**

This policy applies to the Approved Provider (Committee of Management), Persons with Management and Control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in day-to-day charge, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten. This policy does not apply to children. This policy applies to all aspects of the use of ICT including:

* internet usage
* electronic mail (email)
* electronic bulletins/notice boards
* electronic discussion/news groups
* weblogs (blogs)
* social networking
* file transfer
* file storage (including the use of end point data storage devices – refer to Definitions)
* file sharing
* video conferencing
* streaming media
* instant messaging
* online discussion groups and chat facilities
* subscriptions to list servers, mailing lists or other like services
* copying, saving or distributing files
* viewing material electronically
* printing material ν portable communication devices including mobile and cordless phones.

Definitions:

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.

*Anti-spyware:* Software designed to remove spyware: a type of malware (refer to Definitions), that collects information about users without their knowledge.

*Chain email*: An email instructing recipients to send out multiple copies of the same email so that circulation increases exponentially.

*Computer virus*: Malicious software programs, a form of malware (refer to Definitions), that can spread from one computer to another through the sharing of infected files, and that may harm a computer system's data or performance.

Defamation: To injure or harm another person’s reputation without good reason or justification. Defamation is often in the form of slander or libel.

*Disclaimer*: Statement(s) that seeks to exclude or limit liability and is usually related to issues such as copyright, accuracy and privacy.

*Electronic communications*: Email, instant messaging, communication through social media and any other material or communication sent electronically.

*Encryption*: The process of systematically encoding data before transmission so that an unauthorised party cannot decipher it. There are different levels of encryption available.

*Endpoint data storage devices*: Devices capable of storing information/data. New devices are continually being developed, and current devices include:

* laptops
* USB sticks, external or removable hard drives, thumb drives, pen drives and flash drives
* iPods or other similar devices
* cameras with USB drive connection
* IPhones/smartphones
* PCI/PC Card/PCMCIA storage cards
* PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants)
* other data-storage devices (CD-ROM and DVD).

*Firewall*: The primary method of keeping a computer/network secure. A firewall controls (by permitting or restricting) traffic into and out of a computer/network and, as a result, can protect these from damage by unauthorised users.

*Flash drive*: A small data-storage device that uses flash memory and has a built-in USB connection. Flash drives have many names, including jump drives, thumb drives, pen drives and USB keychain drives.

*Integrity:* (In relation to this policy) refers to the accuracy of data. Loss of data integrity may be either gross and evident (e.g. a computer disk failing) or subtle (e.g. the alteration of information in an electronic file).

*Malware:* Short for ‘malicious software’. Malware is intended to damage or disable computers or computer systems.

*PDAs* (Personal Digital Assistants): A handheld computer for managing contacts, appointments and tasks. PDAs typically include a name and address database, calendar, to-do list and note taker. Wireless PDAs may also offer email and web browsing, and data can be synchronised between a PDA and a desktop computer via a USB or wireless connection.

*Portable storage device* (PSD) or removable storage device (RSD): Small, lightweight, portable easy-touse device that is capable of storing and transferring large volumes of data. These devices are either exclusively used for data storage (for example, USB keys) or are capable of multiple other functions (such as iPods and PDAs).

*Spam*: Unsolicited and unwanted emails or other electronic communication

*Security*: (In relation to this policy) refers to the protection of data against unauthorised access, ensuring confidentiality of information, integrity of data and the appropriate use of computer systems and other resources.

*USB interface*: Universal Serial Bus (USB) is a widely used interface for attaching devices to a host computer. PCs and laptops have multiple USB ports that enable many devices to be connected without rebooting the computer or turning off the USB device.

*USB key:* Also known as sticks, drives, memory keys and flash drives, a USB key is a device that plugs into the computer’s USB port and is small enough to hook onto a key ring. A USB key allows data to be easily downloaded and transported/transferred.

*Kindergarten IT Program*: The Victorian Government funds the State Library Victoria to provide IT support to kindergarten cluster managers and community based kindergarten services that operate funded kindergarten programs.Through the Kindergarten IT Program, the State Library Victoria provides the following services to eligible organisations:

* Internet connectivity for kindergartens (data connection only)
* Twenty email addresses per kindergarten
* User support for general computer and Microsoft software enquiries
* Web hosting options
* Coordinated IT Training for eligible services including privacy and cyber safety training
* Providing advice for kindergartens purchasing new computers with the option to supply and install (kindergartens meet the purchase and installation costs)
* Repair of computer hardware that was provided by the Department through the Kindergarten IT Project roll-out.

For more information, visit: kindergarten.vic.gov.au

*Virus:* A program or programming code that multiplies by being copied to another program, computer or document. Viruses can be sent in attachments to an email or file or be present on a disk or CD. While some viruses are benign or playful in intent, others can be quite harmful: erasing data or requiring the reformatting of hard drives.

Background and Implementation

The ICT environment is continually changing. Early childhood services now have access to a wide variety of technologies via fixed, wireless and mobile devices. While ICT is a cost-effective, timely and efficient tool for research, communication and management of a service, there are also legal responsibilities in relation to information privacy, security and the protection of employees, families and children.

State and federal laws, including those governing information privacy, copyright, occupational health and safety, anti-discrimination and sexual harassment, apply to the use of ICT (refer to Legislation and standards). Illegal and inappropriate use of ICT resources includes pornography, fraud, defamation, breach of copyright, unlawful discrimination or vilification, harassment (including sexual harassment, stalking and privacy violations) and illegal activity, including illegal peer-to-peer file sharing.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

**The Approved Provider (Committee of Management) is responsible for:**

The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten’s COM is the Approved Provider and has ultimate responsibility for the management and control of the centr. The Board delegates operational responsibility and day to day management of the service to the Nominated Supervisor and monitors the performance of the organisation, including responsibilities contained in this policy, through regular reporting and by ensuring appropriate resources are available to carry out the organisation’s functions.

**The Nominated Supervisor and Persons in Day-to-Day Charge are responsible for:**

* ensuring that the use of the service’s ICT complies with all relevant state and federal legislation (refer to Legislation and Standards), and all centre’s policies (including Privacy and Confidentiality of Records Keeping Policy and Code of Conduct Policy)
* authorising the access of educators, staff, volunteers and students to the service’s ICT facilities, as appropriate
* providing clear procedures and protocols that outline the parameters for use of the service’s ICT facilities and complying with same
* embedding a culture of awareness and understanding of security issues at the service
* ensuring that effective financial procedures and security measures are implemented where transactions are made using the service’s ICT facilities, e.g. handling fee and invoice payments, and using online banking
* ensuring that the centre’s computer software and hardware are purchased from an appropriate and reputable supplier
* identifying the need for additional password-protected email accounts for management, educators, staff and others at the centre and providing these as appropriate
* identifying the training needs of educators and staff in relation to ICT, and providing recommendations for the inclusion of training in ICT in professional development activities
* ensuring that procedures are in place for the regular backup of critical data and information at the service
* ensuring secure storage of all information at the centre, including backup files (refer to Privacy and Confidentiality of Records Keeping Policy)
* adhering to the requirements of the Privacy and Confidentiality Policy in relation to accessing information on the centre’s computer/s, including emails
* considering encryption of data for extra security
* ensuring that reputable anti-virus and firewall are installed on the centre’s computers and that software is kept up to date
* developing procedures to minimise unauthorised access, use and disclosure of information and data, which may include limiting access and passwords, and encryption
* ensuring that the centre’s liability in the event of security breaches, or unauthorised access, use and disclosure of information and data is limited by developing and publishing appropriate disclaimers
* developing procedures to ensure data and information (e.g. passwords) are kept secure, and only disclosed to individuals where necessary e.g. to new educators, staff or committee of management
* developing procedures to ensure that all educators, staff, volunteers and students are aware of the requirements of this policy
* ensuring compliance with this policy by all users of the service’s ICT facilities
* keeping allocated passwords secure, including not sharing passwords and logging off after using a computer
* maintaining the security of ICT facilities belonging to The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten
* accessing accounts, data or files on the centre’s computers only where authorisation has been provided
* co-operating with other users of the service’s ICT to ensure fair and equitable access to resources
* ensuring confidential information is transmitted with password protection or encryption, as required
* ensuring no illegal material is transmitted at any time via any ICT medium
* using the service’s email, messaging and social media facilities for service-related and lawful activities only
* using endpoint data storage devices supplied by the centre for centre-related business only and ensuring that this information is protected from unauthorised access and use
* ensuring that all material stored on an endpoint data storage device is also stored on a backup drive, and that both device and drive are kept in a secure location
* ensuring electronic files containing information about children and families are kept secure at all times (refer to Privacy and Confidentiality of Records Keeping Policy).

**Educators and other staff are responsible for:**

* complying with all relevant legislation and centre’spolicies, protocols and procedures,
* completing the authorised user agreement form for any equipment issued
* keeping allocated passwords secure, including not sharing passwords and logging off after using a computer
* accessing accounts, data or files on the service’s computers only where authorisation has been provided
* co-operating with other users of the service’s ICT to ensure fair and equitable access to resources
* ensuring confidential information is transmitted with password protection or encryption, as required
* ensuring no illegal material is transmitted at any time via any ICT medium
* using the centre’s email, messaging and social media facilities for centre-related and lawful activities only
* using endpoint data storage devices supplied by the centre for centre-related business only and ensuring that this information is protected from unauthorised access and use
* notifying the Nominated Supervisor of any damage, faults or loss of endpoint data storage devices
* restricting the use of personal mobile phones to rostered breaks
* responding only to emergency phone calls when responsible for supervising children to ensure adequate supervision of children at all times (refer to Supervision of Children Policy)
* ensuring electronic files containing information about children and families are kept secure at all times (refer to Privacy and Confidentiality of Records Keeping Policy).

**Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

* reading and understanding this Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Data Integrity Policy
* complying with all state and federal laws, the requirements of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, and all centre’s policies and procedures maintaining the privacy of any personal or health information provided to them about other individuals e.g. Contact details.

**Volunteers and students,** while at the centre are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

**Procedures for use of ICT at the service**

Email usage

* Content of emails and email addresses must always be checked before sending.
* When sending emails to multiple recipients, care should be taken to avoid the inappropriate disclosure of email addresses to a whole group of recipients; blind copying (BCC) should be used where appropriate.
* Always include a subject description in the subject line.
* Be cautious about opening files or launching programs that have been received as an attachment via email from the email itself. Instead, save an attachment to disk and scan with anti-virus software before opening, and keep an eye out for unusual filenames.
* Never open emails if unsure of the sender.
* Check email accounts on a regular basis and forward relevant emails to the Approved Provider (COM), Nominated Supervisor or appropriate committee members/staff.
* Respond to emails as soon as is practicable.

Unacceptable/inappropriate use of ICT facilities

Users of the ICT facilities (and in particular, the internet, email and social media) provided by The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergatren must not:

* create or exchange messages that are offensive, harassing, obscene or threatening
* create, copy, transmit or retransmit chain emails ,spam or other unauthorised mass communication
* use the ICT facilities as a platform to gain unauthorised access to other systems
* carry out activities that are illegal, inappropriate or offensive to fellow employees or the public. Such activities include, but are not limited to, hate speech or material that ridicules/discriminates against others on the basis of race, nationality, creed, religion, ability/disability, gender or sexual orientation
* use the ICT facilities to access, download, create, store or distribute illegal, offensive, obscene or objectionable material (including pornography and sexually explicit material). It will not be a defence to claim that the recipient was a consenting adult
* use the ICT facilities to make any personal communication that could suggest that such communication was made in that person’s official capacity as an employee or volunteer of The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten
* conduct any outside business or engage in activities related to employment with another organisation
* play games
* assist any election campaign or lobby any government organisation
* exchange any confidential or sensitive information held by The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindergarten unless authorised as part of their duties
* publish the centre’s email address on a ‘private’ business card
* harass, slander, intimidate, embarrass, defame, vilify, seek to offend or make threats against another person or group of people
* breach copyright laws through making copies of, or transmitting, material or commercial software.

Information stored on computers

* Computer records containing personal, sensitive and/or health information, or photographs of children must be stored securely so that privacy and confidentiality is maintained. This information must not be removed from the centre without authorisation, as security of the information could be at risk (refer to Privacy and Confidentiality of Records Keeping Policy).
* Computer records containing personal, sensitive and/or health information, or photographs of children may need to be removed from the centre from time-to-time for various reasons, including for:
* excursions and centre’s events
* offsite storage, where there is not enough space at the centre’s premises to store the records.
* In such circumstances, services must ensure that the information is transported, handled and stored securely so that privacy and confidentiality is maintained at all times.
* Computer users are not to view or interfere with other users’ files or directories, knowingly obtain unauthorised access to information or damage, delete, insert or otherwise alter data without permission.
* Ensure all material stored on an endpoint data storage device is also stored on a backup drive, and that both device and drive are kept in a secure location.

Breaches of this policy

* Individuals who use ICT at the centre for unlawful purposes may be liable to criminal or civil legal action. This could result in serious consequences, such as a fine, damages and/or costs being awarded against the individual, or imprisonment. The Approved Provider will not defend or support any individual using the service’s ICT facilities for an unlawful purpose.
* The centre may block access to internet sites where inappropriate use is identified.
* Employees who fail to adhere to this policy may be liable to counselling, disciplinary action or dismissal.
* Centre Leadership Team, educators, staff, volunteers and students who fail to adhere to this policy may have their access to the service’s ICT facilities restricted/denied.

Guiding principles for security of information systems

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s (OECD) guidelines encourage an awareness and understanding of security issues and the need for a culture of security.

The OECD describes nine guiding principles that encourage awareness, education, information sharing and training as effective strategies in maintaining security of information systems. The guiding principles are explained in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Awareness | Users should be aware of the need for security of information systemsand networks and what they can do to enhance security |
| Responsibility | All users are responsible for the security of information systems and networks |
| Response | Users should act in a timely and cooperative manner to prevent, detectand respond to security issues |
| Ethics | Users should respect the legitimate interest of others |
| Democracy | The security of information systems and networks should be compatiblewith the essential values of a democratic society. |
| Risk assessment | Users should conduct risk assessments |
| Security design andimplementation | Users should incorporate security as an essential element of information systemsand networks. |
| Securitymanagement | Users should adopt a comprehensive approach to security management. |
| Reassessment | Users should review and reassess the security of information systemsand networks, and make appropriate modifications to security policies, measuresand procedures. |

*Sourced from Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s (OECD) (2002) Guidelines for the Security of Information Systems and Networks: Towards a Culture of Security*

**Authorised user agreement - Portable storage device (PSD) (including laptops)**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

acknowledge that I have received a PSD belonging to The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindrergatren

* will ensure that the PSD:

is used for work-related purposes only

* is password-protected at all times
* will not be loaned to unauthorised persons
* will be returned to The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindrergatren on cessation of employment
* will notify the Nominated Supervisor as soon as is practicable if the PSD is damaged, faulty or lost

have read The Avenue Children’s Centre and Kindrergatren ‘s Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Data integrity Policy and agree to abide by the procedures outlined within.

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Authorised User (Name and Signature) Position

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Authorised by (Name and Signature) Position

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date

**Links to other policies**

* Code of Conduct Policy
* Complaints and Grievances Policy
* Programming and Planning Development Policy
* Enrolment, Orientation and Bond PolicyGovernance and Management Policy
* Occupational Health and Safety Policy
* Privacy and Confidentiality of Record Keeping Policy
* Staffing Policy
* Supervision of Children Policy
* Excursion Policy

**Sources and further reading:**

* Broadcasting Services Act 1992 (Cth)
* Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
* Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995
* Commonwealth Classification (Publication, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995
* Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (Cth)
* Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)
* Copyright Amendment Act 2006 (Cth)
* Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
* Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
* Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
* Freedom of Information Act 1982
* Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
* Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic)
* National Quality Standard, Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management
* Standard 7.3: Administrative systems enable the effective management of a

quality service

* Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
* Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
* Public Records Act 1973 (Vic)
* Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
* Spam Act 2003 (Cth)
* Trade Marks Act 1995 (Cth)
* Acceptance Use Policy, DET Information, Communications and Technology (ICT)
* Resources:www.education.vic.gov.au/about/deptpolicies/acceptableuse.htm
* IT for Kindergartens: www.kindergarten.vic.gov.au
* Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2002) Guidelines
* for the Security of Information Systems and Networks: Towards a Culture of Security:

[www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)

* Bubup Womindjeka http://www.bwfcc.org.au/

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