Otago University Childcare Association (OUCA)
Cybersafety and Information, Communication Technology (CICT) Policy and Associated Procedures

Rationale:
Information and communication technologies (ICT) use is an important and financially significant aspect of our environments to be considered with respect. Tamariki, kaiako, and administration staff have access to and responsibility for data, some of which must be kept safe for privacy reasons. Consideration must also be given to the appropriateness and safety of different uses of ICT within an early childhood environment.

Aims:
1. To establish cybersafety procedures to prevent tamariki and adults from accessing inappropriate material online or participating in inappropriate online activities.
2. To protect the material stored on ICTs from being used for any purposes other than those for which it was collected.
3. To provide guidance to all staff, parents, and visitors regarding safe and responsible use of ICT's at the OUCA or at any related OUCA events.
4. To protect the privacy and digital rights of tamariki, staff, whānau, and the OUCA.
5. To ensure every precaution is taken to secure all OUCA ICT's equipment from loss or damage and to provide policies for the updating and quality of equipment.

Definitions:
Cybersafety refers to the safe and responsible operation/use, at any time, on or off the OUCA sites, and by any person, of the centre's internet facilities, network, and associated ICT equipment/devices. This includes but is not limited to computers and laptops, digital cameras, tablets, notebooks, mobile phones, and any other equipment that can be used in conjunction with a computer or phone. Also, the safe and responsible use by anyone, of privately –owned ICT equipment/devices on an OUCA site or at an OUCA event.

Appropriate is defined as the usage of ICT as relevant to the business of the OUCA.

Permitted use: OUCA staff as per employment agreements, ECE students who have signed a cybersafe agreement, persons contracted to the OUCA to carry out work related to the ICT equipment or programmes with the Manager's permission.
Personal use of OUCA ICT equipment by staff during breaks and outside work hours is permitted.
Accessing inappropriate material is forbidden.
Parents and visitors, with the approval of the Manager/Head Teacher, have permitted use of relevant OUCA ICT equipment, for example, a Board member's approval for payments, tablets for signing in and out.
The OUCA recognizes the importance for some families of having photographs of the celebrations of their tamariki, in order to protect the tamariki, families, and staff of the OUCA, we ask that any photos taken by families at such times are treated with respect and remain off publicly accessible websites such as Facebook, etc. **Express permission for taking photos is required at any other time. When permission is given, families are asked to photograph only their own tamaiti.**

While all care and due diligence has been taken and the OUCA will endeavour to protect data in line with New Zealand law and policy, software that is cloud-based subjects the OUCA to each provider's policies and procedures.

Data Sovereignty: We recognise that all tamariki and adults have rights in relation to their personal information under New Zealand law, and that tamariki hold digital rights as reflected in international frameworks such as those advanced by UNICEF. In Aotearoa New Zealand, data is understood as *taonga* (treasure). In line with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the principles of Māori data sovereignty, we acknowledge that data relating to tamariki Māori, their whānau, and iwi carries collective as well as individual significance. We are committed to ensuring that all data is collected, stored, accessed, and used in ways that uphold the rights, dignity, and well-being of all people, and that protect and advance Māori rights and interests in relation to Māori data.

Procedures:

i. Those employed by the OUCA agree to adhere to all policies and procedures as a part of their employment agreement. User agreements will be signed with each person who has legitimate use of the OUCA's ICT equipment.
ii. Security systems are in operation on all OUCA computers, including: updated anti-virus software, updated firewall software and hardware, updated anti-spyware software, and the use of passwords.
iii. The association will maintain a technology register.
iv. The enrolment procedure clearly indicates that by enrolling their child, parents and caregivers agree to data involving their child being stored on ICT equipment as part of the learning environment.
v. Unless otherwise agreed, no privately owned ICT equipment shall be used in any centre.
vi. All centres are provided with cameras (or phones only able to be used as cameras) for the purpose of assessment. Private cameras can only be used after first gaining permission from the Manager. When this is given, the SD card will be securely stored at the OUCA.
vii. Unless in an emergency, mobile phones and smart watches should not be used for private calls or messaging when working in the centres, other than when on breaks. At least one mobile phone with the capability to make calls must be carried by Kaiako when going on an excursion. Mobile phones are not approved for data collection of any kind. Any electronic data or files created or modified for the purpose of completing work on behalf of the OUCA on any ICT equipment, regardless of who owns the ICT, are held by the OUCA while they are the property of the person concerned.
viii. Google Drive is provided to all staff so that assessment data can be safely stored. Google Drive, Educa, Canva, and Infocare are the only places where information about tamariki can be stored electronically. Teachers may include assessment material in their professional growth cycle on their OUCA Google Drive. No data relating to tamariki, their families, or OUCA staff will be stored on memory sticks.
ix. To maintain the security and safety of data, all data will be kept in the Google Drive. None will be kept on computer desk tops, tablets or other ICT equipment.

x. Teachers are responsible for safely deleting assessment material at least within six months of tamariki leaving, unless this is required for evidence of professional growth, and then it is deleted after three years..
xi. Staff will keep passwords and access to Google Drive and Educa secure and safe. When finished using them, they will sign out.
xii. The Manager may conduct an audit of any OUCA computer or other ICT device at any time.
xiii. While using the OUCA internet facilities or ICT equipment/devices or using any privately owned ICT equipment on the premises, no person may: initiate access to or have involvement with inappropriate, dangerous or objectionable material or activities, save or distribute such material by copying, storing or printing.
ix. Authorisation from the Manager must be obtained before any new software is downloaded or installed onto any OUCA ICT devices or equipment. The connection of any new ICT hardware must also be approved by the Manager.
x. When a staff member accesses the internet alongside tamariki, the tamariki will be actively supervised. i.e. tamariki will have an adult with them at all times.
xii. Any breach of this policy, which is deemed harmful to the safety of the tamariki at the centre, may constitute serious misconduct.
xiii As an employee of the OUCA, you will have access to confidential information relating to the organisation and its families. At no time should this information be referred to in any personal electronic communication.

<u>All information should be treated as strictly confidential.</u>

xiv. OUCA ICT equipment is only permitted to be taken off-site for the purpose of adding value to the tamariki or staff learning experiences and with the permission of a Head Teacher in the case of a camera/tablet, and the Manager if a laptop or other equipment.
xv. Where students wish to take data relating to tamariki away from the premises. The data they take must only be stored in a course appropriate location and used for the purpose of their teaching studies and must be deleted after their work has been completed.
xvi. Centre personnel may access the internet for personal use in break times, provided this does not interrupt the centre's needs and is of an appropriate nature.
xvii Annually, a minimum of one staff member from each centre will participate in a cybersafety course if available.
xx In the case of the presence of family/whanau community member's handheld devices being on premises: no child is allowed to use a personal cellphone for taking photos without the express permission from a staff member.
xxi Teachers are to take responsibility for being familiar with the terms and conditions of using EDUCA. For information about a child to be posted on EDUCA the consent form must first be signed.

Procedure for Children's use:

1) ICT should only be used as a powerful learning and teaching tool, however consideration should be given to tamariki's activity levels, other methods of accessing information and tamariki's overall levels of exposure to ICT.
2) When used with a meaningful and strategic approach which is focused on the learning of tamariki', ICT use with tamariki may be appropriate. Screen time is not recommended for tamariki under 2 years and for tamariki aged between 2-4 years no more than one hour of sedentary screen time per day is recommended.
3) Applications are considered by teaching teams for their value as teaching and learning tools. Apps are monitored over a trial period agreed to with the Manager.
4) The place of ICT within the tamariki's environment will be supported by agreed pedagogy of each centre and kaiako will communicate with families about the amount of sedentary screen time (if any) that may be planned for within curriculum so that families may account for this.

Procedure for Accidental Access to Inappropriate Material

In the lower range of seriousness e.g.spam –delete

a. If more serious e.g. spam containing inappropriate but not illegal material - delete immediately and complete an incident form for the managerbut enter the incident in the ICT Incident Book and block the sender. In the case of University webmail, contact Ask Otago. domain from your email inbox.
b. If it appears to be illegal material then remove from the view of any child immediately and report the incident to the Manager. Centre Management will take such further action as required under this policy.(xii)

Procedure for the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Purpose: When used responsibly, artificial intelligence (AI) can support planning, documentation, and administration in early childhood education. This policy ensures that AI use prioritises tamariki safety, upholds privacy rights under the Privacy Act 2020, and maintains the professional integrity of kaiako and the OUCA.

Scope: This procedure applies to all staff, contractors, volunteers and kaiako who may use AI tools for communication, documentation or administration.

Guiding Principles:

- Children's rights to safety and privacy are paramount.
- Kaiako remain professionally accountable for the practice.
- AI use must uphold the mana of tamariki and their whānau and be culturally responsive, avoiding content that lacks inclusivity or may reflect bias
- AI is used as a support tool, not a replacement for kaiako knowledge, relationships or decision making.
- AI use must support the principles and goals of *Te Whāriki* and reflect the Code and Standards for the Teaching Profession

Approved Use

Kaiako can use AI for:

- checking grammar and spelling by using Grammarly, which the OUCA subscribes to.
- carrying out internet searches via Google Workspace (i.e., once signed into Google Drive).

All other uses first require head teacher or manager approval.

Guidance for approving AI use

Where staff or students wish to use AI tools other than those above, they must first discuss the reasons for their proposed use with their head teacher or manager for their approval. Privacy and improvement to written material will be the main considerations. Approval can be given where:

- AI is used as a checking tool, to support the development of the quality of the work of the kaiako or other staff member. In this case there may be a time frame placed on its use.
- No identifying information—such as names, images, or locations relating to tamariki, whānau, staff, or centres—may be entered into AI systems.
- Kaiako must show their head kaiako or manager when and how AI is used, including its purpose.
- All users must be accountable, use integrity, and adhere to professional standards.
- Users must use professional judgment, including evaluating the inclusivity or cultural bias of AI-produced material.
- In order to provide increased security of data, only AI systems that are subscribed to by the OUCA will be used.
- Where available, staff using AI will undertake training on ethical AI use, privacy and limitations.

For kaiako, the use of AI does not remove the requirement to demonstrate and articulate an understanding of teaching standards.

Any breach or inappropriate use of AI must be reported immediately to the Privacy Officer as per the OUCA Privacy Policy.

Social Media Guidelines

At Otago University Childcare Association, we recognise that social media is a regular part of daily life. However, as professionals working with young tamariki and their whānau, it's important we uphold high standards of privacy, professionalism, and integrity – both in the workplace and online.

These guidelines are designed to support staff in using social media safely, ethically, and in a way that aligns with our association values, ECE regulations, and our responsibilities under the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand's Code of Professional Responsibility.

1. Professionalism Online

- As educators and role models, staff are expected to maintain professionalism on personal and professional social media platforms at all times.
- Content shared online – even in a personal capacity – can reflect on you as a kaiako and on our centre.
- Avoid engaging in online behaviour that could damage your professional reputation or the reputation of our centre.

2. Interactions with Parents and Whānau

- Staff are **strongly discouraged** from engaging with parents or whānau of enrolled tamariki through personal social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok).
- These connections may unintentionally create conflicts of interest, blur professional boundaries, or lead to misinterpretation of communication.
- Please use only association approved platforms and communication channels when engaging with parents.

3. Protecting Tamariki Privacy

- Under the **Privacy Act 2020** and our own association policies, **staff must not share any photos, videos, names or identifying details of tamariki** from the association on personal social media accounts.
- This includes group photos, learning activities, or centre events – even if parents have given verbal or written permission.
- All public sharing of centre-related content must be authorised by the manager.

4. Your Own Privacy and Safety

- Staff are encouraged to keep social media profiles private and to regularly check privacy settings.
- Be cautious about posting personal content that may affect how you are perceived in your professional role.
- Think carefully before accepting friend requests from colleagues, parents, or former families of the centre.

5. Work-Related Messaging and Groups

- Any online chat groups (e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, private Facebook groups) used for work-related purposes are considered **extensions of the workplace**.
- Communication in these forums must follow all association policies and expectations around:
    - Respectful and inclusive communication
    - Confidentiality and privacy
    - Appropriate language and behaviour
- These platforms should not be used to discuss sensitive matters relating to tamariki, whānau, or staff.

6. Reminders

- If you wouldn't say it at work, don't say it online.
- If you're unsure whether something is appropriate to post or share, speak to your head teacher or the manager.
- Breaches of these guidelines may be considered misconduct and will be addressed in line with OUCA employment agreements.

We trust our team to uphold these expectations with care and professionalism. These guidelines help protect our tamariki, our whānau, and each other, while supporting the safe use of online spaces.

If you have any pātai or concerns, please speak to your manager or head teacher.

Date: May 2026
Review date: May 2027
This policy will be reviewed annually.
Budget implications:
Computer Expenses
Professional Development
Policy and other References:
Education Regulations (Early Childhood Education) Reg 46 HS 32
Health and Safety Policy
www.netsafe.org.nz
Ministry of Education - Safer Technology for Schools (ST4S) Framework
The Paediatric Society of New Zealand - Recommendations for the use of digital technologies: schools, kura and early childhood education.