

Risk assessment and management – Digital Technology & Online Environments

Developing risk assessment and management plans is an ongoing part of daily practice for education and care services. This tool is a starting point to support your thinking around hazard identification and risk management when planning experiences for children. Use this tool to identify, assess and manage the risk of harm before an incident occurs. It is important to adapt this tool to fit your particular service so it is a meaningful part of daily practice.

Use the risk matrix and control measure below to help you complete this tool.

It is important to adapt this tool to fit each learning experience so that it is a meaningful part of practice.

Risk Matrix						
Consequences	Likelihood					
		Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
	Major	Moderate	High	High	Critical	Critical
	Significant	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Critical
	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
	Minor	Very low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	Insignificant	Very low	Very low	Low	Moderate	Moderate

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Experience plan: Computer room, iPads, Nintendo Switch, Television	Date: Any day the service is operational	Time:
Overview of the experience - Provide a brief overview of the experience <p>Children and young people have access to various forms of technology within the service, including iPads, Nintendo Switch, television, and laptops. When used appropriately and under the guidance of educators, digital technology—paired with awareness of cyber safety—can be a valuable tool for learning and engagement. Educators play an active role in supporting children's use of technology, helping them navigate digital resources in meaningful and developmentally appropriate ways. We use the internet as a platform to support research, enhance communication, and extend children's program ideas and emerging interests. The use of technology in our service is designed to encourage critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills among children and young people. When educators take photos, we are careful to avoid capturing any personal or identifying information, our focus is on highlighting the fun and positive experiences children have while in our care. As part of our enrolment process, families are asked to provide consent regarding the photographing of their child. This permission allows educators to capture images for documentation, learning displays, and communication with families, while ensuring that no identifying information is shared without consent. All images are stored securely in accordance with privacy and data protection guidelines. Photographs are retained only for as long as they are needed for educational or documentation purposes and are permanently deleted when no longer required. If a family does not wish for their child to be photographed under any circumstances, it is their responsibility to notify the Director in writing at the time of enrolment or as soon as their preference changes, our service will respect and adhere to all permissions and restrictions provided by families. We take proactive steps to engage children in age-appropriate conversations about online safety, helping them to develop an understanding of respectful and responsible digital behaviours. By implementing clear photo and technology policies, involving families in the process, and promoting responsible digital behaviours, our service is committed to creating a safe, respectful, and supportive online environment for all children, families, and educators.</p>		

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Rationale and links to children's outcomes - What value does this experience have for the child(ren)'s learning and development?

Outcome 1: Children and young people have a strong sense of identity-learn about safe and unsafe situations.

Outcome 4: Children and young people are confident and involved learners-explore the purpose and function of a range of tools and media.

Outcome 5: Children and young people are effective communicators-operate digital devices such as taking photos or making movies with a tablet.

Who will be participating? - In assessing and managing risk, consider the number of children and your knowledge of their capabilities and dispositions. In assessing and managing risk related to the use of digital technology, our educators carefully consider the number of children participating, as well as their individual capabilities, developmental stages, and dispositions. We acknowledge that each child's experiences, confidence, and needs around technology use may vary, and we are committed to providing inclusive, respectful, and developmentally appropriate digital experiences. As part of this commitment, we actively consider family preferences. We have received requests from some families to limit their child's access to iPads, laptops, or television. These preferences are respected and implemented as part of our collaborative approach to working in partnership with families. Access to the computer room is restricted to children aged 8 years and over. This aligns with our supervision practices and supports appropriate developmental use of the space and its equipment. Educators are diligent in ensuring that only age-appropriate content and devices are made accessible to children. Children who attend OSHC have the opportunity to engage with a range of technologies under direct educator supervision. All devices provided by the service are actively monitored, and internet content is filtered to protect the safety and wellbeing of all users. Educators take proactive steps to guide children in using technology responsibly and safely, including engaging them in age-appropriate discussions about digital citizenship and online safety.

Where will the experience occur? - Considerations include adequate space, ventilation, weather and environmental conditions.

The OSHC service has heating and cooling, and the computer room is equipped with an automated heating and cooling system to ensure a comfortable environment year-round. When children and young people play the Nintendo Switch, this activity typically takes place in either TR11 or the W5 Breakout Space. Our service also has two televisions available for use in both TR10 and TR11, providing flexible options for group viewing and program-related activities.

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What will the children be doing? - Include detail about the experience. Digital technology is used within our service not only for entertainment, but to support social interaction and learning. It provides opportunities for children and young people to form friendship groups through shared interests and cooperative play. Additionally, they are encouraged to explore how technology can be used as a valuable learning tool. With guidance from educators, children learn to engage with digital resources in ways that promote creativity, problem-solving and meaningful learning experiences.

What equipment will they be using? - Consider the equipment and materials required. All equipment is charged by educators prior to use to avoid hazards associated with charging during play and only educators have the passwords for all devices. Children and young people are guided in how to use devices safely and responsibly. They are allocated specific time slots to ensure fair access and to promote balanced screen time.

Who will be leading the experience? - Consider whether expertise is required for handling materials or if additional educators might be necessary. The use of digital technology within the service is closely supervised to ensure safety, appropriate use, and alignment with developmental needs. Only educators have access to passwords for each iPad, meaning children cannot access devices without educator assistance. All apps and games installed on devices are carefully selected and screened by educators to ensure they are age-appropriate and free from sensitive or unsuitable content. While no specialist expertise is required for the general handling of these materials, the presence of sufficient educators is essential to supervise use, support children's learning, and manage access fairly and safely.

Identify hazards - What are the potential hazards in this experience which could cause harm? A potential hazard in providing access to digital technology in the computer room—is the risk of children and young people accessing inappropriate material online. Children could be targeted by bullies through social media which can cause emotional distress, low self-esteem and anxiety, there are predators that groom and exploit children. There could be accidental or deliberate access to unsuitable content. Photos being shared without parent consent, photos shared online could show where a child goes to school or lives.

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Assess risks - Likelihood and severity - Given your knowledge of the experience, context and children, how likely is it that harm will occur? How severe might that harm be? Refer to the risk matrix, if required

The risk of harm to children is low; however, a negative experience on a laptop or iPad could still leave a lasting impression on a child. Educators actively supervise children and young people when using digital technology

Manage risks - Detail how the risk of harm will now be managed. Consider the role of active supervision in mitigating the risk of harm. Refer to the hierarchy of control, if required.

With children being actively supervised by educators and by following the hierarchy of control, the risk to children and young people remains low.

At the conclusion of the experience

Evaluation and review - Risk management - How effective were the controls for managing the risk of harm? What were the positive and negative outcomes of the experience?

Positive Outcomes: Children and young people are highly engaged and motivated when using digital technology. They find it enjoyable and stimulating, which can support learning, creativity, and the development of digital literacy skills, builds relationships between children, educators and parents. **Negative Outcomes:** Some children would prefer to stay indoors to play on a laptop, iPad or anything digital rather than run around outside and be physical.

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Evaluation and review - Teaching and learning - Critically reflect on teaching strategies and the children's learning. Were the identified intentions met? What was surprising about the children's involvement in the experience?

Digital technology offers valuable opportunities for enhancing children's learning, but its effectiveness depends heavily on the teaching strategies employed. When used intentionally, technology can support differentiated instruction, foster collaboration, and provide interactive, multisensory experiences that cater to various learning styles. For example, apps that allow children to create stories, explore coding, or engage in problem-solving activities can promote creativity, critical thinking, and autonomy. However, the use of digital technology in early learning environments also presents challenges. Passive use—such as extended screen time with limited interaction—can hinder engagement and meaningful learning. To avoid this, educators must adopt active, purposeful teaching strategies. This includes setting clear learning objectives, choosing age-appropriate and pedagogically sound digital tools, and integrating technology into broader learning experiences rather than using it in isolation.

Implications for future planning - Consider safety implications in addition to providing for the extension of learning when using digital technology.

A balanced approach to digital technology considers both the importance of safeguarding children and the potential for deeper, more engaging learning. With careful planning, supervision, and intentional use, educators can create enriching, safe digital learning environments that support children's development.

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Date of evaluation:

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