



POLICY STATEMENT

We live in a technological age. Technology is incorporated into many aspects of our lives and its use is an essential part of participating in modern day life. This is true not only for our working environments but for our social lives too.

At TWOOSH, we aim to provide technology commonly available in the children's homes, e.g., television, DVDs, electronic games, computers, tablets and music players.

Electronic media and electronic device use at TWOOSH may teach turn taking, time limits, sharing, competing with cooperation, sportsmanship, and winning and losing graciously. Including electronic media in the program gives children the ability to participate in activities socially popular in the community and readily available in their homes. Electronic devices may also be used for completing school projects and homework, where appropriate.

Duration and access to electronic media and the use of electronic devices should be limited to ensure that children are participating in other parts of the TWOOSH program. We discourage children from just sitting in front of a screen for extended durations.

REFERENCES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Education and Care Services National Regulations, 2011.
- Thornleigh West Public school Student Welfare and Discipline Policy, 2015.
- "Parent Guides", Australian Council on Children and the Media, <http://childrenandmedia.org.au/resources/fact-sheets>
- "Classification for films and computer games", Classification Branch, Attorney-General's Department, Australian Government, <http://www.classification.gov.au/Guidelines/Pages/Guidelines.aspx>

Responsibilities

The Director and Educators are responsible for decisions to include/exclude electronic media and electronic devices in the TWOOSH program. The nominated supervisor and educators will consider use of electronics based on the considerations mentioned in the 'Procedures' section.

For Vacation Care, permission will be sought from guardians, at enrolment time, to allow children to watch movies and play computer games with specified ratings. If guardians do not consent, their children will be not be able to attend TWOOSH during times where those activities are part of the TWOOSH program. This consequence will be explained to the guardians by the Director.

All movies and programs will be supervised by an Educator regardless of the rating.

Classifications

The Australian Government provides a classification system for movies (films) and computer games (see reference 2). Only movies and games with a 'G' or 'PG' rating will be permitted at TWOOSH. In addition, TWOOSH will comply with any age restrictions for movies and games reported on the packaging.

TWOOSH Electronic Devices

TWOOSH may provide electronic devices for programmed activities.

TWOOSH will use electronic devices that allows restriction of access to appropriate and acceptable electronic media (as defined by this policy), and activities programmed by educators.

Devices without features that enable restriction of access will not be provided by TWOOSH.

Non-TWOOSH Electronic Devices

- i) Children are not permitted to bring or use their own electronic devices (with or without communication capabilities) to TWOOSH. Examples of these include personal mobile phones, tablets, laptops, and gaming devices. Children do not need these devices to provide emergency communication as the Director or Authorised Person can contact guardians directly.
- ii) The Director may authorise an exception to (i) subject to a) a demonstrated necessity and agreed safeguards. Such exceptions will be communicated to all Educators, or b) when electronic devices form part of the programmed activities (eg if stipulated in the vacation care program).
- iii) TWOOSH does not take responsibility for any lost, stolen or damaged non-TWOOSH electronic devices.

Breaches

If a child is in breach of this policy while using a TWOOSH or non-TWOOSH electronic device, the device will be confiscated and guardians will be informed. Continued misuse of electronic devices may result in suspension or cancellation of the child's position at TWOOSH.

PROCEDURES

These procedures are owned by the Director.

Permission will be sought from guardians via enrolment forms to allow children to watch movies and play computer games with specified ratings.

Children will be encouraged to access electronic media and electronic devices in keeping with the stated principles of this policy. The Director and Educators consider health issues and the development of a variety of interests. Some factors that will be considered when making program decisions include:

- the weather (eg if it is too hot, cold or wet to be outdoors)
- the health, physiological and emotional states of the children (eg how tired the children are, how active the children have been)
- the balance of pace of activities (eg how active the children have been during the day, whether a calming influence is needed)
- the balance of time accessing electronic media and electronic devices
- the broader program objectives (eg if it can be used to extend or integrate current interests and events)
- the appropriateness of the content
- the academic merit of the content

Day to day decision making will be used by the Director and Educators to:

- limit commercial TV ads exposure, using ABC Network where possible
- program electronic media free times
- give preference to using DVDs, CDs and other electronic media where exposure to unfiltered ads and news updates are minimal
- live radio will not be used when children are present due to news and advertisements which may be inappropriate or covers sensitive issues.
- Supervise the use of ipads to limit exposure to advertisements and/or inappropriate content

TV use may be allowed during sporting broadcasts, or any broadcasts relevant to learning or current events in the world or community. Judgement will be made by educators as to whether the broadcast is appropriate for the age of the children. Educators will always be present during TV use.

TWOOSH Electronic Devices

- Parental locks will be set on all TWOOSH-provided laptops and tablets, and inappropriate words and phrases are blocked from internet browsing using parental lock filters.
- Children will be allocated set times throughout the week to use these, in ten-minute blocks at a time per child. Staff will supervise this in the TWOOSH room.
- Any child caught using these devices inappropriately will be banned from further use, and parents notified. The nominated supervisor will decide on a time when they may be able to use them again.

- Any attempts to circumvent parental controls or device restrictions will be met with disciplinary action.

Electronic Gaming

- TWOOSH provides a range of games for PlayStation and Wii, and these are used during Vacation Care, programmed activities, quiet times, and wet or extreme weather.
- Children are given short turns each and encouraged to engage in other activities while waiting for their turns.
- Classifications on all games are followed, and any age restrictions for games are met as per packaging.
- Children will not be permitted to use games which have inbuilt chat programs that allow unmonitored communication to external parties.

Non-TWOOSH electronic devices

Children are not permitted to use their own mobile phones (or other non-TWOOSH electronic device) unless authorised by the nominated supervisor (see the policy above). Use of children's own electronic devices will be compatible with Thornleigh West Public school Student Welfare and Discipline Policy (reference 3).

Additional Guidelines

The nominated supervisor and educators will consult and use "Parent Guides" provided by the Australian Council on Children and the Media (see reference 4).

Revisions

Date of next review: May 2022

Date	Reviewer	Approved by
23.03.18		TWOOSH Management Committee
18.03.19		TWOOSH Management Committee
24.02.2020		TWOOSH Management Committee
07.05.2021	AB	TWOOSH Management Committee