

POLICY DOCUMENT

Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services

Implementation Procedures - 2020

The Department of Education Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services policy provides advice to NSW public school communities in managing students' use of digital devices and online services. It promotes the learning, safety and wellbeing of students and the management of any risk of harm and distraction from the use of digital technology. The policy can be found at <https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/en/home/about-us/strategies-and-reports/our-reports-and-reviews/review-into-the-non-educational-use-of-mobile-devices-in-nsw-schools/Policy.pdf>

Kariong Mountains High School acknowledges the educational value of digital devices and online services in supporting and enhancing educational outcomes and student wellbeing. We also recognise they may cause harm if used inappropriately and that we need to support our students to use them in safe, responsible and respectful ways.

This policy and implementation procedures document provides a consistent framework for the safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services by students in our school. It sets out the shared responsibilities of school staff, students and parents and carers. It also provides a framework to manage potential risks to student safety and wellbeing.

This document covers student use of digital devices and online services in school related settings, including on school grounds, at school-related activities and outside of school where there is a clear and close connection between the school and the conduct of students. This document covers the use of school-provided and personal digital devices and all online services.

Failure in general to comply with the code of conduct will inevitably lead to a review of the policy and more severe restrictions relating to the possession and use of these devices.

Code of Conduct

Mobile phones, i-Pods, headphones, ear buds and other personal music or communication devices are permitted as a privileged use within the boundaries of the school subject to the following conditions.

- They may be used on the playground during free-time unless otherwise directed by a teacher.
- Individual teachers and/or their faculties maintain the authority to determine whether they are permitted to be used in a classroom and under what circumstances. However, this must be linked to educational reasons and not behaviour control and the teacher must have expressly given their permission on each occasion.
- If students choose to bring mobile phones/electronic devices to school they do so at their own risk. Students must ensure that these items are kept secure at all times. The school will not be responsible for the loss or damage of these items.
- If students have mobile phones at **school they must be switched off or placed in silent mode during class time. Students are not permitted to make calls, respond to calls or send SMS messages while in class.** Teachers should role model this practice and have previously alerted their Head Teacher if an exemption needs to be made.
- Access to mobile phone functions such as clock, calculator or learning based applications during class time is at the discretion of the class teacher. It is the student's responsibility to negotiate access with the class teacher for these functions.
- Students wishing to bring a mobile phone to school and not have it with them during the day can leave the phone with the office staff for safe keeping and collect it at the end of the day.
- Under no circumstances are mobile phones to be used to take photographs, video or voice recordings at school unless for educational purposes under the direction of a teacher.
- Under no circumstances are mobile phones to be taken into any examination or assessment tasks or be used at any assemblies or group meetings.
- If a teacher needs to address a student when a phone conversation is in progress on the playground, the student should immediately excuse themselves from the call and/or put it on hold until the face to face communication is completed.
- When being spoken to by any teacher in a face to face communication, headphones should be removed from both ears as a courtesy to the speaker.
- The management of mobile phones on excursions and sporting visits will be at the discretion of the organiser.
- If a student needs to have their mobile telephone switched on to receive an urgent telephone call, then the following procedures are to be followed:
- A note from their parent/s must be brought to school explaining, in full, the urgency of the situation. This note must be presented to the Deputy Principal who will countersign if it is approved. The note is then to be presented to the class teacher/s at the beginning of the lesson/s.

- If a student does not comply with the above procedures, students may have their phone confiscated by their teacher and/or some further imposition such as a detention may be imposed. Persistent offenders may be dealt with under the school's Fair Discipline policy or be required to surrender their phone to the office at the start of the day and retrieve it at the end of the day.
- Confiscated phones are expected to be given by the teacher to the front office for safe keeping. Whilst the phone is in the teacher's possession, the teacher is responsible for its care. The phone can be collected by the student from the school office at the end of the day.

Parents and carers share responsibility in supporting students to use digital devices and online services in a safe, responsible and respectful way. Following are our recommendations for parents and carers:

- recognise the role they play in educating their children and modelling the behaviours that underpin the safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services
- support the implementation of the school's policy
- take responsibility for their child's use of digital devices and online services at home, such as use of online services with age and content restrictions
- communicate with school staff and the school community respectfully
- switch off or put their devices on silent when at official school functions and during meetings
- provide digital devices that meet school specifications if participating in a bring your own device program and completing relevant paperwork.

Appendix: Glossary of Terms

Bring your own device is an optional program where parents and carers can provide personal digital devices for use at school. Any decision to adopt a bring your own device program is made by the principal in consultation with a school community. All digital devices used in schools are covered by the Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services policy. Schools retain discretion to determine the specifications of personal devices to be used at school.

Digital citizenship refers to the skills and knowledge a person needs to effectively use digital technologies in a positive way so they can participate in society, communicate with others, and create and consume digital content.

Digital devices are electronic devices that can receive, store, process and share digital information and connect to applications (apps), websites and other online services. They include desktop computers, laptops, tablets, smartwatches, smartphones and other devices.

Digital literacy is the set of social, emotional and technological skills and competencies that people need to understand to use digital devices and online services, and to expand their opportunities for education, employment and social participation, including entertainment.

Educational purpose is any use approved by school staff that supports student learning, wellbeing and educational outcomes.

Image-based abuse occurs when intimate, nude or sexual images are distributed, or threatened to be distributed, without the consent of those pictured. This includes real, altered and drawn pictures and videos. This is a crime in NSW.

Online bullying involves using technology such as the internet or mobile devices to bully someone. Bullying behaviour has three key features. It involves the intentional misuse of power in a relationship. It is ongoing and repeated, and it involves behaviours that can cause harm. Bullying behaviour can also involve intimidation, victimisation and harassment, including that based on sex, race, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.

Online safety is the safe, responsible and respectful use of digital media, devices, other technology and online services.

Online services are any software, website or application that can gather, process or communicate information. This includes digital classrooms, chat and messaging, online games, virtual reality, social media and other online spaces.

School-related settings include school grounds, school-related activities and outside of school where there is a clear and close connection between the school and the conduct of students. This connection may exist in situations where: there is discussion about school taking place outside of school hours; a student is wearing their school uniform but is not on school premises; a relationship between parties commenced at school; students are online in digital classrooms; and where online contact has flow on consequences at school and duty of care requires the school to respond once an incident is reported.

School staff refers to school personnel who have some level of responsibility for implementing policy and the school digital devices and online service procedure. This includes principals, senior staff, teachers, non-teaching staff, school administrative staff, volunteers and contracted staff engaged by schools.