



# Merrylands High School

## Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services Procedure

### Purpose

This procedure guides student use of digital devices and online services at our school.

Our 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.

### Scope

This procedure 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 procedure 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 procedure covers the use of school-provided and personal digital devices and all online services.

### Our School's Approach

Generally electronic devices will be considered to be used inappropriately if they:

- Disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school
- Threaten or are likely to threaten the safety or well-being of any person
- Are in breach of any law

Whilst students are in possession of an electronic device the following safe respectful learner expectations apply.

- The electronic device is only to be used in class under teacher instruction for educational purposes. For the safety of the whole school community this will be closely monitored
- The electronic device cannot be used to bully, intimidate or otherwise harass people through any SMS or text message, photographic, video or other data transfer system available on the device

The safety and security of electronic devices is the responsibility of the owner. The school accepts no responsibility if a device is lost, stolen, damaged or misplaced. This includes traveling to and from school and during PE/sport lessons.

Arrangements can be made with a student (if appropriate) to provide access to a phone in the office area.

### Exemptions

Exemptions to any part of this procedure may apply for some students in some circumstances. Parents and carers can request an exemption and these will be considered on a case-by-case basis and granted when required by law or at the principal's discretion.

## Consequences for inappropriate use

If students use electronic devices inappropriately action can include:

- Confiscating the electronic device from the student. The electronic device will be locked away and arrangements made to return the electronic device to the student at the conclusion of the day or via parent contact
- Where a school has reasonable grounds to suspect that a device contains data, the Principal may confiscate the device for the purpose of confirming the existence of the material. Depending on the nature of the material involved, school disciplinary action may be appropriate or further action may be taken including referral to the police
- Students must not use the department's network services to seek out, access, store or send any material of an offensive, obscene, pornographic, threatening, abusive or defamatory nature. Such use may result in disciplinary and/or legal action
- Deleting material from electronic device
- Applying the Student Management plan

## Contact between students and parents and carers during the school day

Should a student need to make a call during the school day, they must approach the administration office and ask for permission to use the school's phone

During school hours, parents and carers are expected to only contact their children via the school office.

## Responsibilities and obligations

### For students

- Be safe, responsible and respectful users of digital devices and online services and support their peers to be the same.
- Respect and follow school rules and procedures and the decisions made by staff, knowing that other schools may have different arrangements.
- Communicate respectfully and collaboratively with peers, school staff and the school community and behave in the ways described in the Behaviour Code for Students.

### 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 implementation of the school procedure, including its approach to resolving issues.
- 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 and collaboratively as outlined in the *2018 School Community Charter*.
- Switch off or put their digital devices on silent when at official school functions, during meetings and when assisting in the classroom.
- Provide digital devices that meet school specifications where a school is participating in a bring your own device program and complete any related paperwork.

### For the principal and teachers

- Deliver learning experiences that encourage safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services. This includes:
  - Establishing agreed classroom expectations for using digital devices and online services, in line with this procedure and departmental policy.

- Identifying strategies to ensure that all students are able to engage in classroom activities including strategies to accommodate students without a digital device.
- Reading and abiding by the Terms of Service for any online services they use in teaching, including those limiting use by age.
- Educating students about online privacy, intellectual property, copyright, digital literacy and other online safety related issues.
- Model appropriate use of digital devices and online services in line with departmental policy.
- Respond to and report any breaches and incidents of inappropriate use of digital devices and online services as required by school procedures, departmental policy and any statutory and regulatory requirements. This includes:
  - Reporting the creation, possession or distribution of indecent or offensive material to the Incident Support and Report hotline as required by the Incident Notification and Response Policy and Procedures and consider any mandatory reporting requirements.
  - Working with the department and the Office of the eSafety Commissioner (if necessary) to resolve cases of serious online bullying and image-based abuse.
  - Following the school’s behaviour management plan when responding to any incident of inappropriate student behaviour relating to the use of digital devices or online services.
- If feasible and particularly as issues emerge, support parents and carers to understand strategies that promote their children’s safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services.
- Participate in professional development related to appropriate use of digital devices and online services.

**For non-teaching staff, volunteers and contractors**

- Be aware of the department’s policy, this procedure and act in line with the conduct described.
- Report any inappropriate use of digital devices and online services to the principal, school executive or school staff they are working with.

**Communicating this procedure to the school community**

This procedure will be shared with every student and parent at the time of enrolment and can be found on the school’s website.

**Complaints**

If a student, parent or carer has a complaint under this procedure, they should first follow our school’s complaint process. If the issue cannot be resolved, please refer to the department’s [guide for students/parents/ carers about making a complaint about our schools.](#)

-----  
 I have read and understand the school’s electronic devices policy.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_