

# Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services

Berridale Public School (2023)



# Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services

## Purpose

This Implementation Plan 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. Berridale Public School supports the restrictions of mobile phones in accordance with the NSW Department of Education: Students' Use of Mobile Phones in Schools policy <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-management-schools/student-use-of-mobile-phones>. Mobile phone use in schools can impact student learning and wellbeing. Restricting mobile phone use at school aims to increase focus in classrooms, remove distractions and promote positive social interaction, while reducing the potential for online bullying.

## Scope

This Implementation Plan 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

**Primary aged students may not use digital devices during class time, recess and lunch unless for an educational purpose or for other reasons such as an adjustment to support learning and wellbeing. Our school has elected to adopt the 'Phones Off and Away' management strategy to reduce the distractions to students in the classroom.**

## Off and Away

Personal devices, including mobile phones and smart watches, are off or in 'flight mode' and out of classrooms (out of sight) during school hours and will be confiscated by the teacher and/or school Principal if they are used between the hours of 8:45am and 3:15pm, unless directed by the teacher. Personal devices may only be turned on once the student is off school grounds.

## Devices for Learning

Teachers will decide if personal devices are required to support teaching and learning programs.

## Exemptions

An exemption from parts of this policy or the school procedure can be requested from the principal by parents, carers, school counsellors and other student support staff, and, if required, students themselves. This may cover times when or places where use would otherwise be restricted. Except where required by law, the school principal has discretion to consider and approve exemptions and to choose which parts of the school procedure the exemptions applies. The exemption may be ongoing or for a certain time period.

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## Consequences for Inappropriate Use

- The student is given a warning from a teacher or other staff member.
- The student's access to the school network is restricted through the EMU tool on the DoE portal.
- The student's digital device is confiscated by a staff member.
- Confiscated devices are handed in to the school office and can be collected at the end the day.

## Contact Between Students and Parents During the School Day

Should a student need to contact a parent or carer 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, not by a Smart watch or mobile phone.

## Responsibilities and Obligations

### For Students

- Keep their mobile phone switched off or in flight mode and out of sight during school hours.
- 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.
- Accept responsibility for the safe keeping of personal devices, including theft of and/or damage to a personal device. Acknowledge that the school accepts no responsibility for theft or damage caused to students' personal devices (including phones, smartwatches, ipads or laptops).

### 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. Check Internet browser history on a regular basis to monitor viewed content.

- Support implementation of the school procedure, including its approach to resolving issues.
- Communicate with school staff and the school community respectfully and collaboratively as outlined in the 2018 School Community Charter (<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/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.
- Acknowledge that the school accepts no responsibility for theft or damage caused to students' personal devices (including phones, smartwatches, ipads or laptops).

### 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; and 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; and 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 Implementation Plan to the School Community

### Students:

- Classroom teachers will inform their students about this new procedure.

### Parents and Carers:

- Parents and carers will be advised via the school newsletter, Class Dojo and Sentral for Parents portal.
- This procedure can be accessed electronically via the school's website and in hardcopy at the school's administration office.

## Complaints

If a student, parent or carer has a complaint under this procedure, they should first follow our school's complaints process. If the issue cannot be resolved, please refer to the Department's guide for making a complaint about our schools (<https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rights-and-accountability/complaints-compliments-and-suggestions>).

## Resources

### Student use of digital devices and online services

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2020-0471>

### Digital Citizenship

<https://www.digitalcitizenship.nsw.edu.au/articles/student-use-of-digital-devices-and-online-services>

### eSafetyCommisioner

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/classroom-resources>

### thinkyouknow (think u know)

<https://www.thinkuknow.org.au/>

### Behaviour Code for Students

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/translated-documents/behaviour-code-for-students>

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## PCYC

<https://www.pycnsw.org.au/internet-safety2020>

## Kids Helpline

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

## Key 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.

**General capabilities** are the broad collection of knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions described within the Australian curriculum and NSW syllabus.

**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.

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**Reasonable adjustment** is a measure or action taken to assist a student with disability to participate in education and training on the same basis as other students.

**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.

## Review

The principal or delegated staff will review this procedure annually.

This plan was developed in 2023 by:

Kimberley Whitehead, Principal

In consultation with Berridale Public School P&C, staff and students

## School Contact Information

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