

KENTHURST PUBLIC SCHOOL

STUDENT USE OF DIGITAL DEVICES AND ONLINE SERVICES POLICY

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.

The Department of Education, and as such Kenthurst PS, does what it reasonably can to provide safe and secure access to school resources, equipment and infrastructure, including internet connectivity, for students at school.

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

A digital device includes phones, smart phones, iPods, smart watches or any device used to send/receive messages or record still or video images. This policy still applies to devices that can be switched to silent/offline mode. Upon arrival at school, the digital device is to be handed in to the school office where it shall be kept in a personalised envelope/small bag. At the end of the school day, students are able to collect their device prior to leaving school grounds. Whilst in school care, we do not assume responsibility for any loss, theft or damage to a device. Also, before/ after school or if a device is not handed in – the school will accept no responsibility. There are several reasons for this rule including restricting interruptions to learning environments, privacy restrictions, student safety and security of devices. This school rule is consistent with NSW Department of Education policy. As always, parents/students are able to make contact via the school office should urgent communication be required.

Devices will not be allowed to be taken to camps, overnight excursions, PSSA games or zone trials (that are held during school hours), school excursions or other off-site activities.

The school's practice is to have all students engaged and focused upon their learning. Students are not permitted to use the school online service to communicate by text, email or through apps, in any form to parents, friends, known or unknown people or sites. Students infringing on these conditions will have their privileges revoked as well as face potential disciplinary action.

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. An example of an exceptional circumstance with grounds for exemption would be a diabetic student who requires the device to monitor blood glucose levels. Cases of exceptional circumstances need to be discussed and agreed upon with the School Learning & Support Team prior to a student bringing the device.

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE USE – RANGE OF INTERVENTIONS

- Confiscated devices are handed in to the school office and can be collected at the end the day.
- The student is reminded of school expectations, to reflect on behaviour and to make better choices.
- The student is given a warning/level, according to our PBL framework, from a teacher or other staff member.
- The student is referred to the Assistant Principal.
- The student's access to the school network is restricted through the EMU tool on the DoE portal.
- The teacher or Principal arranges a meeting with the student's parent or carer.
- Suspension and possible Police and/or Child Wellbeing involvement for serious incidents.
- If a student has breached the procedure by using their personal digital device during school hours and/or events, the device should be confiscated until the end of the day.

CONTACT BETWEEN STUDENTS AND PARENTS AND CARERS DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

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.

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;
- Communicate with school staff and the school community respectfully and collaboratively as outlined in the 2018 School Community Charter (<https://education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/parents-and-carers/going-to-school/school-community-charter>).

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.
- 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;
- Participate in professional development related to appropriate use of digital devices and online services;
- Be aware of the amount of screen time undertaken by students each day;
- Actively monitor device use during class time;
- Be aware of content prior to public viewing by students.

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

Students:

- Classroom teachers will inform their students periodically about the school policy.

Parents and carers:

- Parents and carers will be advised via the school newsletter, with period reminders.
- 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>).

REVIEW

The principal or delegated staff will review this procedure annually.

APPENDIX 1: KEY TERMS

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

APPENDIX 2: WHAT IS SAFE, RESPONSIBLE AND RESPECTFUL STUDENT BEHAVIOUR?

Be SAFE

- Protect your personal information, including your name, address, school, email address, telephone number, pictures of you and other personal details.
- Only use your own usernames and passwords, and never share them with others.
- Let a teacher or other responsible adult know immediately if you find anything online that is suspicious, harmful, in appropriate or makes you uncomfortable.
- Never hack, disable or bypass any hardware or software security, including any virus protection, spam and filter settings.

Be RESPONSIBLE

- Follow all school rules and instructions from school staff, including when using digital devices and online services.
- Understand that everything done on the school's network is monitored and can be used in investigations, court proceedings or for other legal reasons.
- Use online services in responsible and age-appropriate ways: only use online services in the ways agreed to with your teacher; only access appropriate content and websites

Be RESPECTFUL

- Respect and protect the privacy, safety and wellbeing of others.
- Do not share anyone else's personal information.
- Do not harass or bully other students, school staff or anyone, this includes cyberbullying using a digital device or online service.
- Do not send or share messages or content that could cause harm, including things that might be: inappropriate, offensive or abusive; upsetting or embarrassing to another person or group; considered bullying; private or confidential; and/or a virus or other harmful software.

RESOURCES:

Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services Policy

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2020-0471?refid=285776>

Digital Citizenship Website

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/digital-citizenship/teaching-and-learning/digital-devices-in-nsw-schools>

E-safety Commissioner

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/>