

TECHNOLOGY GUIDELINES

Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services at Wamberal Public School

Purpose

Our school acknowledges the educational value of technology, including all 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 procedure provides a consistent framework for the safe, responsible and respectful use of technology by students in our school. This includes all digital devices, such as mobile phones and/or wearable devices, and online services. 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 technology, including all 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 (for example travelling on school buses). This procedure covers the use of school-provided and personal digital devices and all online services.

- 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, wearable devices including smartwatches, smartphones and other devices.
- 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.

Our School's Approach

The Department of Education stipulates that the use of technology, including all digital devices by primary school students must be restricted during class, at recess and at lunch unless approved by a teacher or principal for an educational purpose, where use forms part of a reasonable adjustment for student learning and wellbeing, or where an exemption has been granted for other reasons.

Our school supports this stance and student personal digital devices are not permitted at Wamberal Public School.

Exemptions

Students who need to bring or use a mobile phone or other digital device must apply for an exemption from the Principal. An exemption can be requested 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.

The application form attached is used to apply for an exemption. Students who have successfully applied for an exemption:

- Students bringing a digital device to school must have it switched off and taken into the front office during the day, and signed back out at the end of the day. It **cannot** be kept in the student's bag or on their person.

- For students using wearable devices, such as smart watches, they must have the device either changed to school mode or aeroplane mode prior to attending school. The student may then wear the device.
- The digital device is not to be accessed during school time or while on school grounds.
- Consequences for inappropriate use may include:
 - ✓ Referral to the Assistant Principal, Deputy Principal or Principal.
 - ✓ *First Breach* – Classified as a major incident as per the Behaviour Management Plan which results in attendance at the Wellbeing Room, and a meeting with the student's parent or carer. The device will be signed into the front office as per the procedure.
 - ✓ *Second Breach* – Classified as a Critical Incident as per the Behaviour Management Plan, which results in a Formal Caution or Suspension decided by the principal. The device will be signed into the front office as per the procedure.
 - ✓ *Third Breach* – Results in a Suspension.
 - ✓ Restricted access to the school network through the EMU tool on the DoE portal.
 - ✓ Police and / or Child Wellbeing involvement for serious or unlawful incidents. The device would be confiscated for evidence in this instance.

Responsibilities and obligations Students:

- Be safe, responsible and respectful users of technology, including all 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 and the Behaviour management Plan.

Parents and carers:

- Ensure any wearable devices, including smartwatches have been changed to school mode or aeroplane mode, prior to the child attending school. During school hours, parents and carers are expected to only contact their children via the school office.
- Recognise the role they play in educating their children and modelling the behaviours that underpin the safe, responsible and respectful use of technology, including all 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 technology, including all digital devices and online services at home such as use of online services with age and content restrictions.
- Switch off, or put their own digital devices on silent, when at official school functions, during meetings and when assisting in the classroom.

Staff:

- Be aware of the department's policy, this procedure and act in line with the conduct described.
- Deliver learning experiences that encourage safe, responsible and respectful use of technology, including all 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 can 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 technology, including all digital devices and online services in line with departmental policy
- Respond to and report any breaches and incidents of inappropriate use of technology, including all 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 (1800811523) and consider mandatory reporting
 - 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 discipline code when responding to any incident of inappropriate student behaviour relating to the use of digital devices or online services

Consultation and Communication of this procedure to the school community

This procedure has been developed in consultation with the Wamberal Public School P&C.

This procedure will be communicated with students, staff, parents and carers at the beginning of each year and in school information and induction materials.

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.

Review

The Principal or delegated staff will review this procedure annually.

Reviewed: 21 July 2025

Ratified by P&C: 18 August 2025

Appendix 1: Key terms

- 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.
- 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.
- 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 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.
- 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.

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.
- Ask a teacher or other responsible adult for help if anyone online asks for your personal information, wants to meet you, or offers you money or gifts
- Let a teacher or other responsible adult know immediately if you find anything online that is suspicious, harmful, inappropriate 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 when using digital devices and online services.
- 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, including when using the school's filtered network and personal, unfiltered networks; and do not use online services to buy or sell things online, to gamble or to do anything that breaks the law.
- Understand that everything done on the school's network is monitored and can be used in investigations, court proceedings or for other legal reasons

Be Learners

- Respect and protect the privacy, safety and wellbeing of self and others.
- Do not share anyone else's personal information.
- Get permission before you take a photo or video of someone from the person and from a teacher.
- 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.

STUDENT USE OF TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING MOBILE PHONE / WEARABLE DEVICES/ DIGITAL DEVICES - APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION

Student Name: _____ Class: _____

Student Mobile number: _____

Wamberal Public School has clear guidelines and procedures for the appropriate use of technology, including all digital devices as outlined in the Wamberal Public School Technology Guidelines - Student Use of Digital Devices Procedures. The school accepts that some parents / carers give their children digital devices for reasons related to personal safety and security outside of school hours.

In order for this to occur, it is necessary to apply for an exemption from the principal. This process includes reading and understanding the *WPS Technology Guidelines - Student Use of Digital Devices and Online services procedure* and co-signing the following agreement with the parent / carer.

STUDENT AGREEMENT

I will leave my digital device switched off and sign into the front office for the duration of the school day. It will be signed out at the conclusion of the school day. If it is a wearable device, I will have switched it to either school mode or aeroplane mode. In this case I will still be able to wear the device.

- I will not access it during school times, school activities, or while on school grounds.
- I understand and will abide by all the guidelines for acceptable use of digital devices at Wamberal Public School.
- I understand the behaviours that constitute unacceptable use of digital devices and will not engage in these behaviours at any time.
- I acknowledge that if I break the terms of this agreement my parents/carers will be contacted, and I may not be allowed to bring my device onto school grounds.

Student Name	
Phone Number (if applicable)	
Student Signature	
Date	

PARENT / CARER AGREEMENT

I give permission for my child to carry a digital device to school. I have read the *Wamberal Public School Technology Guidelines Student Use of Digital Devices Procedures* and discussed these procedures with my child. I agree to support school guidelines with regards to digital device use and agree to support school decisions and actions regarding digital devices. I understand that this form will be kept on file and details may be used to assist in identifying a digital device should the need arise.

Parent / Carer Name	
Parent / Carer Signature	
Date	

PRINCIPAL APPROVAL

Principal Name	
Principal Signature	