



Burraneer Bay Public School

Appropriate Use of Digital Communication Devices

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

The NSW Government has announced restrictions on the use of digital communication devices in **all** NSW schools beginning in Term 4, 2023.

As you may know, digital communication devices are banned for primary school students in all NSW schools. To continue supporting the learning environment at Burraneer Bay Public School, we are reinforcing our policy regarding the use of digital communication devices, including but not limited to mobile phones and smartwatches, during school hours.

To help reduce distractions, promote focus in the classroom, and encourage positive social interaction, we are ensuring that all digital communication devices remain turned off and kept in student bags throughout the school day. This includes all break times, such as lunch and recess, as well as on school-based excursions.

Students will still be able to carry their phones while travelling to and from school.

Only the principal has the authority to approve exemptions to the guidelines outlined in the School's Use of Digital Communication Devices Policy. Applications for exemption should only be requested due to exceptional circumstances.

We are excited to make our school a digital communication device-free space to improve learning and engagement, however, we will always make sure you can contact your child in an emergency. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school directly on **(02) 9523 4869**. The ***Use of Digital Communication Devices Policy*** can be accessed electronically via the school's website and in hardcopy at the school's administration office.

Sincerely,

Victoria Pantelis

Principal

Rebecca Harris

ICT Coordinator



Burraneer Bay Public School

Appropriate Use of Digital Communication Devices Agreement

As part of Burraneer Bay Public School's commitment to fostering a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment, students and parents/carers must agree to the following guidelines regarding the use of digital communication devices, including but not limited to mobile phones, tablets, smartwatches, and laptops.

Student Agreement

I have read the Burraneer Bay Public School's Use of Digital Communication Devices Policy and agree to the following:

1. I will keep my mobile phone switched off and kept in my school bag during school hours.
2. When wearing a smartwatch to school, I will switch it to Aeroplane Mode as soon as I arrive at school.
3. I will only use digital devices for educational purposes when instructed by my teacher.
4. I will respect the privacy of others by not recording, photographing, or sharing content without consent.
5. I will follow school rules and teacher instructions regarding device use.
6. I will report any incidents of cyberbullying, inappropriate content, or misuse of devices to a teacher or school leader.
7. I understand that failure to follow these guidelines may result in consequences, including confiscation of my device by teachers, my parents being contacted and I may be banned from bringing my digital device onto school grounds.

Parent/Carer Agreement

I acknowledge that I have read and understood Burraneer Bay Public School's **Use of Digital Communication Devices Policy** and agree to support its implementation.

1. I/we give permission for my child to carry a digital communication device to school.
2. I will encourage my child to use digital communication devices responsibly and in accordance with the school's policy.
3. I understand that the school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal devices.
4. I acknowledge that my child's device may be confiscated if misused, and I will support the school's decisions regarding appropriate consequences.
5. I/we understand the correct process to follow when it is necessary to contact my child during the school day.
6. I will discuss appropriate online behaviour and digital citizenship with my child.
7. I acknowledge that I have discussed this agreement with my child and that we both understand its terms. I have read and understood both the agreement and Policy and am signing on behalf of myself and my child.

Student Name (print): _____ **Class:** _____

Student Mobile Phone Number: _____

Parent/Carer Name/s (print): _____

Parent/Carer Signature/s: _____ **Date:** _____



Burraneer Bay Public School

"Steady & True"

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Use of Digital Communication Devices Policy

1. Rationale

The staff at Burraneer Bay Public School recognise that digital communication devices, including mobile phones and smart devices, are an integral part of modern life. These devices offer benefits such as ease of communication, enhanced learning opportunities, and a sense of personal safety. However, their use also presents challenges, including distractions in the classroom, risks to student wellbeing, cyberbullying, and potential breaches of privacy. While the school acknowledges that some students may require access to these devices before or after school, clear guidelines are necessary to ensure their responsible use. This policy establishes expectations that promote a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment, balancing the advantages of technology with the need to maintain focus and integrity in the school setting.

2. Purpose

This policy provides clear guidelines on the appropriate use of digital communication devices, including but not limited to mobile phones, tablets, smartwatches, laptops, iPads and other internet-connected devices, to support a safe, respectful, and productive learning environment at Burraneer Bay Public School. It applies to all students, staff, and visitors while on school grounds, at school-related activities, and in any situation where student conduct is closely connected to the school. This policy aligns with NSW Department of Education guidelines and promotes responsible digital citizenship among all stakeholders.

3. Student Use of Digital Communication Devices

- Students are only permitted to bring a digital communication device to school once the *Burraneer Bay Public School Appropriate Use of Digital Communication Devices Agreement* has been read, discussed and signed with parents and returned to school.
- All students are to be made aware of the unacceptable uses of digital communication devices and to ensure they have a clear understanding of what is and is not appropriate.
- Mobile phones must be switched off and kept in students' bags during school hours.
- Students wearing smartwatches to school are to have their devices on Aeroplane Mode during school hours. These devices are not to be used to make calls, send text messages, access the internet, take photos, use recording devices or any other application while students are on site at Burraneer Bay Public School.
- Personal laptops or tablets may be used under teacher supervision for educational purposes.

- Students may be required to remove their smartwatch and store it in their bag for the remainder of the school day if they are using it in a way that breaches the digital device policy.
- The school accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged devices. This relates to devices at school or whilst travelling to or from school.
- Students must not lend a device to another student for use as a phone, for text messaging or for use as a camera or recording device. The student who owns the phone will be responsible for its use.
- Students are not permitted to bring communication devices on school excursions and overnight camps. School staff will not be held responsible for the security of phones should this guideline be breached. In instances where students need to contact their parents, this will be organised by supervising staff.

4. Staff Use of Digital Devices

- Staff must model appropriate digital behaviour and limit personal use of mobile phones during instructional time.
- Staff should follow school procedures for communicating with students via digital platforms and avoid personal messaging apps for school-related communication.
- Respect privacy by not recording, photographing, or sharing content without consent.

5. Acceptable Use of Devices and Online Conduct

Students:

- Use devices in accordance with school rules and teacher instructions.
- Respect privacy by not recording, photographing, or sharing content without consent.
- Use school-approved communication channels for educational discussions.
- Report inappropriate content or cyberbullying to a teacher or school leader.

Parents, carers and community members:

- At all official school functions, during meetings or when assisting in classrooms, devices should be switched off or placed on 'silent'. Parents and community members are asked to leave the function, meeting or learning space if they need to use their communication device.
- Respect privacy by not recording, photographing, or sharing content without consent.

6. Unacceptable Use

- Students are not to be in the possession of a mobile phone at any time during school hours.
- Playing games or accessing non-educational websites during class time instead of completing assigned work.
- Using devices to harass, intimidate, or bully others.
- Using obscene, derogatory or socially unacceptable language while using a digital device.
- Accessing, creating, or sharing inappropriate or offensive content.
- Bypassing school internet filters or accessing restricted sites.
- Using devices to cheat or disrupt learning.
- Using devices to receive, download and display inappropriate photographs or other material.
- Using devices to take photographs or record other people without their consent.

7. Consequences of Misuse

Violations of this policy may result in:

- Students who infringe the guidelines in this policy will have their device confiscated by school staff. The device will then be stored securely until the student's parents are informed and arrangements are made for parents to collect the device.
- Parental notification and involvement.
- Suspension of device privileges for repeated infractions.
- Further disciplinary action in accordance with the school's Behaviour Management Policy.

8. Exemptions

Only the principal has the authority to approve exemptions from the guidelines outlined in the School's Use of Digital Communication Devices Policy. Exemption requests should be made only in exceptional circumstances.

9. Contact between students and parents and carers during the school day

Should a student need to contact a parent or carer during the school day, they must not use their digital device for any reason. Instead, they should go through the school office. During school hours, parents and carers are expected to only contact their children via the school office. These measures are to ensure the highest level of safety and wellbeing for students.

10. Communicating this Policy to the school community

Students:

- Classroom teachers will inform their students about this Policy.
- At the beginning of each year, the *Appropriate Use of Digital Communication Devices Letter and Agreement* will be sent home for parents and carers to read and discuss its terms with their child. Parents and carers will sign on behalf of themselves and their child.

Parents and Carers:

- Parents and carers will be advised via the school's digital communication platform.
- This policy can be accessed electronically via the school's website and in hardcopy at the school's administration office.

11. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

Approved by: Victoria Pantelis

Date of Implementation: March 2025