

School Digital Devices and Online Services Procedure

Berkeley Vale Public School's School Digital Devices and Online Services Procedure has been developed to ensure the school's digital device practices align to the [school digital devices and online services policy](#) as set by NSW Department of Education, as well as accepted school practices and requirements.

Rationale

At Berkeley Vale Public School, we aim to empower our students to engage, innovate and inspire by providing them an education that inspires them to become lifelong learners. For the purpose of this document, 'digital devices' includes mobile phones and smart watches.

Purpose

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

Berkeley Vale Public 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.

This 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

Berkeley Vale Public School acknowledges that students may need to be in possession of a mobile telephone at school for reasons relating to their safety in travelling to and from school. However, in accordance with the DoE 'Student Use of Digital Devices & Online Services Policy' (2020), all 'primary schools will restrict the use of digital devices, including mobile phones and smart watches during school hours. Primary-aged students will not be allowed to use digital devices during class time, recess and lunch unless for an educational purpose or where a student needs it for other reasons, such as an adjustment for disability'.

If a student brings a digital device to school the student's responsibilities include:

- The student must hand their mobile phones, turned off, to their teacher in the morning. Teachers will lock all phones away in a secure spot for the day. Students may collect their mobile phones at the end of the school day. Students who bring mobile phones to school do so at their own risk.
- The student must take full responsibility for these devices. The school or staff will not be responsible for their loss, theft or damage nor for investigating loss or damage. Students who bring them to school do so at their own risk.

- Students are not permitted to use their mobile phones or devices on school grounds or at any off-site school business day/excursion unless principal permission is granted (e.g. in medical cases). All communication must go through the school communication avenues.
- Under no circumstances will inappropriate use of digital devices with cameras be tolerated. Students found to be using any camera contrary to this acceptable use policy will be dealt with under the school discipline policy. Disciplinary action will be taken in all cases.
- Students must not use mobile telephones or other digital devices to threaten, bully, intimidate or otherwise harass other people through any SMS or text message, photographic, video or other data transfer system available on the telephone or for any illegal activity. Such activities may incur disciplinary action including suspension.

Exemptions

Use of digital devices must be permitted at recess, lunch and during class-time if a student requires a digital device or online service for **medical reasons or for reasonable adjustments made as part of their individual education plan**. These are not considered 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

Appropriate disciplinary measure as determined by the school's welfare policy.

- [Confiscation](#) of the mobile telephone or other digital device until such time as their parent or caregiver is able to attend school to collect the device.
- Other disciplinary action, including reporting to police, in cases where students have bullied or threatened or harassed other students or staff via the mobile telephone or other personal communication device or where the device has been used to take photographs or display inappropriate material.

Contact between students, parents and carers during the day

During school hours, parents and carers are expected to only contact their children via the school office on 4388 1796.

- If a parent or caregiver needs to contact a student at school as a result of an emergency, they are required to call the school's main office and a message will be sent to the student.
- If a student needs to make emergency contact with anyone they must do so through the school's main office.
- Students are expected to continue the immediate reporting of incidents such as accident/illness or behaviour to teaching staff during school hours for their action.

Responsibilities and Obligations

Supporting students to use digital devices and online services in safe, responsible, and respectful ways is a shared responsibility. Recommended inclusions are listed below.

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 [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.

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

- Teachers will be informed about this procedure through staff and/or stage meetings.
- Students will be informed about this procedure through wellbeing lessons.
- Parents and carers will be advised via the school newsletter and social media platforms. 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 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](#).

Review

The principal or delegated staff will review this procedure annually.