New Lambton Public School
P.O. Box 320
New Lambton NSW 2305

Tel: 4957 1511
Email: newlambton-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services Procedure

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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.

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

For clarity of these school procedures, 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.

At New Lambton PS students must not use personal digital devices

- before and after school
- during class
- at recess and lunch time
- on excursions and other school events such as camps

unless approved by the principal or a teacher. Exemptions may be granted by the principal or a teacher, allowing students to use a device for an educational purpose or to support reasonable adjustments made as part of a student's individual education plan, student learning or for medical reasons.

New Lambton PS recognises some students will bring digital devices to schools, whether for personal or educational use. If a student brings a personal digital device to school this should be stored in their bag from entry on school site until exit from the school site at the end of the day.

Smartwatches may be worn by students for the purpose of checking the time, however, must not be used to communicate, record, receive, store, process and share digital information or connect to applications (apps), websites and other online services. Where capable, smartwatches should be set to 'school mode', 'schooltime', 'do not disturb' or similar for the duration of the school day.

Students and parents are advised that students bring digital devices to school at their own risk. Schools will not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to personal digital devices. If a device is removed from a student as a consequence for inappropriate use (see below), the safety and security of the device rests with the school. The school will provide a limited number of secure storage lockers in the administration building for those families who would prefer that their child's personal digital device be stored by the school.

Departments' digital devices and online services are an important part of everyday life, shaping the way children and young people learn, communicate, work and play. Learning environments at school support students to develop technological, social, and emotional competencies. The focus is on maximising the benefits and minimising the risks of digital environments and preparing students for life beyond school.

Students are supported to develop their competencies in digital literacy, creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, interpersonal relationships and collaboration using a range of digital devices and online services as part of the learning curriculum. At New Lambton PS students have access to department supported devices and are led through lessons on appropriate use of digital devices and online services.

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.

Use of digital devices is 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 and are provided by the class teacher in consultation with the learning and support team and/or principal.

Consequences for inappropriate use

If a student does not adhere to the school's digital device policy, the principal has the right to take action. This includes removing the digital device and storing it securely in the administration building until the end of the school day when the device can be collected. Parents/carers will be notified if this occurs.

Contact between students and parents and carers during the school day

Should a student need to make a call during the school day, they must speak with their class teacher or the teacher on duty in the first instance.

During school hours, parents and carers are expected to only contact their children via the school office. Under no circumstances should a personal digital device be used to bypass the school's communication, behaviour management and disciplinary procedures.

Responsibilities and obligations

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

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 2018 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.
- Provide digital devices that meet school specifications where a school is participating in a bring your own device program and complete any related paperwork.

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

Students will be informed about this procedure through structured lesson delivery detailing New Lambton Public School's expectations for the use of digital devices.

Parents and carers will be advised via the school newsletter. This procedure can be accessed electronically via the school's website and a hardcopy can be requested 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

This procedure was developed in consultation with staff, students and the P&C. The principal or delegated staff will review this procedure annually.

Appendix 1: 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.

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.

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, 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.
- ☐ Take care with the digital devices you use.
    - o Make sure the devices you bring to school are fully charged each day and are stored appropriately when not in use.
    - o Understand that you and your parents and carers are responsible for any repairs or IT support your personal devices might need.
    - o Make sure the devices you bring to school have the latest software installed.
    - o Take care with the school-owned devices you share with others, so that other people can use them after you.
- ☐ Use online services in responsible and age-appropriate ways.
    - o Only use online services in the ways agreed to with your teacher.
    - o Only access appropriate content and websites, including when using the school's filtered network and personal, unfiltered networks.
    - o 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 RESPECTFUL

- ☐ Respect and protect the privacy, safety and wellbeing of others.
- ☐ Do not share anyone else's personal information.
- ☐ Always get permission from a teacher before you take a photo or video of someone for school purposes, e.g. photos at a school assembly; videoing a performance for Starstruck.
- ☐ Do not take a recording, photo or video of anyone using your personal digital device.
- ☐ 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:
    - o inappropriate, offensive or abusive;
    - o upsetting or embarrassing to another person or group;
    - o considered bullying;
    - o private or confidential; and/or
    - o a virus or other harmful software.