

Merewether Heights Public School

Digital devices and online services plan

Purpose and scope

This plan outlines our school’s approach to managing student use of digital devices and online services to ensure safe, responsible and respectful use of these. It covers student use of digital devices and online services in school-related settings, including both school-provided and personal devices and services.

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 should support students to develop technological, social and emotional competencies. This support should maximise the benefits and minimise the risks of digital environments and prepare students for life beyond school.

For mobile phone management, see the [Student Use of Mobile Phones in Schools](#) policy.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Digital devices	include laptops, tablets, wearable technology (such as smartwatches and headphones) and other devices that can receive, store, process and share digital information and connect to applications (apps), websites and other online services For mobile phone management, see the Student Use of Mobile Phones in Schools policy.
Educational purposes	any use approved by school staff that supports student learning, wellbeing and educational outcomes
Online services	include digital classrooms, chat and messaging, online games, virtual reality, interactive online learning activities, social media and other online spaces
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, such as excursions and camps. 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

Our school approach

Using digital devices and online services for educational purposes

Merewether Heights Public School has maintained a no student use of personal digital devices. This includes mobile phones and all devices that can be used to record photo, video or voice. The school provides both ipads and laptops to students for educational purposes. These devices, provided by the school, are only to be used under direct teacher supervision.

Mobile phone or any device with the ability to receive or make phone calls is not necessary at school. These are extensive items that risk damage or loss in the school environment. At Merewether Heights Public School any student who needs to contact their parent/s is able to use the school phone from the administration office after seeking permission from staff. Parents that need to contact students can ring the school at any time.

However, should a situation arise where a student needs a mobile phone after school, it must be switched off during school hours and left in the student's school bag. Student safety and protection is one of our prime responsibilities and problems may occur if students are making and receiving unsupervised phone calls or taking unsupervised and unsolicited photos or videos at school.

For mobile phone management, see the [For mobile phone management, see the Student Use of Mobile Phones in Schools](#) policy.

Inappropriate use of digital devices and online services

Students using digital devices (personal laptops, ipads, phones or watches that allow calls or recording of photo, video or audio) will be managed in line with the school's behaviour management plan.

If students and staff repeatedly engage in activities, using the school's ICT network, that result in copyright infringement then the department may suspend ICT network access privileges.

Medical or wellbeing exemptions to digital device use

Parents who believe their child may need additional considerations for the use of personal technology due to medical reasons, may seek to meet with the school to discuss a personalised plan.

Exemptions to this plan may apply to some students, and will be considered on a case-by-case basis and granted when required by law or at the principal's discretion.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disability

Parents who believe their child may need additional considerations for the use of personal technology due to disability adjustments, may seek to meet with the school to discuss a personalised plan.

Some students require reasonable adjustments to their learning and support needs under the Disability Standards for Education 2005. A disability may include a medical condition impacting a student.

Principals must consult, as appropriate, the student, and their parents or carers, and any external service providers as needed, in determining the adjustments for the student. Reasonable adjustments may include access to digital technologies to participate in the education on the same basis as a student without disability. This may need to be documented as part of an existing student learning plan, as determined by the principal.

Handling complaints

If a student, and parent or carer has any complaints relating to this strategy, the first step is to follow the school's complaints process. If the issue cannot be resolved, they should access the [Making a complaint about our schools](#) guide.

The department's [Complaints Handling](#) policy also provides further information and support for both the school community and staff.

Changes since previous update

Last updated	Description of changes	Approved by
03/04/2023	Updated definition of digital devices to include watch technology that allows for phone calls and/or the ability to record photo, video or audio	Principal
