



NEWINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOL

Learning for Life

STUDENT MOBILE PHONE & DIGITAL DEVICES POLICY

PURPOSE

This statement has been developed to ensure that there is a planned and agreed approach to students bringing mobile telephones, 'smart' watches or other digital devices to school at Newington Public School. This policy establishes the restrictions placed on such devices during school hours within the school grounds and outlines the responsibilities of students, parents and staff.

RATIONALE

As communication devices mobile telephones and digital devices (including 'smart' and/or digital watches, digital cameras, iPads, digital music players or other devices which allow internet connection) when used appropriately, offer students and their parents many advantages in terms of ease of communication and a sense of personal safety. They also have the potential to be incorporated into classroom learning. However, mobile phones have the capacity, if used inappropriately, to be disruptive to teaching and learning and can have a negative impact on the safety and wellbeing of students.

KEY POLICY STATEMENTS

Guidelines for students

- Students should only have a mobile phone or digital watch at school with the consent of their parent. All parents and carers need to give written permission (see attached example) for students to have such devices at school. This permission note should be given to the office. A register of names will be kept of those students with written parental permission to have such devices at school.
- Once on school grounds mobile phones must be turned off and stored inside the student's school bag. Phones must not be turned on until a student leaves the school grounds.
- Phones that ring or beep during the school day disrupt the learning environment. If a mobile phone is used or interrupts learning the phone will be given to the Principal and parents will need to collect the phone from the school.
- Digital and/or 'Smart' Watches that have the capacity to be used as a phone or recording device must have these functions disabled or switched to 'School Mode' during the school day. As per mobile phones, watches with these functions must not be accessed by students whilst on school grounds.
- If a student needs to make emergency contact with a parent or carer during the school day they are required to do so through the school's Administration Office, with Principal permission.

Guidelines for parents

- Complete a written permission note and return to the school.
- Parents should not contact students by mobile phone or 'Smart' watch once a student is on the school grounds. If a parent or carer needs to contact a student at school as a result of an emergency or needs to pass on a message, they are required to call the school's Administration Office and a message will be sent to the student.
- Ensure their child is aware of their own responsibilities and the school's expectations around phones, watches and other devices. This includes knowing how to set watches to 'school or class' mode.
- Students bring mobile phones and/or other technological devices to school at their own risk – the school and school staff members will not accept any responsibility for any loss, damage or theft to mobile phones or other devices or for investigating loss, damage or theft.

Guidelines for teachers and the school

- Should learning time be interrupted by a mobile phone or 'smart' watch or they are being accessed in the playground, the student will be required to take the device to the Principal. Parents will be contacted and must collect the device from the school.
- Individual circumstances as part of a negotiated Personal Learning Plan and Support (PLASP) will be considered if the technology can assist a student with their learning.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 'School grounds' includes classrooms and the playground areas. It extends to school excursions, sports carnivals and other events off the school site, where an approved school activity takes place.
- The School acknowledges that students, under the direction of parents or carers, will use mobile phones and other digital devices out of school hours.
- Parents and schools share the responsibility for teaching children digital literacy and citizenship skills, attitudes and knowledge, including the rights and responsibilities that come with using mobiles telephones and other digital devices.
- Digital or 'smart' watches must be set to 'School or class mode'. This means they cannot act as a phone, camera or recording device during school hours.

RELATED DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

- DoE and School Student Welfare & Student Discipline Policies
- DET Legal Issues Bulletin # 35 *The Use of Mobile Phones, portable computer games, tape recorders and cameras in schools and TAFE NSW Institutes*. (Feb. 2005)
- 2018 DoE Review into Mobile digital devices in NSW Schools
- Impact of mobile digital devices in schools – NSW DoE CESE Literature Review 2018