

# Avoca Beach Public School

## Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services Procedure

### 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

Avoca Beach Public School acknowledge that some students will need to bring mobile phones or communication devices (Eg. Apple watches) to school for the purpose of safety in getting to and from school. In these circumstances the students and parents are required to sign a written agreement (Appendix 1) that states the student takes full responsibility for the phone, will hand it in to their teacher each day and will adhere to Avoca Beach Public School's policy and procedures surrounding the use of the device.

### In these circumstances the following procedures will take place:

1. The device **MUST** be labelled with the students name
2. Students are responsible for signing in and handing over their mobile phone or portable communication device to their teacher each day. Mobile phones or other portable communication devices are to **be switched off during school hours**. Mobile phones or portable communication devices may also be signed in at the school office for storage during the day at a parent's or student's request. Whilst every care is made, the school does not accept responsibility for mobile phones or portable communication devices stored in the office.
3. The device will not be switched on until the student leaves the school grounds
4. Any breach of the use of the device will result in the discontinuation of the contract and the student will be unable to bring the device to school

5. Students must not use mobile telephones or portable communication devices to threaten, bully, intimidate or otherwise harass other people through any SMS, MMS, text message, or social media.

6. Student use of devices whilst travelling to and from school is expected to remain consistent with this policy.

7. Students will only use their mobile phone or portable communication device in a way which reflects the expectations of the NSW Department of Education's Behaviour Code for Students and Avoca Beach Public School's expectations of being Respectful and Responsible Learners.

## **Excursions**

Students are encouraged not to bring or use mobile phones or portable communication devices whilst on day excursions or overnight school excursions. Where a student requires a mobile phone or portable communication device for the purpose of a camera, it needs to be non-operational as a phone (e.g. no SIM card installed and no access to WiFi). Any mobile phones or portable communication devices brought on overnight excursions will require signed parental agreement and permission.

## **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**

Students who engage in inappropriate use of mobile devices will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the school's discipline policy. Some inappropriate uses can constitute criminal behaviour and will be reported to the police.

If students use mobile devices inappropriately the principal and school reserves the right to take reasonable action. Depending on the circumstances, action may include any of the following:

- Banning student from bringing a mobile device to the school
- The Principal or Principal's delegate confiscating mobile devices from individual students;
- Applying student disciplinary provisions; as part of the schools' and NSW Department of Education Behaviour Code for Students
- A suspension or expulsion from school may apply if; a student has engaged in hostile behaviour directed towards another student, staff member or other persons.

Students who infringe the guidelines in this document 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 the parents to collect the mobile device. Repeated infringements will result in the withdrawal of the agreement to allow the student to bring the mobile device to school.

## Contact between students and parents and carers during the school day

In an emergency, our staff will contact home should the need arise. Should a student need to make a call during the school day, they must approach the administration office and ask for permission to use the school's phone.

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

## Responsibilities and obligations

### 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.  
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/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 class discussions and at a whole school assembly.

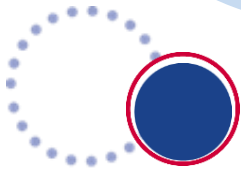
Parents and carers will be advised via the school newsletter. This procedure can be accessed electronically via the [school's website](#) and in hardcopy at the school's administration office.

### **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.



**Avoca Beach Public School**  
**The Round Drive, AVOCA BEACH, NSW, 2251**  
**Ph: 02 4382 1416 Fax: 02 4381 1431**  
**email: [avocabch-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:avocabch-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au)**  
**website: [www.avocabeach.ps.education.nsw.gov.au](http://www.avocabeach.ps.education.nsw.gov.au)**

## Digital Device- Consent to Bring to School

(Appendix 1)

My child..... of class ..... requires a mobile phone/portable communication device for use outside of school hours and therefore needs to have the mobile phone/portable communication device at Avoca Beach P.S. during school hours.

I have read and understand the school policy for the Use of Mobile Phones and Other Portable Communication Devices by Students whilst at school and/or school activities and give my consent to the device being brought to school when required. As per the policy, I understand the school takes no responsibility for the care, loss or damage that may result from the device being brought to school.

If a mobile phone / portable communication device is brought to school, my child will be responsible for switching off the mobile phone or portable communication device during school hours, and will leave the mobile phone/portable communication device with the teacher during the school day (signing it in and out each day).

.....  
 Parent / carer name

.....  
 Parent / carer signature

.....  
 Student name

.....  
 Student signature

.....  
 Date