Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services Procedures

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Purpose

These procedures guide student use of digital devices and online services at Sydney Distance Education High School. It follows NSW Department of Education's Student use of Digital devices and online services and Students' Use of Mobile Phones in Schools policies.

Our school acknowledges the educational value of digital devices and online services to support learning engagement and communication with teachers and other students. See Appendix 3 for recommended specifications for digital devices.

Our school also recognises the potential harm and disruption if digital devices and online services are used inappropriately and encourages students to use them in safe, responsible and respectful ways.

These procedures cover student use of digital devices and online services in school-related settings, including on school grounds, at school-related activities and outside school where there is a clear and close connection with the school and other students. These procedures cover the use of school-provided and personal digital devices and all online services.

Students' use of mobile phones at the learning hubs and school events

Rationale and objectives

Sydney Distance Education High School supports the restrictions of mobile phones in accordance with the NSW Department of Education Students' Use of Mobile Phones in Schools policy. Mobile phone use in schools can impact student learning and wellbeing. Restricting mobile phone use at school aims to increase focus in classrooms, remove distractions and promote positive social interaction, while reducing the potential for online bullying. We promote safe learning environments which support and enhance each child's social and emotional health through our wellbeing and learning support teams.

Our school has elected to use the following approach.

All mobile phones will be **'off and away'** when attending a learning hub or a school event such as a study day or excursion, including during recess and lunch. This means that students will have a responsibility to turn off their phones and store them safely in their school bags. Students will still be able to carry their phones while travelling to and from school. This is an approved NSW Department of Education option and will limit unnecessary distractions and complement our ongoing approach to ensure that every student maximises their learning and social growth in a safe and supportive environment.

Contacting students

Sydney Distance Education High School understands there may be emergencies when parents need to contact students or students may need to contact their parents or carers during the school day. To avoid disturbing the students' learning we encourage this to be kept to a minimum. Parents and carers can contact the school through the school office by phone on (02) 9383 0200 or learning hub mobile phone. Students will also be able to contact parents or carers if they seek permission from the supervising teacher.

Inappropriate use of mobile phones

School procedures to be followed in case of a student's inappropriate use of a mobile phone at a learning hub or school event (such as a study day or excursion) are as follows.

- The supervising teacher will tell the student to stop using the phone, turn the phone off and put the phone in their bag ('off and away'). The teacher will give a maximum of two warnings.

- On the third warning the teacher will phone the student's supervisor and ask them to collect the student from the learning hub or school event (if possible).

- A teacher will phone the student and supervisor to re-negotiate a commitment that the mobile phone protocols will be adhered to by the student at future school activities.

- Where there is repeated misuse of the mobile phone teachers will liaise with a Deputy Principal regarding further consequences. For example, the student will be required to hand in their phone to a supervising teacher for safe keeping while the student is at school.

Refer to the following policies and procedures:

- Student Wellbeing Policy

- Learning Hubs Handbook for Students and Supervisors

Exemptions

Sydney Distance Education High School understands that some students may have exceptional medical, wellbeing or learning needs which will require them to access a mobile phone when attending a learning hub or school event.

If you have concerns about your child not having access to a mobile phone when attending the learning hubs or school events, you may contact the Deputy Principal of the year group by phone on (02) 9383 0200.

The parent/carer and supervisor wishing to apply for an exemption will need to send an email to the school account (E: sydneyh-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au) with the following information.

- The student's name and year.
- The health or wellbeing reason for the exemption.
- The requested adjustments to school-based practices and procedures.
- Supporting medical certificate.

Each application for an exemption will be considered by a Deputy Principal and the Learning and Support Team and the parent/carer/supervisor will be informed of the agreed outcome. Teachers of the student will be informed of the exemption.

Using mobile phones for an educational purpose during a lesson or at a school excursion

There may be situations where students are required to use their phones during a lesson or on a school excursion. In these situations, the staff member will need to monitor students' use of the phones to ensure that they are used for the designated purpose, and once the lesson/activity is completed, ensure that students comply with managing their phone in line with the school's procedures.

Responsibilities and obligations

Student use of 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.

- Respect and follow school rules and procedures and the decisions made by staff, knowing that other schools may have different procedures.

- 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

- Support implementation of school procedures, including the school's approach to resolving issues.

- 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.

- 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 their own digital devices or put them on silent when at official school functions and during meetings.

- Provide digital devices that meet school specifications. See Appendix 3.

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 these procedures and departmental policy
  - reading and abiding by the Terms of Service for any online services they use in teaching
  - 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 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 and these procedures, and act in line with the conduct described.

- Report any inappropriate use of digital devices and online services to the Principal, school executive or teaching staff they are working with.

Communicating this procedure to the school community

- Students, parents and carers will be advised through the school newsletter. These procedures can be accessed electronically on the school's website and in hard copy at the school's administration office.

Complaints

- If a student, parent or carer has a complaint about these procedures, they can send the school an email on sydneyh-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au which will then be forwarded to the senior executive.

- If the issue cannot be resolved, please refer to the department's Making a complaint about NSW public schools - guide for parents & carers.

Review

The Principal or delegated staff will review these procedures annually.

Appendix 1

Key terms

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, smart watches, and smart phones.

Digital literacy is the set of social, emotional and technological skills and competencies that people need in order 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 syllabuses.

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 (elearning), web lessons, 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 places outside 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.

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Appendix 2

What is safe, responsible and respectful student behaviour?

Note: A signed student agreement covering these points is completed on enrolment.

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 or inappropriate, 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. This includes restrictions of mobile phones at school in accordance with the NSW Department of Education *Students' Use of Mobile Phones in Schools* policy. At SDEHS all mobile phones will be **'off and away'** when attending a learning hub or a school event such as a study day or excursion, including during recess and lunch.

- ☐ Take care with the digital devices you use:
  - Understand that you and your parents and carers are responsible for any repairs or IT support your personal devices might need
  - 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:
  - Only use online services in the ways agreed to with your teacher
  - Only access appropriate content and websites, including when using the school's filtered network and personal, unfiltered networks
  - 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 or 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.
- ☐ Get permission before you take a photo or video of someone, including from the person and teachers.
- ☐ 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:
  - inappropriate, offensive or abusive
  - upsetting or embarrassing to another person or group
  - considered bullying
  - private or confidential
  - a virus or other harmful software.

Appendix 3

Recommended specifications for digital devices

Sydney Distance Education High School recommends that students use a laptop or desktop computer to engage with our online learning platforms. Students may use their mobile phone (offsite) to scan or take pictures of their classwork.

Operating System	• Microsoft Windows 10, or later • Apple Mac OSX 10.10 or later
Wireless	• If you intend to bring your device to school, it must have 5GHz 802.11n wireless support. This may be advertised as "Dual Band Wireless", "802.11abgn", "802.11agn", "802.11ac" or "gigabit wireless"
Form Factor	• Choose a desktop or laptop computer, not a tablet • Devices should have a separate keyboard, not an on-screen touch keypad • Screen size should be at least 10 inches • Consider the size and weight of the device if you intend to travel with it frequently
RAM	• Minimum 4GB RAM • If Adobe Creative Cloud software such as Photoshop is required for your subjects, then 8GB RAM or more is recommended
Battery Life	• For laptops, a battery life of at least 4 hours is recommended
Extras	• Audio headset with microphone • Webcam – either built in or external • At least one USB port
Software	• Microsoft Office 365 (free to students) • Access the Microsoft office page on our school website