Coonabarabran High School

Mobile Phone Policy

2023

Helping our Students Reach the Stars

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1. Rationale

Coonabarabran High School supports the restriction of mobile phones in accordance with the NSW Department of Education: Students' Use of Mobile Phones in School policy. The Melbourne Declaration on Education requires that schools provide education of the 'whole child'. Academic research has found that access to mobile phones has significant impacts on students in schools by increasing opportunities for Cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate material, decreasing social interaction, negatively impacting individual mental and physical health, and significantly distracting students from learning.

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. Coonabarabran High School has strong teaching and learning practices to support students in the classroom using various forms of appropriate technology, which maximises the benefits and minimises the risks of digital environments and prepare students for life beyond school. We foster a safe learning environment which supports and enhances each child's social and emotional health through our wellbeing and learning support teams.

1.2 Scope

This policy 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 policy covers student use of digital devices and online services in all school-related settings including 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.

At Coonabarabran High School all student mobile phones will be 'off and away' for the full school day, including recess and lunch. This is an approved NSW Department of Education option and will limit unnecessary distractions and complement our ongoing approach to ensure every student maximises their learning and social growth in a safe and supportive environment.

2. Approach to mobile phones and Digital Devices

Coonabarabran High School acknowledges the use of technology is an important component of learning. The appropriate use of such technology is a collaborative responsibility with students, educators, and families working collaboratively for the best outcomes for our students.

2.1 Mobile Phones and Digital Devices

Students are asked not to bring phones or non-educational digital devices to school. This is a decision made in consultation with the school community. Students who repeatedly bring a mobile phone or non-educational digital device to school will be dealt with in accordance with this policy.

Where there is a medical, wellbeing, or learning need, some exemptions to this rule may apply.

2.2 BYOD Computers

Students are permitted to bring to school BYOD computers for educational purposes. Coonabarabran High School is committed to providing a safe and secure e-Learning environment. Students who use such devices must use the Internet in accordance with the School's and the Department of Education's *Digital Devices and Online Services for Students* policy. Any use of BYOD computers for non-educational purposes may result in restrictions being imposed on individual students or a student no-longer being permitted to bring such devices to school.

Coonabarabran High School takes no responsibility and is not liable for any BYOD equipment brought onto campus while it is in the care and control of the individual student.

3. Exemptions

Coonabarabran High School understands there may be students who have a medical, wellbeing or learning need which will require them to access a mobile phone as defined in this policy.

Parents and carers, school counsellors/psychologists and other student support staff, and, if required, students themselves 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. The exemption may be ongoing or for a certain time period. 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, then in line with the Disability Standards for Education (2005), parents will not be required to seek an exemption.

4. Responsibility and Obligations

4.1 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 Management Policy.

4.2 For Parents and Carers

- Recognise their role in educating their children and modelling the behaviours underpinning the safe, responsible, and respectful use of digital devices and online services.
- Support implementation of this policy.
- Take responsibility for their child's use of digital devices and online services at home.
- 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.

4.3 For the Principal and Teachers

- Deliver learning experiences that encourage safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services. This includes:
  - o establishing agreed classroom expectations for using digital devices and online services in line with relevant school and departmental policies;

- o identifying strategies to ensure that all students are able to engage in classroom activities including strategies to accommodate students without a digital device;
  - o reading and abiding by the Terms of Service for any online services they use in teaching, including those limiting use by age; and
  - o 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 and departmental policy and any statutory and/or regulatory requirement. This includes: reporting the creation, possession or distribution of indecent or offensive material and consider any mandatory reporting requirements; working with the Department and the Office of the eSafety Commissioner (if necessary) to resolve cases of serious Cyberbullying and image-based abuse; and following the school's behaviour management policy 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 using digital devices and online services appropriately.

4.4 For Non-Teaching Staff, Volunteers, and Contractors

- Be aware of the Department's policy, and 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 staff they work with.

5. Consequences for Inappropriate Use

Students who repeatedly (more than two (2) times in a year) bring a mobile phone to school will have their phone confiscated until the student's parents/carers can attend a meeting to discuss the breach of this policy.

5.1 Mobile Phones and Digital Devices

When a student is found with a mobile phone or digital device:

- The student is referred to the Deputy Principal;
- The student's digital device is confiscated by the Deputy Principal;
- Confiscated devices can be collected from the Deputy Principal at the end of the school day;
- Students who repeatedly bring a mobile phone or digital device to school contrary to this policy will have their device confiscated until a parent or carer collects the device. Other disciplinary measures, up to and including suspension, may also apply.

5.2 BYOD Computers

The use of BYOD computers is at the discretion of teachers and staff. Students must use their device as directed by relevant teaching staff for educational purposes. In the event that a student misuses a device for an inappropriate purpose, the provisions of the Coonabarabran High School Behaviour Management Policy apply.

Examples of action the school may take in cases of misuse include:

(a) The device is taken away by the teacher for the remainder of the lesson;
(b) The device is take away by a Head Teacher or Deputy Principal for the remainder of the school day and/or until a parent or carer picks up the device;
(c) Permission for the student to bring their device to school is revoked;
(d) Conventional discipline procedures as described in the Coonabarabran High School Behaviour Management Plan

6. Community Consultation and Communication

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the Coonabarabran High School Community Engagement Strategy to ensure that the Community and relevant stakeholder views are heard and acknowledged. The School has met with Community Groups and relevant stakeholders, and the draft policy has been placed on public exhibition to allow community submission.

6.1 Communication with Students

Students have had the opportunity to contribute to the development of this policy through:

- Consultation with the Student Representative Council;
- Formal and informal discussion with student body;
- Year Advisors and Assistant Year Advisors will inform their students about this new procedure which we be reinforced by Classroom teachers.

6.1 Communication with Parents

Parent and carer preferences were explored through:

- Parent evenings, P&C meetings, and information in the Newsletter, on the school's website and School stream and via information sent home.
- Parents and carers were advised of the procedure via the school website, Schoolstream and via notes sent home.
- This procedure can be accessed electronically via the school's website and in hardcopy at the school's administration office.

7. Contacting Students

Coonabarabran High School understands there will always be emergencies when parents need to get in contact with students or vice versa during the school day. We try to keep this to a minimum, with the exception of emergencies, to avoid disturbing the students' learning. Parents and carers can make contact with the school through the school office (02 6842 1099) and, if urgent, students will also be able to contact parents or carers through the school office.

8. Consistency with NSW Department of Education Regulations

The Department of Education regularly reviews and updates relevant policies and procedures. Where there is any inconsistency between this policy and the Department's, the Department's policy takes precedence.

9. Complaints

If a student, parent or carer has a complaint under this procedure, they should first follow our school's complaints process. If the issue cannot be resolved, please refer to the Department's guide to making a complaint about schools.

10. Review

This policy will be regularly reviewed to reflect the views of Staff, Students, and the wider Coonabarabran High School Community.

11. Appendices

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, 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.

Cyberbullying 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 gender, 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.

Off & Away - Gate to Gate
Coonabarabran High School Mobile Phone Policy

Level 1

Mobile Phone is seen and/or used during school hours or at school event
(1st incident)

Teacher sends student to Deputy Principal to hand in phone. Student receives slip to take to teacher. Teacher puts a negative entry on Sentral. Student collects phone at end of day. Parents/carers may be advised.
Student interviewed by Deputy Principal.

Level 2

Mobile Phone is seen and/or used during school hours or at school event
(2nd incident)

Same procedure as Level 1. Parents/carers formally notified and requested to collect phone from school
Student interviewed by Deputy Principal.

Level 3

Mobile Phone is seen and/or used during school hours or at school event
(3rd incident)

Same procedure as Level 1. Student interviewed by Deputy Principal and issued formal caution of suspension.
Parents/carers formally notified of suspension warning and requested to collect phone from school.

Level 4

Mobile Phone is seen and/or used during school hours or at school event
(4th incident)

Same procedure as Level 1. Student interviewed by Deputy Principal and formally suspended in accordance with the School's Behaviour Management Policy.
Parents/carers formally notified of suspension and requested to collect phone from school.