



PETERSHAM PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mobile and Electronic Devices Policy

This document outlines the appropriate use of mobile phones, tablets, iPads and other communication devices for all stakeholders whilst on our school site. For the purpose of this policy all the above mentioned communication devices will be defined simply as devices.

Rationale

The staff of Petersham Public School recognise that many students and their families own and regularly use mobile phones or other communication devices. We also recognise that some parents and carers may prefer that their child has a mobile phone before or after school for various reasons.

Our school's core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. The school has clarified the appropriate process to be followed by students, staff and parents/community members when having a device at school. This document outlines this process.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- Communication device use does not disrupt the teaching and learning environment for any student or teacher.
- Potential risks to student safety and well-being posed by inappropriate use of mobile phones can be identified and addressed; and
- Students, staff and parents/community members have a clear understanding of school guidelines and personal responsibilities related to the appropriate use of mobile phones.

Responsibility

- Petersham PS discourages students from bringing devices to school. However, where parents feel it is necessary for their child to have a phone in their possession at school, it is the responsibility of the student to abide by the appropriate use guidelines as outlined in this document.
- The decision to provide a device to their child/ren should be made by parents or carers who should be aware that their child is bringing a device to school.
- Permission for students to have a device at school is contingent on parents and students signing the "Appropriate Use of Communication Devices at School" agreement which is attached as an appendix to this document.
- It is the responsibility of all staff, students and parents to comply with the appropriate use of communication devices guidelines as outlined in this document and Department of Education (DoE) policy.
- The school accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged devices if not handed in at the office. This relates to devices at school or whilst travelling to or from school. If students and parents choose not to hand their phones into the office daily and keep them in their bag, this is done at their own risk.



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Guidelines for:

Students

- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency the school office remains the appropriate point of contact. Office staff will ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.
- Students are advised that if they bring a mobile phone onto the school grounds during the school day, they and their parents need to complete the Appropriate Use of Communication Devices at School agreement.
- Mobile phones should be switched off as soon as students enter the school grounds. Phones should be kept turned off at all times. Phones are to be handed into the front office when they arrive at school, and collected before 3:30pm.
- If students have a mobile phone on them during school time the phone will be confiscated by a staff member and can be collected from the office at the end of the school day.
- All communication devices brought to school should be clearly marked with their name.
- Students are not permitted to bring mobile phones on school excursions and overnight camps. In instances where students need to contact their parents on such activities, these will be organised by supervising staff.

In the event that students do not follow these guidelines, the following actions may occur in line with our Student Wellbeing Policy:

- Temporary confiscation of the device (handed back to student at the end of the day or parent contacted to retrieve the device when available).
- Communication with parents/guardians regarding mobile phone use at school.
- Repeated disregard for this policy may lead us to request that parents disallow their child from bringing a phone to school.

Staff

- During all student contact times, such as when teaching, on duty or during meetings, devices will be switched off or put on 'silent' or 'discreet' mode.
- Where urgent or exceptional situations, permission for device use is to be sought from the Principal or a staff member's direct supervisor.
- Staff members are to use their devices during personal or break times and where possible, not directly in front of students.

Parents and Community Members

- At all official school functions, during meetings or when assisting in classrooms, devices should be switched off or put on 'silent' mode.
- Parents and carers are to communicate with their child through the office and not through direct contact with their device whilst they are at school.
- Devices should never be used to obtain, share or disseminate personal student information through the internet or social media, eg. photos of children other than their own without the express permission of their parents.



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Unacceptable Use of Mobile Phones

Using mobile phones in an inappropriate manner is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Inappropriate uses of mobile phones include but are not limited to:

- Using a mobile phone at a time that will disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school;
- Making calls or sending messages with the intent to bully, harass or threaten another person;
- Using mobile phones to take photographs of other people without their consent;
- Using obscene, derogatory or socially unacceptable language while using a mobile phone;
- Using mobile phones to receive, download and display inappropriate photographs or other material; and
- It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. The school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

Related Technology

- Related technology such as portable computer devices, smart devices such as Apple watches/iPods/iPads and other electronic devices should not be brought to school without written permission or request from the school. The school accepts no responsibility for the security of these items and the procedures applying to the inappropriate use of mobile phones will apply equally to these devices.

Exemptions

- Exemptions to this policy can only be approved by the Principal. Applications for exemption should be only requested in writing to the Principal.

Implementation of this Policy

- Teachers will discuss this policy with students to ensure they have a clear understanding of the guidelines and procedures.
- The community will be made aware of this policy through the newsletter and at P&C meetings. The policy will be available on the school website.
- The policy will be made clear to all students and their parents seeking or having enrolment at Petersham Public School.

Ratification and Review

- This policy was developed and ratified by Petersham Public School staff in Term 1, 2018.
- It was presented to P&C for consultation and to the community for input in Term 1, 2018.
- It will be reviewed when deemed necessary by the school Principal and executive.

References

- NSW Department of Education and Training Policies and Procedures
- https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/staff/ethical_behav/comm_dev/PD20020024.shtml
- Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association – Developing an Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones in Your School.
- Bilambil Public School Communication Device Process



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Appropriate Use of Communication Devices at Petersham Public School Agreement

STUDENT AGREEMENT

I have read the Petersham PS Mobile and Electronic Devices Policy, and I agree that:

- When bringing my mobile phone to school I will switch it off as soon as I enter the school grounds. I will hand it in to the front office as soon as I enter the school grounds at the beginning of the school day. At the completion of the school day, I will retrieve my mobile phone from the front office before 3:30pm.
- I understand and will abide by all the guidelines for acceptable use of communication devices at Petersham Public School.
- I understand the behaviours that constitute unacceptable use of communication devices and will not engage in these behaviours at any time. I acknowledge that if I break the terms of this agreement my phone may be confiscated and my parents contacted.

Student Name: _____ Class: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

PARENTAL AGREEMENT

I have read the Petersham PS Communication Device process and agree that:

- I/we give permission for my child to carry a communication device to school.
- I/we have discussed the device guidelines and procedures with my child.
- I/we agree to support school policy with regards to mobile phone use and agree to support school decisions and actions regarding devices.

Parent Name (print): _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____