



Saint Mary MacKillop College

Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services Policy and Procedure

Purpose

This procedure guides student use of digital devices and online services at SMMC.

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

General Principles:

- Parents are the prime educators of their children. SMMC is a co-operator in that process.
- Children have a right to live and to flourish in a safe and supportive environment, free of unnecessary distractions, peer pressure, and potential dangers that digital devices can pose to the developing mind and soul.
- SMMC will cooperate with parents to foster positive and age-appropriate 'digital citizenship' amongst the children in our care.
- Students may engage in *supervised* use of SMMC's Chromebooks and other digital devices during class as required by the syllabus, and as deemed educationally beneficial by the prudent judgement of each individual teacher. (This includes the prudent showing of educational video clips on a classroom television.)

- Personal digital devices are generally disallowed at SMMC. This means that personal digital devices are not to be seen or used any time a SMMC student is on the school campus and/or in our care.
 - Exceptions to this general principle are as follows:
 - A student may be given permission to use a personal digital device within the context of a disability adjustment and/or Individual Health/Learning Plan at the behest of her/his parents and/or SMMC.
 - Stage 6 students (Years 11 & 12) may bring their own Chromebook/laptop as required by their teachers/subjects.
 - Headphones/earphones etc may be used by senior students when practicality necessitates their use.
 - Headphones should not be audible by anyone else except the wearer.
 - Headphones should not be used for non-educational use during school hours.
 - Stage 6 students may, with the permission of their parents and SMMC, use their personal digital device as required by DE subjects in which they are enrolled, or other reasonable use determined by their parents.
 - Students may, with the express permission of parents, possess personal digital devices where deemed necessary by parents.

Management

Each family with children enrolled at SMMC is required to complete and submit the

[2023 Responsible Use of Digital Devices Agreement](#) at the beginning of each academic year. The form outlines the rights and responsibilities of SMMC, parents and their children in relation to the possession and use of digital devices by SMMC students while on the school campus and/or while SMMC exercises a duty of care over its students.

Students who have been given permission to use personal digital devices must generally keep the device out of sight, except where necessity and 'common sense' dictates that the device can/should be reasonably used. [For example, it is perfectly reasonable for a Stage 6 student's Chromebook to be seen by other students through the day as it is used in class, and must be carried between classes. It is perfectly reasonable that a student who has been given permission to possess a mobile phone may *briefly* check her/his phone for an important message from her/his parents, employer, tutor, coach, etc, immediately after school.]

Please note that SMMC takes no responsibility for any loss or damage to any personal property, including personal digital devices, that occurs on college property or while the owner is under the school's duty of care.

Consequences for inappropriate use

Students who use personal digital devices while on campus (and/or while subject to SMMC's duty of care) in contravention of the letter or spirit of this policy will be required to hand the device to the teacher/supervisor without delay. The device will be kept in the school office until the end of the school day. Serial offenders will be required to attend a joint meeting with her/his parents and the principal to determine a prudent and just way forward.

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.

Contact between students and parents and carers during the school day

Should a student need to make a call during the school day, she/he must:

- approach the administration office and ask for permission to use the school's phone; or
- use a personal digital device, if a prior arrangement has been made between SMMC and the student's parents, for him/her to be able to contact her/his parents via that means.

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

Responsibilities and obligations

Supporting students to use 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, 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 [School Expectations \(Student Copy\)](#)
- 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 document.
 - 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.
- Teachers are trusted to use their professional judgement to implement prudent use of digital devices to enhance student learning and meet NESAs requirements.
- Model appropriate use of digital devices and online services in line with this policy.
- Respond to and report any breaches and incidents of inappropriate use of digital devices and online services as required by school procedures, 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 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 school'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 an annual requirement to complete the *Responsible Use of Digital Technology* form.

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 school's Suggestions, Complaints and Grievances Policy

[2023 Suggestions, Complaints and Grievances Policy](#)

Review

The Executive will review this procedure annually.

Appendix 1: Key terms

Insert definitions if required. A sample list is provided below.

Bring your own device is an optional program where parents and carers can provide personal digital devices for use at school. Any decision to adopt a bring your own device program is made by the principal in consultation with a school community. All digital devices used in schools are covered by the *Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services* policy. Schools retain discretion to determine the specifications of personal devices to be used at school.

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.

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, 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.

Appendix 2: What is safe, responsible and respectful student behaviour?

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, 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.
- Take care with the digital devices you use.
 - Make sure the devices you bring to school are fully charged each day and are stored appropriately when not in use.
 - Understand that you and your parents and carers are responsible for any repairs or IT support your personal devices might need.
 - Make sure the devices you bring to school have the latest software installed.
 - 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, 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 from a teacher.
- 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; and/or
 - a virus or other harmful software.