



THE SYDNEY RUSSELL SCHOOL

SET-UP. RESPECTFUL. SAFE

Mobile Phone Strategy
Approved: June 2023
Date for review: June 2024

Rationale

Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. Therefore, the school strongly discourages the bringing of mobile phone to school by students.

However, we recognise that many students and their families own a mobile phone. We also recognise that some parents/guardians request that their child bring a mobile phone to school for before and after school safety reasons. The school is prepared to allow mobile phones on the premises but only within the parameters of the policy as stated below.

Aims

To inform all members of our school community about the appropriate use of mobile phones at our school.
To outline the procedures and processes of this policy.

Guidelines

General guidance - safety

- **We urge students** to be careful when using their mobile phone in public places before and after school. Students must be aware of their surroundings at all times, particularly when crossing roads. Students must also be aware that using their phone publicly could make them a target for theft.
- **We urge parents** to closely monitor their child's mobile phone usage, both their engagement with social media platforms and their screen time. We recommend that parents:
 - regularly check all social media platforms which they allow their child to access
 - if a parent finds that their child, or any child who attends the school, has behaved inappropriately on social media, this should be reported to the school along with any available accompanying evidence (e.g. screen shots)
 - do not allow their child to have their phone in their room at night
 - set a 'digital sunset' time – a time after which their child is not allowed to use their phone on a daily basis
 - limit overall screen time per day/week

Further advice and guidance can be found at [Keeping children safe online | NSPCC](#)

Primary Students

- Reception-Year 5 students are not permitted to bring mobile phones on site.
- Year 6 students can bring in a mobile phone if travelling to/from school independently, but it must be left with staff in the secure box.

Secondary Students

- In general, students should not bring valuable items to school, as they can be easily lost or stolen, which is often stressful for any child.
- Mobile phones are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk. Students remain responsible for all of their personal effects whilst at school. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.
- There are no reasons why a student needs to have in their possession or use a mobile phone during the school day. Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency the Front Office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.
- If a student's mobile phone is **seen** or **heard** then it will be confiscated and held in the Front Office. The device can be collected by the student after school finishes on the next working day.

- If a device is confiscated on a Friday or the last day of school before a holiday and a parent would like their child to have it over the weekend/holiday then it can be collected on the **same day** after school finished by a parent. Please note it can not be collected by the child in this instance.
- At the end of the day, students are able to take their phones out and switch them on as they leave site via the Atrium.

Secondary students during isolations

- Students who are sanctioned with an isolation are **not** permitted to have a mobile phone in their possession at any time during this sanction.
- Mobile phones must be given by students to the supervising member of staff at the start of the period of isolation and will be held in a secure safe until the end of the isolation period. Phones will be returned to them after they have completed the isolation period for that day. If a student fails their isolation then their phone will be returned to them before they go home for the day.

Parents

- For safeguarding reasons parents are advised not to use camera phones to take images on the school grounds unless permitted on special events such as Sports Days or school performances with the Principal's permission.
- Parents should not place images of other children taken at school on social media sites without permission from the parents involved.

Sanctions

If a student does not give their phone to a member of staff when it is being confiscated then this will be deemed a failure to follow instructions and the student will be sanctioned accordingly.

If a student in isolation fails to give their phone to the supervising member of staff to put in the safe at the start of their sanction then they will face a further sanction and may be searched in line with school policy.

If a student is persistently breaking the guidelines then this may result in further sanctions being put in place and/or them being banned from bringing a mobile phone onto the school grounds.

Inappropriate Use

Generally, a mobile phone will be used inappropriately if it:

- Disrupts or is likely to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school; or threatens or is likely to threaten the safety or well-being of any person; or is in breach of any law.
- Inappropriate use of mobile phones will include students using them to bully, intimidate or otherwise harass other people through phone calls, text messages, social media or any other application. This includes photographic and video content.

This type of misuse will be dealt with under the school's Behaviour Policy. It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to intimidate, harass or offend another person. The school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

The procedures applying to the inappropriate use and security of mobile phones, apply equally to the inappropriate use of portable computer games, smartwatches and similar devices.

Exemptions

Exemptions of this policy can only be approved by the Principal and will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.