

Forest Lodge Public School

Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services Procedure



Purpose

This procedure guides student use of digital devices and online services at Forest Lodge Public School.

Forest Lodge Public 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 at Forest Lodge Public 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 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

Our approach to managing the use of digital devices and online services stems from a position of wellbeing and engagement. Our students use digital devices to learn, communicate and meet their emotional, social and academic needs. Digital devices includes smartwatches.

Students at Forest Lodge Public School use digital devices and online services provided by the school with the explicit permission of a teacher, the principal or delegate. Furthermore, they must use these devices in the way they are instructed by their teacher or delegate; for the explicit academic, social or emotional purpose and not otherwise.

Forest Lodge Public School recognises that some students will bring their own digital devices to schools, whether for personal or educational use.

1. Personal use may include to contact family members before or after school, for safety reasons, or medical reasons. At Forest Lodge Public School, students are not permitted to use their own digital devices for personal use (non-medical) from arriving at school to leaving school without permission from the principal, teacher or delegate. Where students need to bring a digital device to school for non-medical reasons, it must be stored in the office. If a student does not store their device as described, they and their parent/carer will receive a verbal and written warning from the school. Further infringements may result in the student being unable to bring their personal use digital device to school.
2. If the device is for educational use, it must form part of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) in consultation with parents and carers and the Learning Support Team. The school may request that restrictions be placed on the use of the digital device used for educational purposes including time periods and the way in which the device is used. Devices may be stored overnight in the classroom for use day by day or sent home with the child at the conclusion of the day.

Mobile phones may provide students travelling to and from school with a degree of security. Students bring mobile phones to the school at their own risk. Forest Lodge Public School will not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to mobile phones or other personal digital devices. They must be stored as outlined above for all digital devices.

We acknowledge that some students may be exempt in order to meet their learning or support needs.

Exemptions

At Forest Lodge Public School, the use of digital devices is permitted at recess, lunch and during class-time 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. These are not considered exemptions.

Exemptions can be considered in other circumstances such as to maintain family connection in difficult 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.

Consequences for inappropriate use

At Forest Lodge Public School, the consequences for inappropriate use of digital devices and online services form part of our Forest Lodge Public School Student Wellbeing Practices and Procedures.

Inappropriate use of a mobile phone includes:

- using it in a way that disrupts or is likely to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school
- bullying, intimidating or otherwise harassing others through SMS or text messaging or through photographic, video or other data transfer system available on the phone
- recording of conversations, including lessons, without the knowledge and permission of the teacher or those involved in the conversation
- downloading or otherwise accessing inappropriate material on the internet such as child abuse or pornographic or other offensive material
- filming of fights or other criminal behaviour involving students that occur at school, during school activities or while on the way to or from school
- using it in a way that threatens or is likely to threaten the safety or wellbeing of any person
- use that is in breach of any law.

Where students:

1. Use online services inappropriately, the student will be sent to Immediate Support Desk as per the Forest Lodge Public School Student Wellbeing Practices and Procedures.
2. Use a mobile phone inappropriately, the principal may
 - confiscate mobile phones from individual students
 - apply student disciplinary provisions
 - report the matter to the police.

The student will be sent to Immediate Support Desk as per the Forest Lodge Public School Student Wellbeing Practices and Procedures.

If school staff have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student has inappropriate material on his or her phone, they may confiscate the phone for the purpose of confirming the existence of the material. Any viewing of the material should be undertaken in the presence of the student and should be limited to establishing that inappropriate material is on the phone.

It is appropriate to confiscate phones from students when:

- it is necessary to examine the phone when there are reasonable grounds to suspect inappropriate material may be on the phone
- material that falls within the meaning of sexting is found on the phone
- the phone has been used to record fights or other criminal activity involving students occurring at a school, during school activities or on the way to, or from, the school.

Contact between students and parents and carers during the school day

Should a student need to make a call during the school day, they must approach the administration office, teacher, principal or delegate and ask for permission to use the school's phone. A decision will be made by the teacher, principal or delegate as to whether the student is allowed to use their phone or a school phone. During school hours, parents and carers are 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.
- If they have a digital device for personal use outside of school hours, their digital device must be stored in the office.
- If given exemption for a digital device, use that digital device only in the way described in their exemption

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 [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.
- 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 school and classroom expectations for using digital devices and online services, in line with this procedure and departmental policy.
 - 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.
- 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 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, 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 when they bring a digital device to school.

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 department's [guide for students/ parents/ carers about making a complaint about our schools](#).

Review

The principal or delegated staff will review this procedure 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, 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.