



Government
of South Australia

Department for Education

Gumeracha Primary School

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Student Personal Digital Device/Mobile Phone Policy

Purpose

This policy provides direction to students, staff and families about managing mobile phones and other personal digital devices that students choose to bring to school. Personal digital devices (PDDs) include, but are not limited to, smartwatches, tablets or laptops. This policy applies while students are at school, or attending an authorised school activity such as an excursion or camps.

Mobile phone use for primary school students

The department's position is that primary aged students cannot use their mobile phones and personal devices at school during school hours. The department and the school recognise that there are legitimate reasons for students to bring a mobile phone or personal device to school. This may include:

- To ensure their safety while travelling
- So that parents can contact them outside of school hours.

During the school day students are not permitted to access or use their mobile phones or other personal devices. Students must switch off or mute their devices before storing them at the beginning of the school day. They will not be able to access their device until the end of the school day.

If you need to contact your child during the school day, or your child needs to contact you, this can be done via the school landline – 8389 1183.

If the students do not comply

Students who do not use PDDs/mobile phones in an appropriate manner will be responded to in line with the following policies

- GPS / DfE Personal Digital Device/Mobile Phone Policy 2021
- GPS / DfE Acceptable Use Agreement
- GPS Behaviour Support Policy

Breaches of the PDD/Mobile Phone Policy may result in the following action:

- First offence – student PDD/mobile phone confiscated, and returned to student at the end of the day (phones will be stored in a locked cupboard in the office)
- Second offence – student PDD/mobile phone confiscated until the end of the day and returned when parent or caregiver collects it from the school office
- Third and subsequent offences - as for second offence, and in line with the GPS Behaviour policy which will include community service
- Ongoing refusal to comply with this policy may result in suspension

Please note:

Accessing the internet or using any communication software, app or program that accesses the internet, via third party WIFI or 3G/4G/5G, while at school or involved in school activities is forbidden under both this policy and the Acceptable Use Agreement. Breaches of this nature may have additional consequences that could include suspension of rights to access the school internet network as well.

Incidents of digital or online bullying or harassment will be responded to in line with the DfE and GPS Behaviour Support Policy

Roles and responsibilities

Principal

- Ensure this policy is clearly communicated and accessible to all students, staff, and families
- Ensure there is a process for regular review of the policy.
- Secure storage is provided for student personal devices that are handed in to school staff
- Ensure processes are in place for monitoring internet and school network use by all members of the school community.
- Enforce the policy and responses to instances of non-compliance.
- Report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legislative requirements.
- Consider requests for exemptions from the policy from parents on a case-by-case basis. Make sure that approved exemptions are documented and that relevant staff are informed about students' exemptions.
- Model appropriate use of mobile phones and support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible and respectful use of mobile phones to their children.

Staff

Teachers will revisit this policy with students at the beginning of each year, and as necessary to ensure student understanding.

To model our commitment to this policy, school staff will:

- Respond to instances of non-compliance in line with the school's policy.
- Report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legislative requirements.
- Make sure that any student personal devices handed in for their care are stored in a secure location and are returned to the student (or their parent).
- Deliver learning opportunities and maintain a safe and productive learning environment. Take steps to minimise distractions from the non-educational use of personal devices in the learning environment at times when a device is being used by a student in line with an approved exemption or in circumstances where students' devices are stored in the classroom.
- Model good practice and minimise distractions by limiting device use during work hours. Offsite staff on camps / excursion or using their PDD to maintain contact with the school while on Yard Duty are examples of exceptions and flexibility with this expectation.
- Ensure personal calls, text messages and/or emails are not taken while they have duty of care for students. While emergency calls or urgent personal matters may override this responsibility, such disruptions should be kept to a minimum.

Students

- Comply with the requirements of the school's policy and follow all reasonable directions from the Principal and school staff.
- If permitted to use a mobile phone or personal device in line with an exemption under this policy, do so in a safe, responsible and respectful way and support peers to do the same.
- Communicate respectfully with others and do not use a mobile phone or other personal device to bully, harass or threaten another person.
- Respect others' rights to privacy and do not take photos, film or audio records of other people without their knowledge or permission.
- Turn their Personal Digital Device off before entering the school grounds.
- Store switched off device in their bag or classroom for the duration of the school day.
- Not turn device back on again until leaving school grounds at the end of the day, for bus students this means when they have boarded the bus (the phone should stay switched off whilst waiting at the bus stop.)
- Not take devices out of bag under any circumstances at a break time or during any other outside activity.
- Not use PDDs during school time or activate to access the internet, whether through school Wi-Fi or 3G/4G/5G networks.

Parents

- Support the implementation of the school's policy, including the consequences for non-compliance with the policy.
- Use the school's formal communication channels in all instances to communicate with the school (including where a student requires early collection from school). Encourage their child to always report to a school staff member in the first instance if they become unwell or experience an issue at school.
- Recognise the important role they play in supporting their child to use their mobile phone (or other personal device) in a safe, responsible and respectful way.
- Turn PDDs to silent when entering meetings, assemblies, teaching spaces and the office area
- Take and make calls outside of teaching and office areas.
- Not take photo or video images on their PDD of any student other than their own child during any school activity, whether they are on site at Gumeracha Primary or at any other location. If a teacher asks such a person to take class images or video for class records, then this MUST be done on a school owned device.

Communication and review

- The policy was shared with students, staff and the Governing Council for discussion.
- The policy was shared with the school community via: email, the newsletter and the SchoolStream app
- The policy will be reviewed on a two year cycle unless prompted otherwise

