



Student Mobile Phone Usage Policy

1 PREFACE

Shearwater, the Mullumbimby Steiner School, is hereby referred to as 'the School'.

The School's policies which are made from time to time are made pursuant to the requirements set out in section 47 of the *Education Act 1990 (NSW)* and of the NESAs for registration of the school.

2 OBJECTIVES

By implementing this policy, the School aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To provide a workplace for staff and students that is safe and free from any unwanted intrusion into privacy or student learning time.
- To reduce the risk of student misuse of electronic devices and reduce the disruption caused by phones.
- To reduce the time that students spend using electronic devices in their free time at school, so that students may be more active and more engaged socially.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all students, and in particular high school students, with the support of teachers, parents and carers.

4 PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS

4.1 Use of mobile phones by students at school

- Once at school, phones must be turned off or switched to flight mode and kept in lockers at all times. Phones that ring or beep during the school day disrupt the learning environment, as does gaming and listening to music on phones in the classroom.
- Physical activity and the development of social skills are encouraged in break times and use of phones interferes with these activities. Therefore, phones need to be kept in lockers during morning tea and lunch.
- School camps are considered school time. Mobile phone use on camp is at the discretion of the lead teacher/s.
- Students and staff are expected to respect Shearwater's low EMF environment by switching phones to flight mode while on school grounds.

- After 3 pm while on school grounds (e.g. while waiting for a bus), students may use their phones to call or text parents/carers.
- After 3 pm while on school grounds, students may not use their phones for gaming or listening to music with ear buds or head phones. This is to assist students to continue to develop their social awareness and interpersonal skills.

4.2 Inappropriate use

If a mobile phone is used inappropriately, action by the class teacher or Guardian in line with item 4.7 *Consequences of policy breaches* and the *Whole of School Behavior Management Policy* will be necessary. Generally, a mobile phone is used inappropriately if it:

- disrupts or is likely to disrupt the learning environment
- interferes with the operation of the school
- is in breach of any law, including photography without permission of those being filmed

Inappropriate use of mobile phones includes students using them to bully, intimidate or otherwise harass other people through any SMS or text message, photographic, video, recording or other data transfer system.

4.3 Responsibility for mobile phones

Students bring mobile phones to school at their own risk – the school and its staff members will not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to mobile phones or for investigating loss or damage.

4.4 Related technology

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

4.5 Special provisions for senior students

As an acknowledgement of the developing maturity and self-regulatory capacity of senior students, teachers of Year 11 and 12 students may use their discretion within their classrooms regarding the use of mobile phones for listening to instrumental music during independent study.

This provision only applies within the classroom environment and in designated senior study spaces.

During breaks between classes and during recess and lunch, senior students must not wear ear buds or head phones and must keep their mobile phones out of sight in lockers, bags or

pencil cases.

Senior students must switch their phones to flight mode while on school grounds between 8.30 am and 3 pm.

Senior students may have their phone privileges suspended if they do not comply with any teacher's

request regarding phone use.

4.6 Exemptions for junior students

Teachers may use their discretion within their classrooms regarding allowing students to use their mobile phones to meet learning outcomes. For example, a student with dyslexia may need to take a photo of the board or a teacher may allow students to use their phones for a film project. Teachers may not allow junior students to engage in gaming or listen to music on phones using ear buds or head phones.

4.7 Consequences for policy breaches

1. *First breach:* The device will be confiscated and taken to the office for the student to collect at 3 pm.
2. *Second breach:* The device will be confiscated and taken to the office for a parent/carer to collect.
3. *Third breach:* The device will be confiscated and taken to the office for a parent/carer to collect. The student will lose the privilege of having their phone at school and Guardians will request a meeting with the student and their parents/carers.
4. *Further breaches:* The student will participate in a behaviour management plan (blue card).

4.8 Reinforcement of Mobile Phone Policy

- Teachers and Guardians will discuss this policy with students at assemblies and in classrooms.
- When inappropriate use is detected, it will be dealt with in terms of the procedure, thereby reinforcing the policy.
- The school community will be made aware of the policy in the school's newsletter.
- The policy will be published in the handbook given to all new enrolments.

4.9 Advice for Parents and Carers

- If a parent/carer needs to contact a student, reception staff will take messages and make sure they are passed on in a timely manner. Text messages sent to students will only be able to be checked by students at or after 3 pm.
- Students can make urgent phone calls from the front office with the permission of

administration staff.

- All visitors to the school are asked to respect Shearwater's low EMF environment by limiting their mobile phone use to the car park areas and switching their phones to flight mode while on school grounds.

5 RELATED LEGISLATION, POLICIES & PROCEDURES

- WS-POL-Whole of School Behaviour Management Policy
- HS-PRO-Blue Card Procedure

6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head of Education is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed and monitored for effectiveness and updated on a regular basis.

The High School Coordinator is responsible for implementing and reviewing the policy, including the development and implementation of action plans, procedures and other documentation.

DOCUMENT APPROVALS AND HISTORY

Version:	Author:	Approved by	Date
V1	P Mourtzakis	Gillian Rogers - Head of Education	29/03/2019
Draft B	N/A		
Draft A	HS Faculty	P Mourtzakis	