Hillston Central School Mobile Phone and Portable Device Policy

This policy applies to the use by students of mobile phones, pagers, handheld audio, video, gaming and communication devices, recording devices, personal digital assistants, cameras and similar devices at school and during school-related activities.

Handheld technologies have the potential to be incorporated appropriately into lessons in ways that open exciting new approaches to learning. Hillston Central School acknowledges that parents may wish students to be possession of mobile phones for reasons relating to their safety when travelling to and from school.

When these technologies are misused they can be disruptive to teaching and learning and in some cases cause harm.

Taking photographs, videos and audio recordings may only occur if there is a sound educational reason, and permission has been obtained from subjects and the supervising teacher. If the photo, video or recording may possibly be published anywhere (including on the internet), or publicly displayed or broadcast, written permission must be obtained from all identifiable people in the photo, video or recording.

Under no circumstances will inappropriate use of mobile telephones with cameras be tolerated. This includes “sexting” or taking inappropriate images of yourself. Students should be aware that this may be a criminal offence, as well as causing future embarrassment, humiliation and distress. Passing on or possessing these images may also be a criminal offence.

Student Responsibilities

- The student must take full responsibility for these devices. The school or staff will not be responsible for their loss, theft or damage. Students who bring them to school do so at their own risk.
- Students will use these devices in a way which reflects the core values of the school, including the values of respect and responsibility.
- Students must not use mobile telephones or other devices to disrupt the learning environment, interfere with the operation of the school, or interfere with the rights of all students to learn and teachers to teach.
- During class time these devices must be switched off (not just silent or vibrating) and kept in the student’s bag outside the room unless directed to use them by the teacher for an educational purpose.
- If a teacher hears or sees a device during class time, the student will be required to hand the device to the teacher upon request. This includes lessons where the student is undertaking individual study eg Yr11/12 SDLs. Devices can be collected from the school office by the parent or caregiver of the student.
- Students must not use mobile telephones or other devices to bully any other person (cyberbullying). Bullying includes threatening, endangering, harassing, intimidating, ridiculing, manipulating, or embarrassing any person.
- Students must not record or transmit video or images of inappropriate actions or activities eg fights or classroom misbehaviour. Students must not record or transmit video or images of others in emergency situations.

Breaches of this policy may result in:

- Daily monitoring, detention or other appropriate measure as determined by the school’s discipline policy.
- The student being required to hand in their mobile telephone or other device at the beginning of the school day for collection when the student goes home.
- Confiscation of the mobile telephone or other device until such time as their parent or caregiver is able to attend school to collect the device.
- Other disciplinary action in cases where students have bullied or threatened or harassed other students or staff via the mobile telephone or other personal communication device or where the device has been used to take photographs or display inappropriate material. In cases where it is confirmed or reasonably suspected that a criminal offence has taken place, the matter will be handed over to the police.

Emergency Contact

If a parent or caregiver needs to contact a student at school as a result of an emergency, they are required to call the school’s main office on (02) 6967 2277 and a message will be sent immediately to the student.

If a student needs to make emergency contact with anyone they are to do so through the school’s main office.