ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY

Rationale
With the increased ownership of electronic devices, including mobile phones the school has a duty to ensure that all devices are used responsibly by students and that students are aware of the etiquette of using electronic devices not only at school but in the wider society including the workplace.

The school accepts that parents/caregivers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can speak with their child as quickly as possible.

Aims
To promote socially responsible behaviour and reinforce the school PRIDE values, with particular emphasis on developing a RESPECT for individuals’ rights to learn without disruption and distraction, to be safe and not have their property interfered with.

Implementation
At Macarthur Girls High School, electronic devices include but are not limited to: mobile phones; PDA's/Personal Organisers or hand held computers; calculators; iPads, personal listening devices (such as MP3 / MP4 players); digital cameras and recorders; stereos and speaker systems.

Electronic devices will be used inappropriately if they:
- disrupt or are likely to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school, and/or
- threaten or are likely to threaten the safety or well being of any person.
- If in breach of any law.

Acceptable Uses
Ipods and MP3/MP4 players can be used in external areas during recess and lunch for personal entertainment. They can with teacher approval be used in classrooms, however, volume levels are to be adjusted so they do not impact negatively on other members of the school community.

If a teacher has designed a lesson that includes the use of electronic devices (including mobile phones) as a learning tool, then it may be acceptable to use them in that instance. Staff should be mindful of the equity issues involved.

In cases of emergency - parents are reminded that the school should be contacted on 9683 1866. The office staff will ensure that your child is reached as quickly as possible and will assist in any appropriate way. Parents/caregivers should not contact a student by messaging or ringing the student's mobile phone during school hours.

Students who need to make emergency phone calls should see their Stage Leader to gain access to a phone.

Students should be reminded on a regular basis - roll call and lessons - about the appropriate use of devices.
Unacceptable Uses:

All electronic devices must be switched off OR to silent during and between lessons (exception — approved calculators). Mobile phones must be switched off whilst students are on school grounds or engaged in school activities. OR Mobile phones must be switched to silent whilst students are on school grounds or engaged in school activities other than where specified by the teacher.

- Electronic devices must not be used inappropriately to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the Internet, record, take photographs/videos or any other application during and between lessons (note the exception described under Acceptable Uses).
- The use of mobile phones to send offensive messages to bully, intimidate, threaten to harm or otherwise harass other people through any SMS - text message, MSN, emails or photographic, video or other data transfer system available on the phone eg: filming criminal behaviour - assault, using phones to send video to others or publishing it on the Internet, is classified as criminal behavior and the police will be notified.
- Electronic devices must not be used to encourage outsiders on to the school grounds.
- Electronic devices must not be used to take photographs/video of students and teachers in the playground or elsewhere without prior consent of the person.
- Mobile phones must be turned to silent during lessons so as not to disrupt classroom lessons by ringing, beeping or vibrating.
- Electronic devices are banned from examination/test/assessment task situations (either in the hall or classroom) due to their ability to store data, transmit messages and disturb others. The Board of Studies has banned electronic devices including mobile phones from examination rooms for the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate. Only approved calculators are allowed.
- Electronic devices are not to be used by students to interfere with school discipline procedures and/or investigations.
- Students must not download or view offensive or pornographic material from the internet as this is a criminal offence.

Consequences

In an examination/test/assessment task situation (either in the hall or classroom) a student caught using any electronic device will be awarded zero marks for that examination/test/assessment task. Students should be instructed to place the device in their bag or, if in the hall, at their feet in view of the examination supervisor.

During class time, students who disrupt the lesson due to the inappropriate use or operation of an electronic device will be reminded of the rule and instructed to put the device away. If the disruption occurs again in the lesson, the student will be referred to the Head Teacher for follow-up of non-compliance.

If a student re-offends, the student will be referred to the relevant Stage Leader by the HT. The Stage Leader will contact parents. The Principal is the only school officers who should confiscate electronic devices. The Stage Leader will take disciplinary action as required.

Students using electronic devices, to intimidate or bully other students or teachers, encourage outsiders onto the school grounds or post criminal content on the Internet will face disciplinary actions as outlined in the Macarthur Girls High School Discipline Policy and the Department of Education and Communities Suspension and Expulsion of School Students Procedures.

Unacceptable use of the Internet such as the downloading or viewing of offensive or pornographic material, will also lead to disciplinary action as outlined in the school’s Internet acceptable use agreement. Police can be notified as this is a criminal offence.

Safety and Security of Electronic Devices

The safety and security of electronic devices is the responsibility of the owner. The school accepts no responsibility if a device is lost, stolen, damaged or misplaced. This includes traveling to and from school and during PE/sport lessons.