

# **Shellharbour Public School**

## **Mobile Phone and Smartwatch Policy**

### **Rationale**

The staff of Shellharbour Public School recognise that many students and their families own a mobile phone or smartwatch. We also acknowledge that some parents/guardians request that their child/ren bring a mobile phone or smartwatch to school for before and after school safety and security reasons.

Our core business of teaching and learning must be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. Therefore, the school strongly discourages students from bringing mobile phones or smartwatches to school. However, these devices will be permitted on the premises under the parameters outlined in this policy.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- Mobile phone and smartwatch use does not disrupt the teaching and learning environment for any student or teacher.
- Potential risks to student safety and well-being posed by inappropriate mobile phone or smartwatch use are identified and addressed.
- Students, staff, and parents have a clear understanding of school guidelines and personal responsibilities related to the appropriate use of mobile phones and smartwatches.

### **Responsibility**

Shellharbour Public School strongly discourages students from bringing mobile phones or smartwatches to school. However, in cases where parents feel it is necessary for their child to have one of these devices at school, the student must adhere to the appropriate use guidelines outlined in this document.

The decision to provide a mobile phone or smartwatch to their children is made by parents or guardians, who must be aware that their child is bringing a device to school.

All staff, students, and parents must comply with this policy and the Department of Education (DoE) guidelines regarding mobile phone and smartwatch use.

The school accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged devices. The school also accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their devices stolen while travelling to and from school.

### **Guidelines**

#### **Staff:**

- During teaching time, while on playground duty, and during meetings, mobile phones and smartwatches should be switched off or set to silent/discreet mode.
- Mobile phone and smartwatch use is permitted during teaching time for educational purposes, such as photographing student work samples, accessing apps like Seesaw or Class Dojo, and using a timer.
- Mobile phone and smartwatch use is also permitted for emergency use in the classroom or playground.
- All non-urgent matters should be attended to at other times.

## **Students:**

- Students should avoid bringing valuable items to school, as they can be easily lost or stolen, which can be distressing for a primary-aged child.
- Students remain responsible for all personal belongings while at school. Mobile phones and smartwatches are brought to school at the owner's risk, and the school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen, or damaged devices.
- There is no educational reason for a student to have a mobile phone or smartwatch in their possession or to use it during the school day.
- In case of an emergency, parents should contact the school office, ensuring their child is reached quickly and appropriately assisted.
- Students are not allowed to use mobile phones or smartwatches at school, including during recess and lunch.
- If a student brings a mobile phone or smartwatch to school, the device must be switched off as soon as students enter the school grounds and stored in a mobile phone locker located in the front office.
- Smartwatches with communication capabilities (such as messaging or calls) must also be stored in the mobile phone locker during school hours.
- Principals will manage individual requests from parents and/or carers, and students, for any exemptions to the policy.
- Principals may allow students to use mobile phones or smartwatches in specific circumstances, such as for an educational purpose, to achieve student health and well-being outcomes, or as part of reasonable adjustment to enable students with specific needs to participate in education on the same basis as other students.

## **Consequences for Misuse**

- Students who fail to adhere to this policy will be subject to consequences consistent with the school's discipline policy.
- Misuse of mobile phones or smartwatches, including using them during school hours without permission, may result in confiscation. Confiscated devices will be stored in the school office and returned at the end of the school day.
- Repeated misuse may result in further disciplinary action, including requiring a parent or guardian to collect the device from the school.
- Continued or serious breaches of the policy may lead to suspension, in line with the school's behaviour management procedures.

This policy ensures that Shellharbour Public School maintains a focused learning environment while supporting student safety and well-being.