

Digital Device Procedure

Rationale and Objectives

Great Lakes College Forster Campus supports the restrictions of mobile phones in accordance with the NSW Department of Education, Students' Use of Mobile Phones in Schools policy:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-management-schools/student-use-of-mobile-phones> .

Mobile phone use in schools can affect student learning and wellbeing. Restricting mobile phone use at school aims to increase focus in classrooms, remove distractions and promote positive social interaction, while reducing the potential for online bullying. Great Lakes College Forster Campus has strong teaching and learning practices to support students in the classroom using various forms of appropriate technology, which maximises the benefits and minimises the risks of digital environments and prepares students for life beyond school. We foster a safe learning environment which supports and enhances each child's social and emotional health through our wellbeing and learning support teams.

Great Lakes College Forster Campus has elected to use the following approach. *All mobile phones are required to be turned off and placed in a locked pouch* for the full school day, including recess and lunch. This will mean that students have a responsibility to turn off their phone, place it in the locked pouch and store it safely in their school bag for the course of the school day. This is an approved NSW Department of Education option and will limit unnecessary distractions and complement our ongoing approach to ensure every student maximises their learning and social growth in a safe and supportive environment. A summary of research used to inform this policy can be found at the end of this document.

The Procedures

For the purposes of these procedures, 'mobile phones and other personal digital devices' includes smart watches and all other electronic devices (including iPods and other branded tablets), as well as their associated listening accessories – such as, but not limited to, headphones, ear pods and ear buds. These procedures are outlined to manage student use of these devices at Great Lakes College Forster Campus.

Our College's Approach

Great Lakes College utilises the locked device pouch system. All students enrolled at the college will be allocated a locked device pouch free of charge. If this is damaged or lost a replacement cost of \$15 will be billed to parents/carers. Students enrolling throughout the year will be allocated a pouch as part of their enrolment.

Use of mobile phones or other personal digital devices

Students will have their device immediately confiscated and further disciplinary action will follow in any of the following situations:

- Their device is observed to be outside the locked pouch in the time between the first bell for Roll Call and the final bell at the end of Period 5 ('from bell to bell').
- They are using their device in class (excluding laptops) or in the playground without permission.
- The device is used to bully, intimidate, or otherwise harass other people through any voice call, text message, photographic, video, or other data transfer system available on the device.
- Students use digital devices to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school.
- Students use devices to record images, video, or sound without permission.
- The device has been used to contravene the law.

Student Expectations

- Students may not use mobile phones and other digital devices while on school grounds in the time between the first bell for Roll Call and the final bell at the end of Period 5 ('from bell to bell'). 'School grounds' extends to school excursions, sports carnivals, and other events at the school or offsite where an approved school activity takes place, unless otherwise advised.
- **'Mobile phones and other digital devices'** includes smart watches (permitted on aeroplane mode) and all other electronic devices (including iPods and other branded tablets), as well as their associated listening accessories – such as, but not limited to, headphones, ear pods and ear buds.
- Mobile phones and other digital devices are to be **switched off, placed in a locked pouch, and remain in the locked pouch from bell to bell**. This includes recess and lunch breaks.
- Students must switch their smart watch to 'aeroplane mode' for the duration of the school day.
- BYO or school issued laptops are NOT part of the ban; however, these devices are not to be accessed during break time in the playground. Students who wish to use laptops at these times must do so in the library or in a classroom under the supervision of a teacher. Teachers may also request or allow students to use listening accessories with their laptops as required for learning activities.
- If a student breaches the digital device procedures, the student will place their mobile phone or other digital device into the **Digital Device Breach Envelope** immediately if instructed by a teacher or other member of staff. The envelope will be delivered by the student to the front office, where a member of staff will enter the phone on the Daily Phone Register and securely store the device in a safe. Failure to follow the Digital Device Breach ('DDB') policy will incur more serious consequences, including a formal caution to suspend, or a suspension, for persistent failure to follow school procedures, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Management Policy.
- Students must take full responsibility for any mobile phone or other digital device brought to school. The school or staff will not be responsible for their loss, theft, or damage. Students who bring their devices to school do so at their own risk.
- **Purchasing at the canteen** – students will be required to use a card/cash to pay for purchases at the canteen. Phones are not to be used for purchases and canteen staff will not accept payments using phones.

Exceptions/Accommodations

A small number of exceptions/exemptions will be made. These exemptions will only be available for:

- **Managing a health condition.** Health related exemptions can be sought by parents/carers by contacting the Principal and completing the Mobile Phone Exemption Application. In the case of a health condition, a letter from a medical specialist stating when and how the mobile phone is to be used will be required. The Deputy Principal will work alongside parents and complete the Phone Exemption Plan. For example, the Plan may outline a process by which students check their phones as required in consultation with the Deputy Principal. Families of students who require exemption will be referred to the Phone Exemption Flow Chart.

Note: No phones to be used for Canteen purchases, including those who have an exemption.

Parent or Caregiver Expectations

In accordance with the procedure, parents/carers will:

- Contact the school Front Office to pass on messages rather than contacting a student directly on their device (for acceptable reasons only, students will be permitted to use a phone in the Front Office to contact their parents/carers under the supervision of the Deputy Principal).
- Understand that the school takes no responsibility for loss or damage to phones or other digital devices.
- Work collaboratively with the school and help reinforce Great Lakes College Forster Campus's Digital Device Procedure with their child/ren.

Consequences

- If requested by a teacher or other staff member, students will immediately place their mobile phone or other digital device into the **Digital Device Breach (DDB) Envelope**. The envelope will be delivered by the student to the Front Office, where a staff member will enter the phone on the Daily Phone Register and securely store the device in a safe.
- Consequences will be applied according to the school's Behaviour Management Policy. These include, but are not limited to:
- Confiscation of the device until the end of the day.
- Confiscation of the device until such time as their parent or caregiver can attend school and collect the device.
- Issuing of a Formal Caution to Suspend, or a Suspension, for persistent failure to follow the procedures of this policy and the school's Behaviour Management Policy.
- Withdrawal of a student privilege to bring their phone to school.

It is appropriate to confiscate devices from students when:

- Students have failed to meet the school's expectations relating to appropriate use of mobile phones or other digital devices.
- Have and use phones contrary to this policy.
- It is necessary to examine the device as there are reasonable grounds to suspect inappropriate material may be on the device. Senior Executive will be involved in such incidents.
- In cases where students have bullied, threatened, or harassed other students or staff via a device or where the device has been used to film, take photographs, or display inappropriate material.

Discipline and Student Behaviour Management

1. **In class**, any student with a phone/device out of the locked pouch will be issued with a DDB card and will take the device and the DDB card to the Front Office, where they will place the device in a GLCFC Digital Device Breach (DDB) envelope, clearly marked with the student's details and phone condition. A staff member will enter the phone on the Daily Phone Register and securely store the device in a safe. The student's DDB card will be stamped and marked with the time and the student will return to class. In the first instance, the phone will be returned to the student at the end of the school day. A student who needs to collect a phone from the Front Office may present their DDB card to their Period 5 Classroom Teacher at the beginning of the lesson and may leave the classroom to go to the Front Office at 2:58pm. The teacher issuing the DDB card will record a DDB incident on Sentral.
2. **In the playground**, any student with a phone or other digital device out of the locked pouch will be issued with a DDB card and will take the device and the DDB card to the Front Office, where they will place the device in a GLCFC Digital Device Breach (DDB) envelope, clearly marked with the student's details and phone condition. A staff member will enter the phone on the Daily Phone Register and securely store the device in a safe. The student's DDB card will be stamped and marked with the time and the student will return to the playground. In the first instance, the phone will be returned to the student at the end of the school day. A student who needs to collect a phone from the Front Office may present their DDB card to their Period 5

Classroom Teacher at the beginning of the lesson and may leave the classroom to go to the Front Office at 2:58pm. The teacher on playground duty issuing the DDB card will record a DDB incident on Sentral.

3. **Students who fail to cooperate with the above process** will be referred immediately to the Head Teacher Faculty or Head Teacher on duty. The student will take the device and DDB card to the Front Office, where they will place the device in a GLCFC Digital Device Breach (DDB) envelope, clearly marked with the student's details and phone condition. A staff member will enter the phone on the Daily Phone Register and securely store the device in a safe. The Head Teacher Faculty or Head Teacher on duty will record a Refusal to Comply with DDB Procedures incident on Sentral and will notify the relevant Deputy Principal as soon as practicable. The Deputy Principal will contact the parent/carer and will organise for collection of the device with the parent/carer (Parent/Student by negotiation with the DP).
4. **Students who fail to follow Head Teacher Instructions** will be referred immediately to the Deputy Principal. The Deputy Principal will confiscate the device and contact the parent/carer to arrange collection of the device. Consequences for failure to follow instructions and comply with the school's Digital Device Policy may include a Formal Caution to Suspend, or a Suspension for persistent failure meet the procedures of this policy and the School's Behaviour Management Policy.
5. **Students with multiple digital device breaches** or misuse entries will be referred to the Year Group Head Teacher and/or the Deputy Principal. An improvement plan will be formulated, in partnership with parents/carers. This may include consequences, such as mentoring, a Formal Caution to Suspend, or a Suspension for persistent failure to meet the procedures of this policy and the School's Behaviour Management Policy.

Students Who Sign Out During the Day

As part of the sign out process through the front office, administrative staff members will open a student's pouch using the front office unlocking station.

Evaluation and Review

This policy has been reviewed Term 3, 2023. Future reviews will be as required, but no later than 2026 as per Department guidelines.

Implementation of the Procedures

These procedures will apply from Week 1, Term 4, 2023

Appendix 1. Great Lakes College Forster Campus – Digital Device Procedures

- **Students may not use mobile phones** and other digital devices while on school grounds in the time between the first bell for Roll Call and the final bell at the end of Period 5 ('from bell to bell'). 'School grounds' extends to school excursions, sports carnivals, and other events at the school or offsite where an approved school activity takes place, unless otherwise advised.
- **Digital devices** are to be switched off and placed in a locked pouch from bell to bell. This includes recess and lunch breaks.
- **'Mobile phones and other digital devices'** include smart watches (permitted on aeroplane mode) and all other electronic devices (including iPods and other branded tablets), as well as their associated listening accessories – such as, but not limited to, headphones, ear pods and ear buds. For further detailed information, refer to the GLCFC Digital Device Policy.

