

MOBILE PHONE and Digital Device Policy



Revised August 2023

RATIONALE

Sydney Technical High School accepts that many students now possess mobile phones and other devices and bring them to school. The Department of Education has a document *Legal Issues Bulletin No. 35* and recent update of the Mobile Phone Policy. The school's Computer Policy should be read in conjunction with this policy regarding privacy, safety, copyright, management and behaviour.

The Legal Issues Bulletin can be found at the following web address:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/rights-and-accountability/legal-issues-bulletins/technology-misuse-in-schools>

The Department of Education Student Use of Mobile Phones Policy effective Term 4 2023 can be found at the following web address:

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

The Mobile Phone and Computer policy shall apply to all students both on and off school premises.

MOBILE PHONES

- Mobile phones and accessories including but not limited to smartwatches, earbuds and headphones must be off and away. Use of these devices will be dealt with by following the STHS student behaviour policy and repeated instances will be referred to a member of the Senior Executive.
- Students will not make or receive mobile phone calls or messages before or during school hours including recess and lunch, from 8.45 am until the final bell – mobile phones are “off and away”.
- Students who need to contact parents, such as sustaining an injury or requiring approval to leave school, must report to the school administration office. Office or teaching staff will contact the parents, not the students on their mobile phones
- Legal Issues Bulletin No. 35 states that “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 or other data transfer system available on the phone”
- The procedures applying to the inappropriate use of mobile phones apply equally to the inappropriate use of computer games or similar devices.
- Students who bring mobile phones or other electronic devices to school do so at their own risk and the school will not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to mobile phones.

RECORDING AND OTHER LISTENING DEVICES

- Staff and students need to be aware of intellectual property rights and individual rights if recordings are to take place
- The Bulletin states “it is an offence for a person to use a listening device to record or listen to a private conversation to which the person is not a party or to record a private conversation to which the person is a party”. It is not an offence if “everyone involved in the conversation agreed either explicitly or implicitly” that the recording can be made
- Staff members who are requested to be recorded may decide whether this is to occur or not. Approval is discretionary.
- Audio recording devices must be off and away during school hours and the same procedures will apply as for mobile phones
- Staff may decide to allow, with explicit instruction and active supervision, audio recording as part of the learning process

CAMERAS AND VIDEO CAMERAS

- The Bulletin states that “While there is no general law against taking photographs, such behaviour may be considered as harassment, intimidation or threatening”. In some circumstances it may threaten the safety of a person or interfere with the learning environment of the school
- Cameras and video cameras must be off and away during school hours and the same procedures will apply as for mobile phones
- Staff may decide to allow, with explicit instruction and active supervision, the use of cameras and video cameras as part of the learning process only in unique situations