Miller Technology High School
Mobile Phone Policy 2023

1. Rationale

The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that parents, carers, students, schools and teachers take steps to ensure that they are used responsibly at school and in school-related activities. This policy is designed to help increase teaching and learning time, reduce mobile phone-related distractions, increase the safety and well-being of our students, help ensure potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed.

Research demonstrates that increased use of mobile phones by teenagers has led to a decrease in conversation skills, group work skills and skills in managing conflict. Current studies support limiting student use of devices used to interact with others such as mobile phones in order to bring about positive inter-personal relationships.

1 in 5 Australian young people report being socially excluded, threatened or abused online. Only 55% of these young people sought help from their parents, whilst 28% sought assistance from a friend. 24% of teenagers admit to behaving in a negative way online, and 90% of these teenagers have experienced negative online experiences themselves. Teacher interactions with students, DP feedback and Sentral data support the fact that students use of mobile phones as led to an increase in negative interactions between students during school hours.

Studies show that students are often unable to resist the temptation of their mobile phone at school, with the highest use relating to "responding to others". On average, school students check their phone every 8.6 minutes. A recent study published in Computers & Education discovered a negative relationship between mobile phone usage and students' academic performance, such that every 100 minutes that a student spent using their phone a day led to the student dropping 6.3 places in terms of their academic school ranking. This effect was doubled when the students used their phone whilst in class.

This policy provides teachers, students and parents/carers with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones at school and school-related activities.

2. Policy Statement

The procedures outlined in this policy provide a consistent framework for the safe, responsible and respectful use of mobile phones by students at our school. It sets out the shared responsibilities of school staff, students and parents and careers.

Mobile phones and headphones / air pods are not to be used during the school day before school, in class, during breaks, or during other school-related activities (unless permitted under this policy).

3. Context

This policy has been informed by the following:

Student use of digital devices and online services (Department of Education Policy Library) https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2020-0471
Legal Issues Bulletin 35 - Misuse of technology in schools (Department of Education) https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rights-and-accountability/legal-issues-bulletins/bulletin-35-misuse-of-technology-in-schools
Legal Issues Bulletin 56 - Confiscation of student property. (Department of Education) https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rights-and-accountability/legal-issues-bulletins/bulletin-56-confiscation-of-student-property

4. Responsibilities and Delegations

4.1 It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.

4.2 Mobile phones are not to be used during school hours. They are not permitted to be used as a teaching tool to support classroom learning.

4.3 Every student will be assigned a personal Yondr Pouch. Whilst the Yondr Pouch is school property, it is each student's responsibility to bring their Yondr pouch with them to school every day. Parents/carers will be billed for the cost of replacing a Yondr pouch that has been wilfully damaged, tampered with or lost.

4.4 Every student will be a safe, responsible and respectful user of online services and support their peers to be the same.

4.5 Every student will respect and follow school rules and procedures and the decisions made by staff, knowing that other schools may have different arrangements.

4.6 Due to the implementation of the Yondr Pouch, parents/carer are reminded that in cases of emergency during the school day, the school office remains the preferred point of contact and school staff will ensure students are contacted quickly and assisted in the appropriate way.

4.7 Matters not specifically addressed in this policy will be managed by the principal/delegate in accordance with the relevant school and Department policies and procedures.

5. Procedures

POUCH
As a student enters school, they place their phone in their assigned Yondr pouch.

SECURE
The pouch is closed and secured. Each student keeps their pouch throughout the day.

EXIT
When leaving school, the student taps their pouch to an unlocking base to release their phone.

5.1 **School Entrance: As students enter school grounds, they will:**

1) Turn their phone off.

2) Unlock their empty pouch using an Unlocking Base at the School Entrance.

3) Place their phone and earbuds inside the pouch, securely close it and store in their backpack.

Each student will maintain possession of their mobile phone inside their pouch for the duration of the school day. Late students will do this process at the Administration Office (kiosk) as they sign in.

5.2 **Period 2 Pouch-Check:**

Period 2 teachers will ask students to present their pouches for inspection. Teachers will record the names of the students on their roll with no pouch/phone.

5.3 **School Exit: As students exit the school at the end of the school day, they will:**

1) Unlock their pouch using an Unlocking Base at the school Exit.

2) Remove their phone and/or earbuds from their pouch.

3) Securely close their empty pouch and place the pouch in their backpack for the next day

5.4 **Breaches:**

Below is a list of potential student breaches. Each of these breaches will result in the student's device/phone and/or pouch being confiscated by school staff.
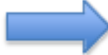
1) Physical damage to the pouch, in an attempt, to circumvent its intended purpose. (e.g. cut, discolouration, bent pin or stripped lock inside the pouch).

2) Losing the pouch.

3) Using their phone during school hours.

4) Smart watches are allowed but used only as a watch (no phone functions).

5) Other devices used in a manner similar to mobile phones such as texting, using social media, listening to music, etc.

5.5 **Consequences if a pouch is damaged:**

1) Phone and Pouch will be confiscated, and parent/carer will be notified.

2) Student's parent/carer must come to the school to pick up their child's phone and a replacement pouch may be assigned at a cost of $20.

6) Repeat offences will result in further disciplinary action.

5.6 **Process for phone misuse**

1st Breach – Recorded on Sentral (MOBILE PHONE CATEGORY)				
Student has phone out or phone not in a pouch (class or playground)	→	Teacher records in SENTRAL Teacher sends student to DP. DP confiscates the phone for collection at the end of school day.	→	Phone placed in pouch and under supervision of DP and kept in school office until the end of the day. If student does not have a pouch, phone confiscated, placed in school office and returned to student at end of school day. Student returned to class with a note (if no note, teacher must follow up with the DP).

2nd Breach – Recorded on Sentral (MOBILE PHONE CATEGORY) – Parents Notified				
Student has phone out or phone not in a pouch (class or playground)	→	Teacher records in SENTRAL Teacher sends student to DP. DP checks Sentral for previous warning. DP confiscates the phone for collection at the end of school day. DP documents – 'Warning DP – Phone misuse' category on Sentral. Parents informed via phone.	→	Phone placed in pouch and under supervision of DP and kept in school office until the end of the day. If student does not have a pouch, phone confiscated, placed in school office and returned to student at end of school day. Student returned to class with a note (if no note, teacher must follow up with the DP).

3rd Breach – Recorded on Sentral (MOBILE PHONE CATEGORY) – Parents called to collect phone				
Student has phone out or phone not in a pouch (class or playground)	→	Teacher records in SENTRAL Teacher sends student to DP. DP checks Sentral for previous warnings. DP confiscates the phone for collection at the end of school day. **Formal Caution issued.** Parents informed via phone to collect phone	→	Phone placed in pouch and under supervision of DP and kept in school office. If student does not have a pouch, phone confiscated, placed in school office. Student returned to class with a note (if no note, teacher must follow up with the DP). Parents must collect phone from the school office.

4th Breach – Recorded on Sentral - SUSPENSION				
Student has phone out or phone not in a pouch (class or playground)	→	Teacher records in SENTRAL Teacher sends student to DP. DP checks Sentral for previous warnings. DP confiscates the phone for collection at the end of school day. **Suspension Issued** (Category: Continuing persistent behaviour posing unacceptable risk to another person's learning and/or wellbeing).	→	Phone placed in pouch and under supervision of DP and kept in school office. If student does not have a pouch, phone confiscated, placed in school office. Parents notified to collect student and phone from the school office.

*Any additional breaches will be managed by the Deputy Principal / Principal on a case-by-case basis.

5.6 **Classroom processes for student phone use:**

After a student hands phone to the Front Office, they will return to class with a note. This will be used to notify the teacher that the phone has been locked away.

Contact between students and parent /carer during the school day.

Should a student need to make a call during the school day, they may:

• See the wellbeing team (for social/emotional support)

• Administration Office (parent questions not able to wait until the end of the school day) During school hours, parents and carers are expected to only contact their children via the school office via **Ph: 02 9607 8669** or email miller-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au. A message will then be given to the student.

6. Responsibilities and obligations

6.1 **For students**:

• Be safe, responsible and respectful users of mobile phones and online services and support their peers to be the same.

• Respect and follow school rules and procedures and the decisions made by staff, knowing that other schools may have different arrangements.

• Communicate respectfully and collaboratively with peers, school staff and the school community in line with the Student Behaviour Code.

6.2 **For parents and carers**:

• Recognise the role they play in educating their children and modelling the behaviours that underpin the safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services.

• Support the implementation of the school procedure, including its approach to resolving issues.

• Take responsibility for their child's use of digital devices and online services at home such as the use of online services with age and content restrictions.

• Communicate with school staff and the school community respectfully and collaboratively.

• Switch off or put their digital devices on silent when at official school functions and during meetings.

• Provide digital devices that meet school specifications and complete any related paperwork.

6.3 **For the principal and teachers**:

• Deliver learning experiences that encourage safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services. This includes:

- Will follow agreed classroom expectations for using digital devices and online services, in line with this procedure and departmental policy.
- Educating students about online privacy, intellectual property, copyright, digital literacy and other online safety-related issues.

• Model appropriate use of digital devices and online services in line with school and departmental policy.

• Respond to and report any breaches and incidents of inappropriate use of digital devices and online services as required by school procedures, departmental policy and any statutory and regulatory requirements.

This includes:

- Reporting the creation, possession or distribution of indecent or offensive material to the Incident Support and
- Report to hotline as required by the Incident Notification and Response Policy and Procedures and consider any mandatory reporting requirements.
- Working with the Department and the Office of the eSafety Commissioner (if necessary) to resolve cases of serious online bullying and image-based abuse.
- Following the school's behaviour management plan when responding to any incident of inappropriate student behaviour relating to the use of digital devices or online services.

• If feasible and particularly as issues emerge, support parents and carers to understand strategies that promote their children's safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services.

• Participate in professional development related to the appropriate use of digital devices and online services.

6.4 For non-teaching staff, volunteers and contractors:

• Be aware of the department's policy, this procedure and act in line with the conduct described.

• Report any inappropriate use of digital devices and online services to the principal, school executive or school staff they are working with.

7. Communicating this procedure to the school community

Students and parents/care givers will be informed about this procedure through MTHS School Website, email, School Stream and the MTHS Facebook page. This policy /procedure can be accessed electronically via the school's website.

8. Complaints

If a student, parent or carer has a complaint under this procedure, they should contact the relevant Deputy Principal for their child's year group to discuss.

9. Review

The principal or delegated staff will review this policy annually and in line with NSW Department of Education's Student Digital Devices and Online Services Policy.