



Pittsworth SHS

Management Guideline



Subject: Use of personal technology devices at school

Contact: School Administration

Date: January 2008

Background: The community of Pittsworth SHS considers that the values of courtesy, consideration and respect are paramount to effective learning and teaching.

The use of mobile phones and associated technologies (iPods etc) can cause disruption to the teaching and learning process and with the rapid advances in technology, can record sound and still and/or moving images. Mobile phone usage has been linked to illegal activities and with the growing number of phones with inbuilt cameras; the continued use in the school environment is a matter of concern.

Pittsworth SHS considers that the use of mobile phones and associated technologies is prejudicial to the good order and management of the school.

Issues and Policy: **AMENDMENT TO THE RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR PLAN OF
PITTSWORTH STATE HIGH SCHOOL**

THE USE OF PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY DEVICES AT SCHOOL

At Pittsworth State High School we believe that every member of the school community should feel confident in participating fully in all aspects of school life without concern that personal devices are being used to record them without their knowledge or consent.

We uphold the value of trust and the right to privacy at Pittsworth State High School. Using mobile phones or any other technologies to underhandedly record events builds a culture of distrust and disharmony. It is considered conduct prejudicial to the good order and management of the school.

Therefore, the recording of any conversation, function, incident without the prior consent of all parties involved is considered to be in breach of school policy.

Furthermore the school will not tolerate images being captured by mobile phones in classes or in the playground that are then forwarded to others, posted on the internet or published in any other way.

Gaining the consent of others to record images that are inappropriate and then sharing these images with others is also considered an inappropriate use of a personal device. The school considers the matter so serious that such behaviour could result in suspension from school.

Also highly inappropriate, and potentially in breach of the Telecommunications Act, is the sending of text messages at school (or on the way to and from school) that contain obscene language and/or threats of violence. If a student receives such a message, he/she should ensure they keep the message as evidence and bring the matter to the attention of the school office. In these cases, the matter will be investigated and may be referred to our Police Service.

Private Conversations and the *Invasion of Privacy Act 1971*

It is important that all members of the school community understand that under the *Invasion of Privacy Act 1971*, 'a person is guilty of an offence against this Act if the person uses a listening device to overhear, record, monitor or listen to a private conversation'. Furthermore it is an offence under the Act for a person who has recorded a conversation to which he is not a party to publish or communicate the conversation.

Students need to understand that some conversations in schools are deemed private and therefore to capture images/record conversations in these cases may be deemed to be in breach of this act.

Mobile Telephone Etiquette

In accordance with the above, students should not bring mobile phones/personal electronic devices to school. Should parents need to contact their student for matters of an urgent nature they may contact the school, which will then arrange direct contact with the student, should it be deemed necessary. Calls and/or messages to personal mobile phones are discouraged as they have the potential to disrupt learning and are prejudicial to the good order and management of the school.

The Education General Provisions Act (EGPA 2006) defines the role of a school as *in loco parentis* (in place of parent). This means that the school is required to know and approve of the movement of all students in its care during school hours. Use of personal communication via mobile phone potentially undermines the school's duty of care. Students who require mobile phones for contact with parents whilst in transit to and from school may either personally secure their phones while at school or have them held by the school during office hours.

Phones and any other electronic devices discovered at school will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day unless a potential criminal act has occurred and the device is required by the police. Students who have their phones confiscated more than once will be informed that their parents will be required to pick up the phone from School Administration.

Other Personal Devices

Students should not bring other personal devices like cameras, digital video cameras, MP3 players or iPods to school. These are often very valuable and there is a risk of damage or theft. Such devices will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day. It should be noted that the school takes no responsibility for the loss or damage of any such item that students bring to school.

References:

1. EPPR : SCM-PR-003