Mobile Phone and Other Electronic Devices Policy

Policy
This policy outlines the appropriate use of mobile phones and electronic devices on our school site.

Rationale
Smithfield West Public School recognises that many children have access to mobile phones and other electronic devices (iPods; PSPs, digital cameras etc). The school also recognises that when used appropriately these devices offer students, parents and staff advantages in terms of ease of communication and personal safety. While recognising the positive aspects these devices may provide, they also have the capacity to have a negative impact on the learning and social interactions of students when used inappropriately. The following policy sets out guidelines for the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices at Smithfield West Public School.

Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:
1. Mobile phones and other electronic devices do not disrupt the teaching and learning environment for any student or teacher.
2. Potential risks to student safety and well-being associated with the inappropriate use of mobile phones and other electronic devices are avoided.
3. Students, staff and parents have a clear understanding of school guidelines and personal responsibilities relating to the appropriate use of mobile phones and other electronic devices.

Responsibility
1. In general students are discouraged from bringing mobile phones and other electronic devices to school.
2. Students, whose parents deem it necessary for their child/children to have a mobile phone at school, are responsible for abiding by the guidelines outlined in this policy.
3. The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by the parents or guardians.
4. Parents or guardians should be aware that their child/children takes a mobile phone to school.
5. Permission for students to have a mobile phone at school is contingent on the parent/guardian signing the Appropriate Use of Mobile Phones at School Agreement which is available from the school office.
6. The school will accept no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones or other electronic devices or for any costs incurred while the phone/device is on school grounds. The school also accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their phone/device stolen travelling to and from school.
7. Any surrendered phone/device will be stored securely.
8. It is the responsibility of all staff and parents to comply with the appropriate use of Mobile Phones and other Electronic Devices Guidelines outlined in this policy and the Department of Education and Communities (DEC) policy.
Guidelines

Staff
1. During teaching time, while on playground duty and during meetings, mobile phones will be switched to ‘silent’ or ‘discreet’ mode.
2. Except in urgent or exceptional situations (including calls from the office), mobile phone use is not permitted during teaching time, while on playground duty and during meetings.

Students

Acceptable Use
1. Students are only permitted to bring a mobile phone to school once the Appropriate Use of Mobile Phones at School Agreement has been signed by both the parent and student.
2. Other electronic devices (iPods; PSPs, digital cameras etc) should not be brought to school under any circumstance.
3. Mobile phones should be switched off as soon as students enter the school grounds.
4. All mobile phones are to be handed in at the front office before 8:55am each day and retrieved at 3:00pm. Phones will be placed in an envelope with the student’s name on it and kept in a secure location during the school day.
5. Any other electronic device that is inadvertently brought to school must be handed to the front office where it will be stored securely.
6. Students will not be permitted to use the mobile phone during the school day. Parents are reminded that in the case of emergency or when messages need to be passed on to students, the school office remains the point of contact and will ensure any student is contacted and assisted in an appropriate and timely manner.
7. Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to friends and family to ensure they are only receiving communication from people known to them. It is strongly advised that students use passwords or personal identification numbers (pin) to prevent unauthorised calls or SMS messages being made. Students must not lend their phone to other students at any time. The student who owns the phone is responsible for its use.
8. Students should mark their phones clearly with their names.
9. Students are not permitted to bring mobile phones or other electronic devices on school excursions or overnight camps under any circumstance. School staff will not be held responsible for the security of phones should this guideline be breached. In instances where students need to make contact with their parents this will be organised by supervising staff.
10. Under no circumstances are students to take photos or videos of other students with mobile phones or other electronic devices while on school grounds or involved in school activities. Any variations will be at the discretion of the Principal.

Unacceptable Use
1. Unless express permission is granted, students are not to be in the possession of a mobile phone or other electronic device at any time between the hours of 8:55am and 3:00pm. Accordingly mobile phones or other electronic devices should not be used to make phone calls, send SMS messages, surf the Internet, take photos or use any other application while on school grounds.
2. Using mobile phones or other electronic devices in an inappropriate manner is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The misuse of mobile phones or other electronic devices includes but is not limited to:
   i. Using a mobile phone at a time that will disrupt teaching and learning activities;
   ii. Making calls or sending SMS messages that intend to threaten, bully or harass another person;
   iii. Taking photos of other students without consent of their parent or guardian
iv. Using inappropriate, obscene or socially unacceptable language while using the phone or device;
v. Downloading and displaying inappropriate photographs or other material on websites including but not limited to You Tube, Facebook, My Space and Twitter.

**Consequences for Inappropriate Use of Mobile Phones**
Students who infringe the guidelines set out in this policy will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the school and DEC discipline policies. Some inappropriate uses can constitute criminal behaviour and will be reported to the police.

**Sanctions**
a. Students who infringe the guidelines in this policy will have their phone/device confiscated by school staff. The phone/device will then be stored securely until the student’s parents are informed and arrangements are made for the parents to collect the mobile phone/device.
b. In the case of mobile phones, repeated infringements will result in the withdrawal of the agreement to allow the student to bring the mobile phone to school.

**Implementation of this Policy**
1. Teachers will discuss this policy with students to ensure they have a clear understanding of the guidelines and procedures.
2. The school community will be made aware of this policy through the school newsletter and at P&C meetings.
   - The policy will also be posted on the school website.
3. The policy will be made clear to all students and their parents seeking enrolment at Smithfield West Public School.

**Appendix**
i. *Appropriate Use of Mobile Phones at School Agreement*

**References**
- NSW Department of Education and Communities Policies and Procedures
- South Coogee Public School – Mobile Phone Policy.

Ken Smith
Principal
4th August, 2011
Appropriate Use of Mobile Phones at School
Agreement

Student’s Name: _____________________________ Class: __________

Student’s Mobile Phone Number: ________________________________

Smithfield West Public School accepts that some parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. However, the school has clear guidelines and procedures for the appropriate use of mobile phones as outlined in the Smithfield West Mobile Phone Policy. In order for any student to bring a mobile phone onto school grounds they must have read and clearly understood the policy as well as co-signing the following agreement with their parent.

STUDENT AGREEMENT
I have read the Smithfield West Public School Mobile Phone Policy and agree to the following:
· When bringing my mobile phone to school I will personally hand it in to the school office by 8:55am and collect it at 3:00pm.
· I understand and will abide by all the guidelines for acceptable use of mobile phones at Smithfield West Public School.
· I understand the behaviours that constitute unacceptable use of mobile phones and will not engage in these behaviours at any time. I acknowledge that if I break the terms of this agreement my phone will be confiscated, my parents will be contacted and I may be banned from bringing my phone onto school grounds.

Student’s Name (print): _____________________________

Student’s Signature: ________________________________

Date: __________________________________________________________________

PARENTAL AGREEMENT
I give permission for my child to carry a mobile phone to school. I have read the Smithfield West Public School Mobile Phone Policy about appropriate use of mobile phones and discussed the guidelines and procedures with my child. I agree to support school policy with regards to mobile phone use and agree to support school decisions and actions regarding mobile phones. I understand that this form will be kept on file and details may be used to assist in identifying a phone should the need arise.

Parent’s Name (print): _____________________________

Parent’s Signature: ________________________________

Date: __________________________________________________________________