



BESDS Personal Communication System Policy

In this policy, communication systems could include, but are not limited to:

- Electronic communication devices e.g. dedicated communication device, iPads
 - Non-electronic communication systems e.g. core boards, aided language displays, PODD communication books
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- At Burwood East Special Developmental School, communication systems are encouraged to be brought to school by students each day. We recognise that these systems provide a way for our students to communicate or support their communication and believe it is vital that they are always with them.
 - The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) Article 19 states that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.” As such, students should have access to their preferred or prescribed personal communication system in all environments.
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Communication systems are at risk of becoming damaged, lost or needing repairs. The Department of Education, and therefore Burwood East Special Developmental School (BESDS), do not have insurance for personal property of students.

Therefore, BESDS cannot accept responsibility for any communication systems which are lost, broken or damaged while they are at school with students.

The NDIS states that they will support in repairing communication systems as needed and consider them to be an “urgent repair”. Please refer to the following website for more information:

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/assistive-technology-explained/assistive-technology-repairs-maintenance-and-replacement>

Responsibilities of parents/guardians of students using communication systems:

- Be aware that repairs to communication systems are to be undertaken by parents/guardians of the student whose device has been damaged or lost.
- Ensure the system is clearly labelled with the student's name and contact details, and includes durable protection e.g. a case, screen protector, carry strap/bag, laminated/durable paper for non-electronic systems etc.
- Bring the device to school fully charged and ready to use for communication purposes each day.
- Limit applications on the communication system, where possible, to those required for communication.

Responsibilities of staff at Burwood East Special Developmental School:

- Establish classroom routines to facilitate unpacking and packing the device each day.
 - Ensure the device will be accessible to the student across the school day.
 - Supervise device use across the school day as much as is possible and reasonable.
 - Support with exploring back up communication systems so the student has an alternative if their device is broken, stolen or lost in collaboration with private therapists.
 - With formal consent from families, collaborate with external Speech Pathologists or relevant providers as required.
 - Encourage students to utilise their communication devices across all school environments.
 - In accordance with Child Safety practices:
 - Communication devices are not permitted in bathroom areas. Non-electronic communication methods are provided in bathroom areas to ensure students continue to have access to communication.
 - School based Speech Pathologists will disable camera features on electronic communication systems where the software allows.
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We agree to the above guidelines outlined in the “BESDS Personal Communication System Policy”:

Student name: _____ Communication system: _____

Signed: _____ (Parent/Guardian) Date: _____