



## STUDENT USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND PORTABLE DIGITAL DEVICES POLICY

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The increased ownership and use of mobile phones and portable digital devices by our students requires that teachers, parents/guardians and students are aware of what constitutes acceptable use within the College and whilst traveling to and from the College via public transport.

It is acknowledged that parents/guardians allow their children access to mobile phones in order that they may feel reassured that contact is possible before and after school. The College also has a responsibility to ensure that mobile phones and digital devices are used appropriately, so that they do not interfere with the educational focus of the classroom, the rights of students to privacy and the smooth functioning of the College.

This policy is designed to clarify what uses of mobile phones and portable digital devices are acceptable for students when brought onto school premises during school hours and what responses will occur in cases of inappropriate use.

### 2.0 PURPOSE

In accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#) issued by the Minister for Education, **personal mobile phones must not be used at Marist-Sion College during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted.

Where a student has been granted an exception, the student must use their mobile phone for the purpose for which the exception was granted, and in a safe, ethical and responsible manner.

#### EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to the policy:

- may be applied during school hours if certain conditions are met
- can be granted by the Principal, or by the teacher, in accordance with this policy and the school's local policy on mobile phones
- must be documented, noting that, to avoid administrative burden on schools, this requirement can be met by including exceptions in documents that schools already regularly develop/use.

Where an exception is granted, the student can only use the mobile phone for the purpose for which it was granted.

**There are three categories of exceptions:**

1. **Learning-related exceptions**

Specific exception	Suggested documentation
For specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Unit of work and included in the Teaching Program
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability and/or learning difficulty	Personalised Learning Plan (PLP)

## 2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Suggested documentation
Students with a health condition	Student Health Support Plan
Students who are Young Carers	School record

## 3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite

Specific exception	Suggested documentation
Travelling to and from excursions	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students on excursions and camps	Risk assessment planning documentation
When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel	Risk assessment planning documentation

## EXCLUSIONS

In the following circumstances, this does not apply:

Description	Rationale
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<b>Out-of-School-Hours Care (OSHC)</b>	Policy not applicable, as attendance falls outside of school hours.
<b>Out-of-school-hours events</b>	Policy not applicable, as attendance falls outside of school hours.
<b>Travelling to and from school</b>	Policy is not applicable when travel falls outside of school hours.
<b>Wearable devices</b>	All notifications must be switched off.
<b>iPads and all other personal devices</b>	All notifications must be switched off.
<b>Students undertaking workplace learning activities e.g. work experience</b>	The policy is not applicable for students on work experience. Instead, students are expected to comply with a workplace's policies.
<b>Students who are undertaking VET</b>	The policy is not applicable for students undertaking VET offsite (as opposed to on school grounds). Instead, students are expected to comply with a TAFE or registered training organisation's policies.

## **SECURE STORAGE**

Mobile phones owned by students at Marist-Sion College are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner's (student's or parent/guardian's) risk. Students are encouraged not to bring a mobile phone to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Students and their parents/guardians are encouraged to obtain appropriate insurance for valuable items.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Marist-Sion College will provide secure storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At the College students are required to store their phones in their locked locker. Phones must be turned off or put on silent. Mobile phones may be briefly checked but are not to leave the vicinity of the locker bay during the school day. In the event that a student fails to bring his/her locker key, the student must seek a spare key from his/her Head of House. Students with codes for the lock, are to see their Tutor or Head of House for their code/to re-set their code. Failing that, the student must leave the phone at reception for safe keeping during the school day.

The audio, camera or video recording functions of phones are not to be used by students at school, during off-campus activities, at bus transfer points or when travelling to and from school on public transport. These functions may be used with the permission of a teacher when needed for a particular learning activity. Teachers will notify their class, in advance, if phones will be required for learning purposes. These may also be used in the case of College events where a College staff

member explicitly states that it is acceptable. Students are reminded that sharing of images of other students, without prior consent, is always inappropriate.

During off-campus activities (e.g. excursions, Whole School events), mobile phones and other portable digital devices may only be used when students are given explicit permission and/or direction by supervising staff, for example, to inform parents of the estimated time that an excursion will return.

The College accepts no responsibility for phones and other portable digital devices which are lost, damaged or stolen whilst on the College premises, during off-campus activities or whilst the student is travelling to and from school.

### **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES**

- a. Mobile phones and other portable digital devices used outside permitted times will be confiscated and stored safely. The following steps regarding their return will be followed:
  - On the first occasion, the item will be confiscated, given to Reception / Administration and returned after 24 hours, either by Reception or by a Head of House. Upon receipt of the confiscated item Reception / Administration will notify parents / guardians.
  - On the second occasion, it will be confiscated, given to the Head of House via Reception, parents / guardians will be contacted and it will be returned after 3 days.
  - On the third occasion, it will be confiscated and returned only to the parents / guardians. At this point, should the device be judged by parents/guardians and the College as a necessity, it will need to be handed in at the beginning of each day and collected at the end of the day, through Student Reception.

The above process starts afresh in each semester.

In all cases when mobile phones are confiscated, students will be asked to turn the phone off, leave the SIM card in and at some stage, during recess or lunch, go to the office in order to contact parents/guardians and let them know they cannot be contacted by mobile. This is to avoid needless angst for parents/guardians who wish to contact their children and are not aware of why they cannot.

- b. If a mobile phone or other portable digital technologies are used in any of the following ways, the students involved will face further disciplinary action:
  - Storing, transferring or accessing pornographic images or similarly inappropriate material
  - Enabling the camera, video or audio recording functions of the device at the College, while involved in off-campus activities or travelling to and from school on public transport
  - Accessing social media websites, with a view to posting or responding to material that will affect the college community
- c. Mobile phones and other portable digital devices are never to be brought into examination rooms. This applies for College as well as VCAA and other conducted examinations.
- d. Where these technologies are used to bully, harass or intimidate other students, parents / guardians or staff, the College's PAC02 Personal Respect and Dignity Policy will be used to address the situation and determine the consequences.

- e. It is a criminal offence to use electronic devices, such as mobile phones to menace, harass or offend another person. The Crimes Legislation Amendment (Telecommunications Offences and Other Measures) Act 2004 provides for offences under the Criminal Code Act 1995. As such, the College may involve the police if there is suspicion that such an offence has occurred. In such cases, the parents/guardians will be informed promptly.

### 3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all students.

### 4.0 DEFINITIONS

**Portable digital devices** such as mobile phones and tablets, personal music player, wireless headphones and Watches. e.g. iPad, Music Players and Internet Connected Devices e.g. Smart Watches.

**A mobile phone** is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network.

**A personal music player** is a device that plays music via headphones or portable speakers.

**Wireless headphones** - headphones that connect to computers, phones or Bluetooth enabled devices.

**During school hours – before the official commencement of school i.e.** beginning of Tutor Group and after the completion of school i.e. at the end of the last lesson for the day.

### 5.0 REFERENCES

- Ministerial policy formally issued by the Minister for Education under section 5.2.1(2)(b) of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Acceptable use of ICT Policy\_DOSCEL

### 6.0 POLICY STATUS AND REVIEW

<b>Approval</b>	Principal, Marist-Sion College
<b>Implementation Date:</b>	February 2020
<b>Last Amended:</b>	
<b>Consultation:</b>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	February 2023
<b>Formerly Titled</b>	PAC15 Student Use of Mobile Phones and Portable Digital Devices Policy