



Mobile Phone Policy

St Bernard's College is committed to a culture of "zero tolerance" for child abuse. We promote a culture that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all young people and continue to respond positively and proactively to Ministerial Order 870 in relation to related policies, procedures, strategies, risk mitigation and our responsiveness to emerging issues.

At the core developing students academically, physically, emotionally and spiritually is the recognition that education and development around the responsible use of mobile phones is vital. The impact technology can have on learning and wellbeing both positive and negative are now fundamental parts of education and we must work in partnerships with families to equip young people with the skills they need to manage their mobile usage. It is the aim of this policy to enable students to develop important skills, knowledge and values which set them up to be safe, reasonable and constructive mobile phone users both now and in the future.

The Risk – Mobile Phones

Mobile phones can create a range of risks when brought to the College:

- They are valuable items that can easily be lost, stolen or damaged in the College environment;
- Using phones inappropriately to bully, intimidate or harass people can have serious consequences including police involvement
- Mobile phone usage in class not only disrupts learning for the phone user but also for fellow students; and
- Illegal and other inappropriate content can be shown and shared with others.

St Bernard's College acknowledges parents may wish their child to carry a mobile phone for personal safety reasons however, the right of a student to have access to a mobile phone at school must be balanced with the responsibility to use it appropriately.

St Bernard's has a responsibility to students and staff to mitigate any risk associated with the use of technology at the College.

Therefore it is our policy that:

- Students must sign and return an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Agreement before they are permitted to bring their mobile phones to the College;
- Mobile phones are brought to the College at the owner's own risk. No liability will be accepted by the College in the event of loss, theft or damage of the phone;
- Mobile phones must only be used by students before school, prior to 8.30 am or after school from 2.55 pm.
- Mobile phones must be left switched off in the student's locker for the duration of the school day and must not be used on school property throughout the day;
- Staff should be alerted, and exceptions requested if a student has special circumstances requiring the use of their mobile phone during school hours (e.g. Health issues);
- Mobile phones must not be brought into exams or class assessments (even if they are turned off or on silent mode);
- Mobile phones must not be used inappropriately. Refer to our Positive Relations Policy, Responsible Use of ICT Policy and Bullying and Harassment Policy;
- Phone cameras are not to be used within the College grounds and in particular, where it would be considered inappropriate such as in change rooms or toilets;
- Students should never photograph or record any person either intentionally or inadvertently without their express permission; and
- Reports of all incidents of misuse of mobile phones will be recorded and retained on the student's file.

Expectations

All students have the right to learn in an environment free from interruption.

As such;

- Mobile phones are to remain in lockers for the duration of the school day, including recess and lunch;
- Headphones should also remain in lockers as they are not part of the College dress code;
- These items should not be visible between 8.30 am and 2:55 pm, without explicit teacher permission;
- Students and families will utilise [Front Reception] should the need arise for external communication;
- Students will adhere to the College ICT Policy, ensuring mobile phones are not used to photograph or record people without permission;
- Mobile phones and other electronic equipment are not permitted in any College based or VCAA examination or assessment.
- It is the responsibility of the student to securely store their mobile phone whilst at school, and
- St Bernard's College staff may request access to electronic data where the school deems it appropriate such as a concern for the safety of a student(s) or staff, an identified breach of a school policy or where it is suspected that a criminal offence has occurred.

Process

Any student with a mobile phone is to leave it switched off and secured in their locker for the duration of the school day and it is not to be used on the College property from 8:30 am until school ends at 2:55 pm.

If during the school day a student is seen using and/or heard by staff, the item will be confiscated as per the following process: e.g:

- First offence: the phone will be confiscated by the teacher and handed back to the student at the end of the lesson. Parents are contacted via a Level One Synergetic entry and email;
- Second offence: the phone will be confiscated and handed to the Year Level Leader. Students may collect their device at the end of the school day. Parents are contacted via a Level Two Synergetic entry and email or phone call;
- A third breach will result in an after-school detention. Parents will be contacted and will have to collect the device from the relevant Year Level Leader;
- A fourth offence will carry an internal suspension for failing to follow reasonable staff direction. Parents are contacted and will be required to attend to pick up the device following a reinstatement meeting;
- When explicit permission has been given by the teacher to access and use such devices to enhance learning opportunities, students may use the devices for its intended use for the designated lesson and in the designated period, after which the device should be immediately returned to the student's locker;
- Parents are advised that students are not permitted to receive or make telephone calls, take photos, film videos, upload images to social media or SMS messages on mobile phones or other electronic equipment while at the College as their use/abuse may be a breach of the College Privacy Policy. If a criminal offence is detected, Police may be informed and the device handed over to them for further investigation; and,
- The College will take no responsibility for lost or stolen phones or electronic equipment.

Workers' Responsibility

All workers are responsible to:

- Model appropriate behaviour at all times, focusing on use of effective self-management skills;
- Ensure all students are provided with ICT Agreements, that they understand them, and that they understand they will face disciplinary action in the event they misuse ICT equipment and devices;

- Be vigilant in monitoring students when using mobile phones;
- Ensure mobile phones are not taken into exams or assessments;
- Deal with all reported and observed incidents of inappropriate mobile phone use in accordance with this policy; and
- Ensure that any incident of inappropriate mobile phone use that they observe or is reported to them, is recorded appropriately.

Implementation

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- Staff training;
- Student ICT Agreements;
- Effective student supervision;
- Education through the Pastoral Care Program
- Effective incident notification procedures;
- Effective communication procedures;
- Effective management of incidents of inappropriate mobile phone usage when reported and/or observed;

Related Policies

- Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy
- Positive Relations Policy
- Information & Communication Technology Policy
- Child Safety and Protection Policy

Policy Revised and Approved Date:	
Next Review Date:	
Persons Responsible:	