

11 December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to inform you about an important change in our school policy that will take effect from the beginning of the 2025 school year.

In our ongoing efforts to create an optimal learning environment and support the well-being of our students, Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd Schools will be implementing a ban on the use of personal digital devices during school hours.

Policy Details:

- Students will be required to keep their mobile phones and other personal digital devices switched off in their bags, or designated location during school hours.
- These devices should not be accessed during the day except in an emergency or when necessary to manage a medical condition.
- A three-step response system will be implemented. If a student is found using a device without permission, the device will be confiscated, and parents or carers will be informed.

Rationale Behind the Policy: Research in neuroscience and the development of social behaviours strongly supports this decision. Studies have shown that excessive use of personal digital devices, including mobile phones and wearable devices, can negatively impact young people's cognitive development, attention span and social skills. By limiting access to these devices during school hours, we aim to:

1. **Enhance Focus and Learning:** Reducing distractions from mobile phones and personal digital devices allows students to concentrate better on their studies, leading to improved academic performance.
2. **Promote Social Interaction:** Encouraging face-to-face interactions helps students develop essential social skills, such as empathy, communication, and teamwork. These skills are crucial for their personal and professional lives.
3. **Support Mental Health:** Limiting screen time can reduce anxiety and stress levels among students. It also promotes healthier sleep patterns, which are vital for their overall well-being.

We understand that this change may require some adjustment, but we firmly believe that it will have a positive impact on our students' academic success and personal development. We appreciate your support and cooperation in implementing this policy. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you for your understanding and partnership in fostering a nurturing and productive learning environment for our students.

Peace and blessings for a wonderful Christmas season,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Fogarty', written in a cursive style.

Kate Fogarty

Executive Director, Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited

