



Student Mobile Phone and Smart Watch Policy

HOLY SPIRIT COMMUNITY SCHOOL

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Purpose of this policy

This policy outlines the requirements of the Minister for Education relating to students using cellular devices during school hours and school grounds. Definitions For the purpose of this policy, a mobile phone is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network. A smartwatch is a watch with cellular capabilities to contact

Rationale

The Victorian Government takes the safe and responsible use of digital technologies, student safety and wellbeing, and the development of social skills and positive behaviour, very seriously.

On this basis, the Hon. James Merlino MP, Minister for Education, announced that a new mobile phone policy would take effect from Term 1 2020. Whilst the Victorian Government acknowledges that we live in a technology-rich world where mobile phones are an important communication tool, research has found that mobile phones can be disruptive in classrooms and open to misuse at school. The unregulated presence of mobile phones in classrooms can undermine students' capacity to think, learn, remember, pay attention and regulate emotion. At recess and lunchtime, opportunities for students to communicate with each other face-to-face or be involved in physical activity are also valued, rather than students being focused on a mobile phone, particularly when they are using it to engage with social media.

This new policy acknowledges that technology is increasingly affecting how students learn and communicate. Therefore, when a student has been given explicit permission to access and use such devices to enhance learning by the classroom teacher, mobile phones will be permitted for that specific purpose. For a few students with particular health and wellbeing needs, an exception to the policy may also be granted. This policy will remove a major distraction from our classrooms, so that teachers can teach, and students can learn in a more focused, positive and supported environment.

Policy

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones and smartwatches to school must have them switched off and stored in their homeroom classroom at all times.
- Students are not permitted to check their phones or smart watches at any point of the school day.

- Students are not to turn on and access their phones and smartwatches until they are outside the black gates.
- Students need to communicate home will be need to be done through traditional means via the school office or class teacher.
- Students who chose to bring their phones or smartwatches to school, if needed will relinquish them to their teacher upon request.

Failure to comply with this policy will be a breach of our behaviour expectations and will be managed accordingly with our behaviour policy under major behaviour process. Student's who fail to comply will risk resulting in having their phone and smart watch either confiscated or banned from school premises.

Exceptions

Exceptions to the policy:

- can be granted by the principal, or by the teacher, in accordance with this policy and the school's local policy on mobile phones and smart watches
- 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 (see table below for suggested ways to document).
- Where an exception is granted, the student can only use the mobile phone or smartwatch for the purpose for which it was granted. There are three categories of exceptions: Learning Need, Wellbeing Need, Off-site Safety Need.

Exclusions

In the following circumstances, the new mobile phone and smartwatch policy does not apply:

Out-of-School-Hours Care (OSHC):

Policy not applicable, as attendance falls outside of school hours.

Out-of-school-hours events:

Policy not applicable, as attendance falls outside of school hours.

Travelling to and from school:

Policy is not applicable when travel falls outside of school hours. Policy is not applicable outside school grounds. School grounds is considered to be outside

iPads and all other personal devices:

These devices fall under the policy of bringing learning devices to school policy. All notifications must be switched off.

Students undertaking workplace learning activities e.g. work experience

The policy is not applicable for students on work experience. Instead, students are expected to comply with a workplace's policies.

Students who are undertaking VET

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, smartwatches and any technology device owned by students are brought to schools at the owner's risk. Where students bring a device to school, if preferred, students can request a locked secured storage for their device which will be locked at the beginning of the day and opened when the student is dismissed at the end of the day. It is up to the student and family to make teachers aware of their more secure storage preference. It is up to the student to give their device to their teacher for the secured storage each day. If the student prefers to store their device in their school bag in their bag totes, that is the default storage option and at their own risk.

Enforcement

Holy Spirit will enforce this policy in line with the Positive Behaviour policy and expectations. Where students fail to comply with the school policy on mobile phones and smartwatches, including if they refuse to relinquish their phones to school staff when asked, this type of behaviour will be managed in accordance to our behaviour policy. Further information on managing personal items can be found within the Education Department's *Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items policy*. Reporting of some incidents involving mobile phones and smartwatches to a relevant authority may be necessary under the Department's *Reporting and Managing Emergencies and Incidents policy*

Related Policies

 [eLearning Policy](#)

 [HS Behaviour Policy](#)

[HS Behaviour Flow Chart](#)

[3-6 Student User Agreement](#)