**Mobile Phone Policy 2020**

As you may be aware, the Victorian government has announced a new mobile phone policy that will require students to switch their phones off and securely store them away during the school day which will be enforced from January 2020.  
  
The policy is designed to support teaching and learning in an environment that is free from unnecessary distractions, disruptions and student inattention caused by the urge to check their phones. At recess and lunch times, students will be better-placed to communicate with each other face to face and/or be involved in activities rather than being focused on a device or on social media.

Carwatha College P-12 understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone and other personal mobile devices to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

**At Carwatha College P-12**

* Students who choose to bring mobile phones and other personal mobile devices to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours as required by the minister.
* When emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school’s office.

**Personal mobile phone use**

In accordance with the Department’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used by students at Carwatha College P-12 during school hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted. Exceptions can only be granted by the Principal or an Assistant Principal

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.

**Secure storage**

Mobile phones owned by students at Carwatha College P-12 are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner’s (student’s or parent/carer’s) risk.  Students are encouraged not to bring a mobile phone to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so.  Please note that Carwatha College P-12 does not have accident insurance for accidental property damage or theft. Students and their parents/carers are encouraged to obtain appropriate insurance for valuable items.

At Carwatha College students in P-6 are required to hand their phones in at the general office immediately when they arrive at school, where they will stored in a locked cupboard for the day. *Please note phones should be clearly named or easily identifiable.* Students in years 7 -12 are required to store their phones in their lockers. Students are required to provide their own padlock in order to secure their locker.

**Enforcement**

* Students using their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Carwatha College P -12 will result in the mobile phone being confiscated. If the mobile phone is confiscated, it will be stored in the secure room in the general office. It can be signed out and collected at the end of the day. If a student refuses to hand over their phone when requested they will be issued with consequences consistent with our hierarchy of consequences.
* If a student repeatedly breaches this policy, his/her parent will be asked to collect the confiscated mobile phone.

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At Carwatha College P-12 **inappropriate use** of mobile phones is any use during school hours, unless an exception has been granted. Inappropriate use is particularly use of a mobile phone:

* + - * in any way that disrupts the learning of others
      * to send inappropriate, harassing or threatening messages or phone calls
      * to engage in inappropriate social media use including cyber bullying
      * to capture video or images of people, including students, teachers and members of the school community without their permission
      * to capture video or images in the school toilets, changing rooms, swimming pools and gyms
      * during exams and assessments
* Any student who is feeling unwell at school and needs to go home must arrange this through the First Aid Attendant, School Office or Year Level Coordinator. Under no circumstances may students use either mobile or pay phones to contact home and make arrangements to leave except through the School Office, Year Level Coordinators or Assistant Principals.
* Mobile phones are brought to and kept at school, and used if the student has an exemption, entirely at their owner’s risk. The school cannot accept any responsibility for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) resulting from mobile phone use. Students and parents should recognise, however, that mobile phones are a target for theft and, accordingly, phones should always be stored in a safe and secure place.
* Parents and students should ensure that phones are properly and adequately insured as personal property.
* Students wishing to bring a mobile phone to school must sign a contract at the beginning of each year. Conditions relating to the use of mobile phones at school will be detailed in the contract. The contract needs to be endorsed by a parent/guardian.

**Additional information** regarding the policy is available on the Department of Education and Training’s [website](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/going-to-school/Pages/Mobile-phones-in-schools.aspx).  
   
Yours sincerely,  
Peter Allen  
Assistant Principal