

Student use of Mobile Phones Policy

1. Background

Melton Secondary College supports the safe and appropriate use of personal mobile devices including mobile phones where students have a compelling reason to bring them to school. We recognise that students live in a technology-rich world where mobile phones are an important communication tool. We also provide the opportunity for students to enjoy an environment where they feel safe and able to learn without distractions. Research has found that the unregulated presence of mobile phones at school can undermine students' capacity to think, learn, remember, pay attention, socialise and regulate emotion. Mobile phones can also be open to misuse with potential to cause significant harm. For this reason mobile phones are regarded as "harmful items" and their use at Melton Secondary College is restricted.

Earphones or speakers (wired or wireless) provide users with the capacity to both receive and transmit audio data and enable the user to connect discretely to personal mobile devices. The use of earphones can also prevent students from engaging in face to face social interactions.

This document outlines the way that Melton Secondary College is implementing the Mobile Phones Policy issued by the Minister for Education under section 5.2.1(2)(b) of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

Definitions

A mobile phone is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network. For the purpose of this policy, "mobile phone" refers to mobile phones and devices with similar functionality which connect to cellular networks. Restrictions apply also to wearable devices such as "smart watches".

An accessory is any device that connects wired or wirelessly to a mobile phone. For the purpose of this policy an "accessory" includes earphones/earbuds, microphones and audio speakers.

A student locker is the individual locker assigned to each student on enrolment secured by a lock provided to them by the College. Students are required to "securely lock" their locker, not share their locker with any other students and to immediately report lost keys, or any sign of unauthorised access to the Junior/Senior Office.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline expectations consistent with policy issued in 2019 by the Minister for Education under section 5.2.1(2)(b) of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

This policy applies to:

- a) All students at Melton Secondary College,
- b) All mobile phones and personal mobile devices,
- c) Audio speakers, headphones or earphones (wired or wireless) capable of transmitting or receiving audio data from a mobile phone.

3. Guiding Principles

- Melton Secondary College has a duty of care to provide students with a safe learning environment. Personal mobile devices including mobile phones have the potential to undermine student safety, wellbeing and learning.

- Students may have a compelling reason to bring a mobile phone to school, if they are travelling some distance or independently to and from school, or travelling to extra-curricular activities.
- The College supports the need to provide students with protected time during the school day when personal mobile devices and mobile phones are not available to support the development of face to face social learning skills and physical activity.
- The College provides students with access to technology where this is required to support their learning during the school day.

4. Implementation

Summary of expectations

At Melton Secondary College:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones and personal mobile devices to school must have them switched off and securely stored in their lockers during school hours.
- Students who choose to bring 'smart watches' to school may wear this device, but must disable cellular network connections during school hours and make the device visible to staff if requested.
- Accessories are only permitted for use when under direct supervision of a teacher and connected to a school approved device in the Library, Senior Study Area or other area approved by the Principal.
- School hours are from first bell at 8.45 am to last bell at 3.10 pm (Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri) and 2.30 pm (Wed).
- Students leaving the school during school hours may not use their personal mobile device while on school grounds.
- Should parents, or carers wish to communicate with their child during school hours, they must do so by contacting the school office on 9743 3322.
- Exceptions to this policy may only be granted by the Principal and must be officially documented.

Personal mobile device storage

At Melton Secondary College students are required to store their mobile phones in their student locker during school hours. Students may hand their mobile phone into the Junior/Senior School Office where they will be placed in a locked cupboard.

Students are encouraged not to bring a mobile phone to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Mobile phones owned by students at Melton Secondary College are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner's (student's or parent/carer's) risk.

Please note that:

- Melton Secondary College does not have accident insurance for accidental property damage or theft. Students and their parents/carers are encouraged to obtain appropriate insurance for any valuable item brought to school.
- Melton Secondary College provides each student with an individual locker. It is each student's responsibility to ensure that they protect the security of their locker by not sharing it with anyone, safeguarding their key and alerting the Junior/Senior School Office quickly if a key is lost or they believe the security of their locker has been compromised.
- If a student believes that their locker is not secure, they must leave their mobile phone or personal mobile device in the Junior/Senior School Office.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Melton Secondary College, or are otherwise in breach of this policy will be issued with consequences consistent with the school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and *Bullying Prevention* policies.

At Melton Secondary College, “inappropriate use” of a personal mobile device or accessory is any use during school hours unless an exception has been granted.

Consequences of breach of this policy

Confiscation of the mobile phone and/or accessories.

- Staff will instruct the student to hand over the mobile phone/accessory. Students are expected to comply with this instruction.
- Confiscated phones/accessories will be available for students to collect at the end of the school day.
- If the student refuses to follow a staff member’s instruction, disciplinary consequences will be applied including the possibility of suspension.
- Confiscated items may be held if they are subject to investigation by Police.
- Repeated misuse of a personal mobile device may lead the Principal to prohibit a student from bringing the device to school.

The Principal (and authorised staff) has the right to search and seize student property in order to enact the Mobile Phone policy: [Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items](#).

More serious consequences will apply for use of mobile phones:

- in ways that disrupt 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 of conflict, bullying or fighting, in the school toilets, change rooms, swimming pools and gyms.
- during exams and assessments.

Exceptions

There may be circumstances in which the Principal believes that an exception from this policy is warranted on the basis of substantial student safety and/or wellbeing grounds, or to effectively manage risk when students are off-site. Exceptions can only be granted by the Principal and must be documented.

Situations where exceptions may be granted to manage risk include:

- Where students are travelling to and from excursions
- Students on camps and excursions
- Where students are engaged in school activities off-site (not on school grounds)

Where an exception is granted, the student can only use the mobile phone for the purpose for which it was granted and must follow the conditions of use. Rules relating to exceptions must be documented as part of risk assessment planning and clearly communicated to parents and students.

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school before 8.45 am / after 3.10 pm (or after 2.30 pm Wednesdays)
- iPads and other devices officially approved by the College
- Students undertaking off-site workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience

5. Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed in four years or as necessitated by changes or developments which may occur through requests by College Council.

6. References

- Melton Secondary College Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

Date Endorsed	
Author	REY
School Council Approval	
School Council Consultation	
Responsible for Review	Principal
Review Date	11/2020
Published	Website/Internal Circulation