

# Endeavour College Digital Devices Policy

***“We want to create the best possible learning environment for our students. To do this, students must feel safe and want to engage”.***

The core values of the Endeavour Way; Love, Courage, Forgiveness and Hope, underpin all College policies. As a restorative school, Endeavour College values the on-going development of authentic relationships in real time. Endeavour College also acknowledges the importance of personal interaction and face-to-face conversation, and we aim to build a culture which values both screen and screen-free time.

While mobile phones offer us lots of benefits, they can impact the safety and wellbeing of students when used inappropriately. Prohibiting the use of mobile phones during school hours helps us to limit the negative impact from inappropriate use and reduces unnecessary distractions in classrooms to help both teachers and students focus on learning. It also encourages students to use breaks as quality time away from screens. The College has ensured that students have access to resources that are sufficient for their learning without the use of mobile phones.

The aim of this policy is to help promote:

- Classroom environments where teachers can teach, and students can learn, free from distractions caused by personal use of devices.
- Safe environments with reduced negative impacts of inappropriate use of devices at school, such as cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, and critical incidents that involve mobile phones.
- Use of breaks as quality time away from screens, encouraging physical activity and play and meaningful face-to-face connections with peers.

## Overview

This policy:

- Requires students to keep their personal devices, particularly mobile phones, **“off and away”** between the start and end of each school day and while attending authorised school activities off-site.
- Outlines the circumstances where students may be given an exemption to use their personal device during the school day for a specific, agreed purpose.
- Helps the College to manage student mobile phones and personal devices that are brought to school.

## What is a digital device?

Digital devices are electronic devices that can create, generate, send, share, communicate, receive, store, display or process information. Digital devices contain a computer or microcontroller. Examples of a digital device include Mobile phones, iPads, iPods, smartwatches, servers, desktops, gaming devices and laptops.

For the purpose of this policy, the use of school approved laptops is not included, however, the use of school approved laptops is still subject to the ICT agreement.

This policy also allows for the exemption of smartwatches. However, they are not to be used during class (and will also be subject to teacher discretion of appropriate use) and must not be taken into exams or assessments.

## What kinds of negative outcomes do digital devices possess?

Endeavour College acknowledges parents may wish their child to carry a mobile phone for safety reasons outside of the formal school day. The right of a student to have access to such devices at the College and on school events must be balanced with the responsibility to use it appropriately. During the school day, the College reserves the right to set guidelines and parameters for the use of all digital devices by students.

Digital devices (in particular mobile phones) have the potential to create a range of risks including:

- They are valuable items that can be lost, stolen or damaged.
- Using digital devices to bully or harass people will have serious consequences which may include police involvement or legal action. The same consequences may also apply to the creation or sharing of some content.
- Inappropriate use of digital devices outside of college hours also has the potential to harm or impact relationships within the College. While the College will work to protect students from harm when they are in

our care, unlawful use of digital devices outside of our direct supervision and school hours should involve direct parent action, and may also involve police and/or legal action; and

- Digital device usage within the College has the potential to disrupt learning for the user, as well as for fellow students if the device is used inappropriately.

### **College policy**

It is our policy that:

- Students must sign and return an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Agreement before they are permitted to use nominated digital devices on the school network or bring any other digital devices to the College.
- Digital devices 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.
- Mobile phones are not to be brought to class, including Care Group time or Care Group events or break times, except where an exemption exists.
- To minimise distractions, mobile phones must be kept in the student's locker (or at Student Services) during classroom lessons, Care Group, Recess/Lunch and College activities.
- Staff should be alerted, and exceptions requested if a student has special circumstances requiring the use of their mobile phone during College hours (i.e. health issues);
- Mobile phones and/or wearables should not be brought into examinations or class assessments under any circumstances.
- Digital devices must not be used inappropriately on school grounds including before and after school. Refer to our Bullying Prevention and Intervention, Cyber Safety, Information and Communication Technology – Student Usage and Photography & Video policies.
- In alignment with and with respect to privacy laws, digital device cameras should be used with great caution 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 without their express permission.
- Misuse of mobile phones could lead to the confiscation of the device for the duration of the day.
- Consequences will be enforced on a 3-caution basis. Where a student is seen in possession of their personal device without an exemption, the device will be confiscated. Where a student receives a second caution about possessing a device, the device will again be confiscated and the student's parent/guardian will be contacted. Where a student receives a third caution about possessing a device, the device will be confiscated and parents/guardians will be contacted to come and pick up the device/s.
- Parents are informed that in cases of emergency, the College (via Student Services) remains the most appropriate point of contact to reach their child quickly. Parents and students have a shared responsibility to prioritise learning during class time; and
- Staff have the right to confiscate any digital device if it is being misused.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

All staff are responsible to:

- Model appropriate digital behaviour at all times.
- 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/or digital devices.
- Be vigilant in monitoring students and their use of mobile phones, wearables, and other digital devices.
- Ensure mobile phones and/or wearables are not taken into examinations, assessments.
- Ensure digital devices stored by the College are signed in and out.
- Remove digital devices(s) from students should that device's use compromise the learning of that student or others or should their use of devices go against the Digital Devices policy;
- Removed devices should be taken to Student Services to be collected by the student or parents after school, with a follow-up restorative conference held for repeat offenders.
- Address inappropriate digital device use in accordance with this policy and in alignment with restorative practices; and
- Ensure that any incident of inappropriate digital device use is recorded and reported appropriately. This could include, but is not limited to, informing parents, Year Level Leaders, the appropriate Director or College Counsellor, and Police depending on the nature and severity of the incident.

### **Bringing personal devices to school**

Students are permitted to bring personal devices to school:

- As a measure to ensure their safety while travelling to and from school

- So parents and part-time employers can contact them outside of school hours
- So they can be contacted about their own child or a person under their care
- To be used during school hours in line with an exemption under this policy, if approved by the school.
- To be carried by Year 12's if going off campus during non-contact time.

The College encourages students not to bring mobile phones and personal devices to school unless necessary for these purposes.

### **Student use of personal devices at school**

All students are required to keep their personal devices 'off and away' between the start and end of each school day and while they are attending authorised school activities off-site, such as camps and excursions. Students may only access their personal devices during these times if they have received an approved exemption from their school to use the device for a specific, agreed reason. Access refers to both physical access, including wearing any wearable technology that fits the definition of personal devices in this policy (other than smartwatches), including remote access, such as connecting other technology to the personal device's hotspot or using headphones or Air Pods that are paired to the personal device.

### **Storage of personal devices**

The College allows students to make the decision on where and how they will store their devices during the school day at their own discretion.

This could include:

- in an individual's student locker
- in the student's school bag
- in a secure storage location such as student services or the front office.

Students are required to turn their devices off or place them in flight mode before storing them in the location given.

### **Liability and damage, loss, or theft**

The College does not provide insurance for accidental loss or damage to personal items including mobile phones and personal digital devices brought to schools by students. Where a personal device is lost, stolen or damaged while in possession of the College (through confiscation) or while locked in a student's locker, the College will review the situation on a case-by-case basis.

### **Exemptions from the policy**

Students are not permitted to access their personal devices at any time during school hours or while they are attending authorised school activities unless they have received an approved exemption in line with this policy. Exemption approvals are subject to the student using their personal device appropriately and only for the specific, agreed purpose of their exemption.

### **Exceptional circumstances**

Individual students may have exceptional circumstances that require a longer-term (or indefinite) exemption from the requirements of the policy, including where:

- The device is used to monitor or help manage a health condition.
- The device is a negotiated adjustment to a learning program for a student with disability or learning difficulties.
- The device is used for translation in the classroom by a student where English is an additional language.
- The student has extenuating personal circumstances that require them to have more ready access to their personal device, such as being a parent themselves or a primary carer to younger siblings or an unwell family member.

All requests for exemptions from parents or independent students on the above grounds must be considered by the principal or their delegate on a case-by-case basis. Approved exemptions for these purposes must be documented in the student's learning plan, or student file (as appropriate) and made accessible to their teachers, including temporary relief teachers.

There may be rare circumstances when there may be a whole class exemption to this policy should digital device use be required for specific learning activities. Should this be the case, the responsible teacher must notify and seek approval from the principal for such an activity.

### **Safe and responsible use of devices**

While this policy is specific to managing student use of personal devices while they are at school, we know that most young people are also using digital technologies at home (and by extension, internet-based services including social media and gaming). Therefore, it is essential that schools and families work in partnership to support students to develop the skills needed to live and work in an increasingly digital world safely, responsibly, and respectfully.

This includes recognising how and when it is appropriate to use devices for personal and recreational purposes, and the importance of also going 'offline' each day to participate in physical activity and play, get quality sleep, be fully present in face-to-face social situations, and spend time doing other enjoyable things like reading, creative arts, and being outdoors. Research shows that balancing screen time with these other important activities is critical to promoting physical and mental health, social and emotional wellbeing, and healthy development for children and young people.

Adults, including school staff and parents, can support students to make positive choices by modelling responsible and respectful use of personal devices and helping children and young people develop the tools to self-manage their behaviour.

### Responses to non-compliance

The College will respond to students using a personal device for a non-exempted purpose in line with our Student Behaviour policy. As a first response, the student will be reminded to put their device "**off and away**" redirecting them to the appropriate task and removing their phone for the remainder of the day. Consequences for the repeated or intentional non-compliance with behaviour expectations are confiscation of the device, escalation to leadership and contact with parents. Ramifications will be enforced on a 3-caution basis:

Caution 1 - Where a student is seen in possession of their personal device without an exemption, the device will be confiscated.

Caution 2 - Where a student receives a second caution about possessing a device, the device will be confiscated, and the student's parent/guardian will be contacted.

Caution 3 - Where a student receives a third caution about possessing a device, the device will be confiscated, and parents/guardians will be contacted to come and pick up the device/s.

In some circumstances and as a last resort, it may be necessary for schools to consider responses to non-compliance in line with the 'Suspension and Expulsion of Students' policy. In other less serious cases, a restorative conference may be held.

In accordance with the 3-caution rule, students' personal devices may be kept by college staff for short periods of time for instances of less-serious misuse. Devices confiscated in these circumstances should be returned to the student (or the students' parent) at the end of the same school day or until a parent or guardian is able to collect.

The College will not keep seized devices for an extended period (being beyond the school day) unless advised by the South Australian Police. The College may contact South Australian Police for advice if a student's personal device has been used to film an unlawful event, such as an assault etc.

Confiscation must occur with student cooperation. There is no lawful authority for school staff to use force to confiscate a device from a student. Where a student refuses to comply with a staff members request to hand over their device, the principal will be notified, and such consequences will be to their discretion.

### Misuse or illegal use of devices

Incidents of misuse of personal devices may be in relation to:

- Bullying and harassment
- Transmission of explicit images
- Photographing, recording or uploading inappropriate content.

Where incidents occur during school hours, or in connection with the school, they will be managed and reported in line with the College policies and procedures. Any illegal activity will be reported to the police.

### Roles and responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities are outlined below.

The principal:

- Ensure the policy is communicated and accessible to all students, staff and families.
- Ensure there is a process for regular review of the policy.
- Ensure that secure storage is available for students to store their digital devices.
- Ensure that exemption requests are reviewed and responded to
- Ensure that students have access to alternative devices for learning.
- Ensure that processes are in place for monitoring the internet and school network use by all members of the learning community.
- Enforce the policy for instances of non-compliance.
- Model appropriate use of digital devices
- Support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible, and respectful use of digital devices.
- Report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with this policy and legislative requirements.

**School staff:**

- Deliver learning opportunities and maintain a safe and productive learning environment,
- Minimise distractions from digital devices in the learning environment.
- Respond to instances of non-compliance in line with the College policy.
- Ensure that all incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices are reported and responded to in line with this policy.
- Ensure that if students are given permission to access their personal device due to an exemption, that they are using it appropriately and only for the specified purpose.
- Ensure that any personal devices that are confiscated are returned to students or parents at the end of the day and that they are logged in and out accordingly.
- Ensure that confiscated devices are stored safely and appropriately.
- Model appropriate use of personal devices.
- Support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible, and respectful use of personal devices.

**Students:**

- Comply with the requirements of this policy and follow all reasonable directions from the principal and school staff.
- Switch all personal devices off upon entering the College each day and store them in the chosen manner.
- Use personal devices for the approved exemption use only where an exemption has been approved.
- Communicate respectfully with others and not use a personal device to bully, harass or threaten another person.
- Respect others' rights to privacy and not take photos, film, or audio records of other people without their explicit consent, knowledge or permission.
- Where needed, notify school staff if there are any issues in which they may need to be in contact with parents or employers etc.

**Parents/Caregiver/guardian:**

- Support the implementation of the school's policy, including the consequences for non-compliance with the policy.
- Encourage their children not to bring a personal device to school unless necessary.
- Understand that the College does not provide insurance under any circumstances for student's personal devices brought onto school grounds.
- Contact the school reception or student services should they need to pass a message to their child/children.
- Encourage their children to report to a staff member should they feel unwell or experience an issue while at school.
- Recognise the important part they play in supporting their child to use their personal devices in a safe, responsible and respectful way.
- Assist their child in understanding the natural consequences of using personal devices as a way of bullying, harassment or in a threatening manner.