



# Wycheproof P-12 College

## Acceptable use of MOBILE Devices POLICY

(includes Mobile phones & devices, taking photos & videos and use of social media)

### Rationale

Mobile devices (such as mobile phones, Smart Watches, tablets and iPods) have become an important and invaluable part of our lifestyle. When used appropriately and responsibly they offer students and their parents many advantages in terms of ease of communication and a sense of personal safety. However, these devices have the capacity to have a negative impact on the learning environment and the safety and well-being of students and we have a duty of care to ensure that we maintain a learning environment that is safe, friendly and cohesive.

### Guiding Principles

- At all times, the need to provide a happy, safe and stimulating learning environment for all students and staff is paramount. We must ensure that mobile device usage does not disrupt this learning environment.
- The right to privacy is a fundamental one and no student should have their privacy or well-being put at risk by the use of a mobile device.
- It is important that the rights and responsibilities of staff, students and parents with regard to mobile devices are clear to all and consistently applied.
- Mobile devices have introduced an alternative method of communication. It is appreciated that this is an integral part of today's lifestyle, but we must still support students to develop skills in other, more traditional, forms of communication – both verbal and written.
- Children need to learn effective study habits and current research indicates that interruptions and distractions have eroded our ability to concentrate.
- 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. This policy aligns with the announcement from James Merlino MP, Minister for Education, that a new mobile phone policy would take effect from Term 1 2020.
- This policy should align with the principles and actions of other Wycheproof P12 College policies including the Student Engagement and Inclusion policy and the Bullying and Harassment (including Cyber-bullying) Policy.

### Implementation

#### (i) Students

**It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile devices to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in the Wycheproof P-12 College Acceptable use of Mobile Devices policy.**

- In general, students should not bring valuable items to school as they can be easily lost, stolen or damaged. As such, students who bring mobile devices to school do so at their own risk and the College accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged mobile devices. This applies not only whilst the students are at school; but also whilst on excursions and camps and whilst travelling to and from school.
- If a student is concerned about the **security of any mobile device they should leave the device at the office.**
- Primary students are **strongly advised not to bring a mobile device to school.** If they elect to bring a mobile device to school, they are to follow the procedures outlined in this policy.
- Before entering the school, **students should turn off their mobile devices.** They are then to be taken to the office (before the morning form assembly) where they will be stored in tubs and available for collection at the end of the day. Class teachers may collect the tubs during the day to access devices for a specific learning task if required.
- If a learning task involves taking photos of other students or filming – this can only occur under the direct supervision of a classroom teacher and with the permission of students involved.
- Any student who wears a Smart Watch must ensure that they are not receiving text messages or notifications (linked to a phone) on their watch. Breaches of this rule will result in students facing the disciplinary procedures outlined in this policy.
- If students need to contact their parents/carers for any reason they are to do so through the office.
- For a small number of students with particular health and wellbeing needs (as detailed by a supporting letter from a medical practitioner), permission may be given by the school Principal to access medical apps on mobile devices.
- In bringing a mobile device to the College, students and their parents are accepting that staff have the right to check the mobile device at any time if there is suspicion of inappropriate images or messages. This is a

condition of having the mobile device at school and if students or their parents don't accept this, they should not bring their mobile phone to school.

- Students who breach any of these rules will be required to hand their mobile device to the Principal at the beginning of each day (for a two week period). If the mobile device is confiscated more than once, parents will need to contact the College and arrange a time to collect the mobile device. A third offence will result in student suspension.
- The Acceptable use of Mobile Devices Policy for mobile devices also applies to students during College excursions, camps and co-curricular activities or travelling on the bus to the North Central Trade Training Centre. Whilst at NCTTC, students must abide by the NCTTC rules relating to mobile phones and other devices. On camps and excursions, conditions for the use of mobile devices will be determined by the organiser/teacher in charge and clearly explained to all students involved at the commencement of the event.

**(ii) Staff**

- Mobile phones and other devices are to be switched off or placed on 'silent' profile during meetings, in class time and on yard duty.
- Staff who use mobile devices and social media tools to engage children and young people must have a clear educational context to support teaching and learning.

**(iii) Parents**

- Parents who are working in classrooms, attending assemblies or meetings at the College are asked to turn their mobile devices off or to 'silent' profile so that there is no disruption to the College's programs.
- Parents should spend time discussing this policy and its implications with their children to ensure that all fully understand and accept the conditions under which mobile devices may be brought to school.

**Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle: **July 2026**

**Basis of Discretion:**

At all times, DE Guidelines, the needs of the students and the school community will be considered in the implementation of the Acceptable use of Mobile Devices policy.

**This policy was last ratified by School Council: 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023**