

# Students Use of Mobile Phone Policy



At Caroline Chisholm Catholic College we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our college. Our commitment is drawn from and inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice, and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel (*CECV Commitment to Child Safety*).

As a Catholic learning community, the College is committed to ensuring all students engage meaningfully in their learning, build a sense of hospitality and compassion, and create respectful relationships within the college community.

This policy is designed to ensure that Caroline Chisholm Catholic College complies with the eleven minimum child safe standards in line with *Ministerial Order 1359*. As educators, we have a mandatory obligation to create a culture which prioritises a safe, nurturing community for every child. The standards provide a framework for routinely reviewing and strengthening child safety strategies, policies, and practises. This policy outlines the requirements of the *Minister for Education* relating to students using mobile phones during school hours.

While technology can provide many opportunities for communication and learning, there are growing concerns about the relationship between excessive usage and its impact on learning and wellbeing for adolescents.

Caroline Chisholm Catholic College advocates for safe and responsible digital citizenship and prioritise the student's safety and wellbeing in the development of social skills and positive behaviour. As a learning community our role is to educate students in the responsible use of technology so that our students are able to:

- Build relationships and community by increasing face to face interactions and physical activity during breaks.
- Enhance learning through full engagement in classroom.
- Develop capacity for empowerment and self-regulation.

The aim of the policy is to provide a safe environment where students can learn without inappropriate mobile phone use including (cyber bullying) or distractions and provide greater opportunities for social interaction and physical activities during recess and lunchtime.

## Scope

This policy applies to all students who attend Caroline Chisholm Catholic College.

## Policy

It is the student's responsibility to show that the mobile devices are stored in a secure place. Each Caroline Chisholm Catholic College student is provided with their own locker and a combination lock.

Mobile phones are not permitted to be brought to class. Students need to be present and, in the moment, whilst at school and, as a college community, we want to promote fair and reasonable use of mobile phone devices. The use of technology is important, but there are risks and benefits from its use and need to be managed and responsibilities owned.

Mobile phones are not allowed in class unless specifically requested by the teacher and noted in the lesson plan. Students should be fully present and engaged during school hours. As a college community, we aim to encourage fair and reasonable use of mobile devices. While technology is important, its use comes with both risks and benefits that need to be managed responsibly.

## Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide:

- A safe environment to learn without inappropriate mobile phone use (including cyber bullying) or distractions.
- Create opportunities for social interactions and physical activity during recess and lunchtimes.
- Research confirms that mobile phones can negatively impact on educational outcomes for students. Constant notifications, messages and checking of phones is an ongoing distraction for students, limiting their ability to focus and concentrate on learning.

Research from Victorian Education Department shows: Ref <https://www.vic.gov.au/mobile-phones-schools#research>

- Even when a phone is not turned on but is close to a person, its physical proximity is distracting and reduces the person's ability to perform tasks.
- There is a link between the use of smartphones and an increase in depression, anxiety, and reduced happiness.
- Mobile phone content can influence our dopamine pathways leading to a battle for more and more of the users' time.
- Grades improve when mobile phones are banned from classes.

## Family Contact – Emergencies

The College acknowledges that most students own a mobile phone and the importance they now serve as a tool of communication between parents, carers, guardians, and students. In emergencies, parents can contact their children through the front office and reception staff will contact the student. Parents and carers are required to follow the school process with regards to making arrangements for collecting their students during the school day.

## Exceptions

A small number of exceptions may be made. These exceptions will only be available if a mobile phone is essential for a student in:

- Managing a diagnosed health condition (exemptions on medical grounds, will be permitted for the approval of Deputy Principals).
- Classroom learning only at teachers' discretion (including filming for specific classes).
- Liaise with the relevant Director of Campus with regards to certain students that use noise cancelling headphones for a wellbeing reason.
- Students may use wired headphones for learning purposes which can be purchased through the booklist.
- Year 12's may listen to music in their study space with wired headphones only.

## Expectations

- The individual student is responsible for the security of their phone. All students are provided with an individual combination lock to ensure that secure storage of their device is possible.
- The phone is to be turned off and locked in individual student's lockers throughout the school day, from the time they enter the school grounds until they exit the school grounds.
- For the canteen, students will need to ensure that they have their Compass ID card or a physical bank card to pay for items electronically. Alternatively, they may order their lunch online.
- Mobile phones may not be brought into any examination room.
- Students will not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, bully others, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, phone calls or via any other means.
- Students will not circulate any images that make reference and/or identify community members without their consent.
- Students will not circulate or view explicit images. Children under the age of 18 are unable to give consent to these types of images.

- Students will not use a VPN to bypass the school internet filtering system.
- Students are not to bring or use their phones on camps, excursions, sports days or the like.

## Headphones and Earbuds

- Headphones and earbuds may not be used.
- Students are not permitted to listen to music during class time.
- Students wearing headphones or earbuds whilst at school will have them confiscated until the end of day. The same process for phone confiscation will apply.

## Liability

Students acknowledge that mobile phones/devices, earbuds, and headphones are brought to school at the owner's risk. The College does not hold insurance for personal property brought to school and will not pay for any loss or damage to such property. Phones should be identifiable, and password protected.

## Consequences

Students who are found using a mobile phone, ear buds or headphones during school time will have their devices confiscated and it will be placed at reception and collected by the student at the end of the school day by a member of the Wellbeing Team.

- If a student's mobile phone, ear buds, or headphones are confiscated for a third time, parents will be asked to collect the phone from reception on the student's behalf.

# Mobile Phone Device, Ear buds and Headphones Confiscation Process

