



St Joseph's School

PETERBOROUGH

MOBILE DIGITAL DEVICES POLICY

Definitions

'Mobile digital devices' are hand-held electronic devices that can generate, receive, store, process and send digital information, including photos and videos. Under this policy, mobile digital devices include smartphones, smartwatches and mobile tablets but not Chromebooks or laptops. (Carr-Gregg, 2008). This policy makes a distinction between personal devices that often have independent internet connectivity which bypasses the school internet filter and devices that are provided by the school and or authorized by the school as part of teacher-directed educational activities.

Rationale

Mobile digital devices are an important communication medium and have significant benefits for use in the broader community. Some of the benefits include:

- Aids to wellbeing
 - Connection to peer networks and communities of interest
 - Personal safety
 - Digital literacy
 - Access to information
 - Communication benefits
- (Carr-Gregg, 2018)

However, research has found that "Mobile digital device use in schools has the potential to disrupt student wellbeing and affect the education of the 'whole child'" (Griffiths & Williams, 2018). In particular, some of the significant risks and harms of mobile digital devices include:

- Distraction from school work
 - Impediment to good physical health
 - Negative impact on mental health
 - Decreased face-to face social interaction
 - Exposure to inappropriate material
 - Cyberbullying
- (Griffiths & Williams, 2018)

Guidelines

- Students are not to use mobile digital devices on school grounds during school hours, this includes during lesson times, recess, lunchtime, in between lessons or during afterschool study.
 - *School grounds extends to school excursions, sports carnivals, and other events off the school site, where an approved school activity takes place.*
- If a student chooses to bring their mobile digital device(s) to school:
 - R-6 students will need to turn their mobile digital device(s) off or on silent and hand in at the front office where it will be safely stored until the end of the day.
 - 7-9 students will need to turn their mobile digital device(s) off or on silent and have them locked in the student's locker and must not be accessed during school hours.

- Mobile digital devices are brought to St Joseph's School at the owner's own risk. No liability will be accepted by the School in the event of loss, theft or damage of the mobile digital device.
- Students are discouraged from using their mobile digital devices whilst walking or riding to and from the School. There are significant safety risks associated with walking and riding whilst texting, messaging, being on the internet or listening to music with earbuds or headphones
- Students are reminded that when mobile digital devices are used outside of school hours they must be used in a manner consistent with the School's Anti-Bullying & Harassment, Behaviour Education and Personal Responsibility and Intervention, Computer & Internet and Learning Technologies policies.
- Normally, a parent should not communicate with their child during school hours. In the event of an emergency, parents are requested to contact the School Front office, advise them of the nature of the emergency and staff members will facilitate communications with their child. Parents should be aware that calls or messages to their child's mobile device will not be accessed until the end of the school day.

Procedure

- Students who choose to use their mobile digital devices for any reason will first be issued with a warning. Teacher will record the breach of procedure on SEQTA.
- Students who choose to use their mobile digital devices for any reason on a second occasion within a calendar year will have their device confiscated. It will be stored safely in the front office and will be able to be collected by a parent/caregiver at the end of the day. Teacher will record the breach of procedure on SEQTA
- Students who choose to use their mobile digital devices for any reason on more than two occasions will have their phone confiscated. It will be stored safely in the front office and will be able to be collected by a parent/caregiver at the end of the day. If the student is in R-6 the parents will be informed that the child is no longer permitted to bring the device to school. If the student is in 7-9 they will no longer be permitted to leave their device in their locker and will instead need to hand their device in to the front office at the start of each day. They can then collect it again at the end of the day.
- Any further breaches of these expectations by 7-9 students will result in the device no longer being permitted at school.
- Exemptions to this policy for medical purposes maybe given after direct negotiation between parent/carer and the Principal.

Responsibilities

Students

- Are expected to follow the guidelines outlined above.

All Staff

- Model appropriate behaviour at all times;
- It is expected that staff mobile phones are either switched off or on silent during meetings, school functions and lessons, so there is minimal distraction to others.
- When in a supervisory capacity, it is inappropriate for staff to engage in personal communication other than in an emergency.

Teaching Staff

- Ensure all students are provided with ICT Agreements, that they understand them, and that they understand the will face consequences in the event they misuse ICT equipment and devices;
- Deal with all reported and observed incidents of inappropriate mobile digital device use in accordance with this policy; and

- Ensure that any incident of inappropriate mobile digital device use that they observe or is reported to them, is recorded appropriately on SEQTA.

Parents/Caregivers

- The decision to provide a mobile phone and other electronic equipment to their children should be made by parents/caregivers.
- Parents/Caregivers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone or other electronic equipment onto St Joseph's School premises.
- Parents are asked to contact their child only through the St Joseph's School landline 86518100 during school hours not via their child's mobile phone.
- As a courtesy, parents are asked to turn off phones or switch to silent when attending St Joseph's School functions and meetings.

References

Carr-Gregg, M (2018), "Review into the non-educational use of mobile devices in NSW schools – report" accessed 30 March 2019 from: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/our-reports-and-reviews/mobile-devices-in-schools>

Griffiths, K & Williams, M, (2018), "Literature review – Impact of mobile digital devices in schools", Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, accessed 30 March 2019 from <https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/strategies-and-reports/media/documents/mobile-device-literature-review.pdf>.

Policy reviewed 2022