



"To Live, To Love, To Grow In Christ"

HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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MOBILE PHONE AND SMARTWATCH POLICY – COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Purpose of this policy

This policy outlines the requirements of staff relating to students having mobile phones or a smartwatch at school.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, a mobile phone is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network.

A smartwatch is a wearable computer in the form of a wristwatch. Modern smartwatches provide a local touchscreen interface for daily use. Most can be used to make phone calls and send and receive text messages. They can also be used for purpose of taking photos and film/voice recordings.

Procedures in place

Students who bring mobile phones or a smartwatch to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours.

Exceptions to the policy may be applied if certain conditions are met. Exceptions can be granted by the principal, or by a teacher. Exceptions must be documented.

Where students bring a mobile phone or smartwatch to school the school must provide secure storage. For non-compliance, schools to manage

Rationale

At Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School, we take safe and responsible use of digital technologies, student safety and wellbeing, and the development of social skills and positive behaviour very seriously.

While we live in a technology-rich world where mobile phones are an important communication tool, research has found that they can be disruptive in classrooms and open to misuse at school. The unregulated presence of mobile phones or a smartwatch in classrooms can undermine students' capacity to think, learn, remember, pay attention, and regulate emotion.

At recess and lunchtime, opportunities for students to communicate with each other face-to-face or be involved in physical activity are also valued, rather than students being focused on a mobile phone or a smartwatch, particularly when they are using it to engage with social media.

Both these communication devices cause disruption in the classroom and playground and can be used inappropriately to access social media and take photos without permission. This can cause distress and breach the privacy of others.

Parents can contact their children by calling the school office on 89 27 4311. If necessary, students can contact parents from the front office.

For a small number of students with health and wellbeing needs, an exception to the policy may also be granted.

This policy will remove a major distraction from our classrooms, so that teachers can teach, and students can learn in a more focused, positive, and supported environment.

This policy is applied also to students who attend Out of School Hours Care (OSHC). This includes Before and After School Care as well as Vacation Care.

Policy

On arrival to school, students who bring their mobile phone or smartwatch to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours.

Exceptions

Exceptions to the policy:

- May be applied during school hours if certain conditions are met
- Can be granted by the principal, or the teacher, in accordance with this policy
- Must be documented, noting that, to avoid administrative burden on schools, this requirement can be met by including exceptions in documents that schools already regularly develop/use

Where an exception is granted, the student can only use the mobile phone for the purpose for which it was granted.

Categories for exemption:

- Learning
 - Specific learning activities
 - Students with adjustment plans due to a disability and/or learning difficulty
- Health and wellbeing
 - Health condition
- Managing risk when students are offsite
 - Excursions and camps
 - When students are offsite and unsupervised by parents/staff

Secure storage

Mobile phones or smartwatches owned by students are brought to schools at the owner's risk. The school must provide safe storage, such as school office safe. Secure safe storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so.

The principal is responsible for determining the appropriate arrangements for secure storage.

Enforcement

Schools will enforce the policy under their existing student wellbeing and behaviour management policies. Where a student does not comply with the policy, the school will refer to Holy Spirit Positive Behaviour Support Policy and Procedures for course of action.

Ratified

This policy was ratified by School Board on Thursday 18th March 2020

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year cycle – March 2026