



MERREDIN COLLEGE

A Wheatbelt Independent Public School

Mobile Phones & Electronic Device Policy

Revised 2021

learning close to home

INTRODUCTION

Merredin College has developed this policy to reflect the Department of Education's 'off and away- all day' Mobile Phone Policy (2020). It takes into account new forms of technology which impact on the educational environment of students. This includes smart watches and listening accessories, such as headphones and earbuds.

School concerns regarding the use of mobile phones

- Focus removed from education and placed on socialising.
- Students arranging to go home without going through the office when sick or having problems.
- Students texting within the classroom, to another room or beyond the school.
- Ring tones disrupting classes or silent calls distracting students.
- Students cheating in tests/exams.
- Students arranging for other students to bring false messages to the teacher so they can truant.
- Privacy issue - phones used for taking photographs or recording conversations without the knowledge of those being recorded.
- Problems relating to access rights, privacy, harassment or bullying.
- Theft or damage of phones.
- Bullying through social networking sites which students can access while they are at school.

School concerns regarding the use of Electronic Devices (Smart Devices, MP3 players, iPods, headphones etc.)

- Focus removed from education and placed on socialising.
- Students not listening to teachers.
- Music causing a distraction to other students.
- Theft or damage of devices.

POLICY

1. Mobile telephones and electronic devices may be brought to school but must be switched off and put away in bags from first to last bell:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday - **8.50am to 3.00pm**
Wednesday - **8.50am to 2.30pm**

Any urgent communication should be made through the school office.

2. Smart watches must be switched to 'airplane' or 'School' mode.
3. The school takes no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage to student mobile telephones or electronic devices that are brought to school or other school sponsored functions (either at school or relevant site, or whilst travelling to or from school or site).
4. Mobile phones and electronic devices will be locked in a secure safe and whilst every care is taken following confiscation, the school takes no responsibility for loss, theft or damage of any device.
5. Staff may only use personal mobile telephones during the school day for conducting school business, preferably in the privacy of office or staff areas.

The above pertains to students in Year 7-12. No students in years K-6 should be in possession of a mobile phone or electronic device.

The authorisation of the Principal or Deputy Principal is required for any variations to these directions.

SANCTIONS

If Students are seen in the possession of a mobile phone, electronic device or ancillary items irrespective of it being turned off or on, they will be instructed to take the device or item to Student Services. Staff will not give students a warning. At Student Services the student will be handed a named sealable envelope to package it in. The sealed, labelled envelope containing the device will then be placed in the locked safe.

1st Offence -

- Student is instructed to take device to Student Services where the student's name is recorded centrally and the device is locked in the safe.
- The student collects the device at the end of the school day and reminded that their first offence has been recorded.
- If the student refuses to bring the device to Student Services, the teacher is to notify the HOC/TIC for follow up. Should the student refuse to volunteer the device, the HOC/TIC will call parents and a suspension may follow at the discretion of the Deputy Principal. Offence will be recorded irrespective of refusal or HOC/TIC intervention.

2nd Offence -

- Student is instructed to take device to Student Services where the student's name is recorded centrally and the device is locked in the safe.
- Student Services staff will notify parents via telephone. The parent must collect the device from school. A letter will be sent home to inform parents that if the device is required to be handed in again, a suspension may follow.
- If the student refuses to bring the device to Student Services, the teacher is to notify the HOC/TIC for follow up. Should the student refuse to volunteer the device, the HOC/TIC will call parents and a suspension may follow at the discretion of the Deputy Principal. Offence will be recorded irrespective of refusal or HOD/TIC intervention.

3rd Offence -

- Student is instructed to take device to Student Services where the student's name is recorded centrally and the device is locked in the safe.
- The student's parents will be notified and the parents will also be sent an 'Intent to Suspend' letter and/or a call from the Deputy Principal. The parent must collect the device from school.
- If the student refuses to bring the device to Student Services, the teacher is to notify the HOD/TIC for follow up. Should the student refuse to volunteer the device, the HOC/TIC will call parents and a suspension may follow at the discretion of the Deputy Principal. Offence will be recorded irrespective of refusal or HOD/TIC intervention.

4th Offence –

- Student is instructed to take device to Student Services where the student's name is recorded centrally and the device is locked in the safe.
- The student's parents will be notified with a call from the Deputy Principal. The parent must collect the device from school.
- A suspension will follow at the discretion of the Deputy Principal.

All instruction of students in actioning this policy will be carried out by Teaching staff only. Non-teaching staff members can support by confidentially notifying teachers of any issues.

Approved use

- Students may turn on their mobile phones at the direction of a school staff member for a specific educational purpose. Any planned use shall be submitted to the teacher's line manager 2 days prior to planned use.
- Students on a SEN plan may have very specific mobile phone use included in their planning after approval by the Deputy Principal, Student Services.
- Students may need to use a mobile device to monitor medical devices remotely. Allowances will be negotiated with parents and communicated with staff on a case by case basis by the Deputy Principal, Student Services.

Inappropriate conduct

It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone or electronic device to menace, harass or offend another person. Students or staff who use mobile phones or electronic devices to engage in personal attacks, harass another person, covertly record sound or video, post private information about another person using SMS or online messages, take/send private photos or objectionable material or make inappropriate phone calls may find the matter referred to the Police.

Loss of Good Standing

Student will lose their good standing for 2 weeks on their second offence. On the third offence students will lose their good standing for 3 weeks. When the student is suspended after the third offence they will lose Good Standing for 5 weeks in line with the Merredin College Good Standing Policy 8-12.

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