St Philip’s College Mobile Phones Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose
1.1 The increased ownership of mobile phones requires that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly. This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues (such as mobile phone etiquette) can be clearly identified and addressed; ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students.

1.2 St Philip’s College has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones to provide teachers, students, and parents with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.

1.3 In order for students to carry a mobile phone during school hours, students and their parents or guardians must first read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy.

1.4 The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school excursions, camps, and extra-curricular activities.

Rationale

2.1 Personal safety and security St Philip’s College accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also ever-increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents the reassurance of being able to speak with their child at any time.

2.2 Young people and mobile phones
Scientific evidence does not indicate the need for special precautions for either adults or children in the use of mobile phones. This view is supported by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other leading experts and health authorities internationally.

Mobile phones sold in Australia are required to comply with the Australian Communication Authority’s Electromagnetic Energy (EME) safety standard, which is for all people, including children. The safety margins on national and international guidelines are significant and already take into account any differences in exposure that could be experienced by children due to conductivity and head size.

Responsibility

3.1 It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones onto school premises to adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document.

3.2 The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or guardians.

3.3 Parents should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone onto school premises.

3.4 Permission to have a mobile phone at school while under the school’s supervision is contingent upon parent/guardian permission in the form of a signed copy of this policy. Parents/guardians may revoke approval at any time.

Acceptable Uses

4.1 Mobile phones should be switched off during the school day. Exceptions may be permitted in exceptional circumstances, should the parent/guardian specifically request it. Such requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis, and should be directed to the
Deputy Headmaster. Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, Student Access remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly, and assisted in the appropriate way.

4.2 While on school premises, students should use soundless features such as text messaging, answering services, call diversion and vibration alert to receive important calls – if approval is granted by the Deputy Headmaster.

Unacceptable Uses

5.1 Unless express permission is granted to the contrary, mobile phones not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos or any other application during the school day.

5.2 Students with mobile phones may not engage in sending group SMS messages at the College.

5.3 Mobile phones should not disrupt classroom lessons by ringing or beeping, otherwise the mobile will be taken by the teacher and forwarded to the Deputy Headmaster's office for storage. An automatic Friday Detention will be issued.

5.4 Should there be repeated disruptions caused by a mobile phone, the student will lose the phone and it will be stored by the Deputy Headmaster until parents can collect it.

Theft or damage

6.1 Students are required to have their names clearly marked on their mobile phones.

6.2 As soon as they arrive at school, students who bring a mobile phone onto school premises should leave it locked away in their locker/bag. In order to reduce the risk of theft during school hours, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not ‘advertise’ they have them.

6.3 Mobile phones which are found in the school, and whose owner cannot be located, are to be handed in at Student Access.

6.4 The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

6.5 The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school or whilst at school.

6.6 It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (eg by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their passwords/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords may not be shared.

Inappropriate conduct

7.1 Any student/s caught using a mobile phone to cheat in examinations or assessments will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Deputy Headmaster or Headmaster.

7.2 Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Deputy Headmaster or Headmaster. *

7.3 Students with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, post private information about another person using SMS messages, take/send photographs or objectionable images, or make offensive phone calls. Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Deputy Headmaster or Headmaster. *

* It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if the action sanctioned by the Deputy Headmaster or Headmaster is deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

Effective 23rd July 2007