



St Brigid's Catholic School

New Norfolk

MOBILE PHONES, IPODS & COMPUTER TABLET DEVICES THAT ARE NOT OWNED BY THE SCHOOL - ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

PURPOSE

The increased ownership of mobile phones, iPods and computer tablets requires that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure that these devices are used responsibly. This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues (such as mobile etiquette) can be clearly identified and addressed at both the school and at home, ensuring the benefits that these devices can provide (such as increased safety and security) can continue to be enjoyed by our students.

The school recognises that the Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones, iPods and computer tablets may vary for school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities. However, in the case of school camps involving overnight stay, the school does not allow students attending to carry mobile phones (staff mobile phone numbers will be made available to parents for emergency purposes) but iPods may be useful when travelling distances. Students and parents will be informed in writing about these occasions.

RATIONALE

Personal safety and security. St. Brigid's Catholic School accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also an 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 reassurance that they can speak with their child quickly, at any time. However, if there is an issue that the parent needs to share with the child, for example a change to who is picking them up from school, parents need to remember it is preferred to contact the school office.

RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones, ipods or computer tablet devices onto school premises to adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document.

The decision to provide a mobile phone, ipod or computer tablet to their children should be made by parents or guardians.

Parents/guardians should be aware when their child takes a mobile phone onto school premises, and students should only bring them to school with the explicit permission of their parent/s or guardians.

STORAGE

Mobile phones, iPods and computer tablets must be handed into the school office before school. The devices then must be picked up by the student at the end of the day or when the student leaves the school. The device must be clearly named. If a student needs to make a telephone call during the day they must ask permission from the class teacher and a school telephone will be used if deemed appropriate. Any mobile phone, iPod or computer tablet device being used during the day will be confiscated.

THEFT AND DAMAGE

Students are required to mark their mobile phone, iPod or computer tablet clearly with their name.

Mobile phones which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to the school office.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones, iPods or computer tablets. Their safety and security is wholly in the hands of the student. This includes devices brought to school (either with or without parental consent), taken on excursions or taken on school camps.

The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones, iPods or computer tablets stolen while travelling to and from school.

Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential and they should not be shared. It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that:

- i) unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones.
- ii) iPods or computer tablets cannot be opened (eg by other students, or if stolen).

INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT

Students not adhering to the policy, eg not handing in their phone, iPod or computer tablet will have it confiscated and parents/guardians will need to collect them from the office. Any student who uses vulgar, offensive, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary actions as per the school bullying policy.

Students with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable image or phone calls. Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary actions as per the school bullying policy.

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 action as sanctioned by the school is deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

STAFF USE OF MOBILE PHONES

Staff members are not permitted to use personal mobile phones during the prescribed school hours, except in cases of emergency and during recess and lunch times, as long as the teacher is not on playground duty. Mobile phones are to be switched off or on silent during class times.

Policy implemented March 2007

Policy reviewed and amended October 2013

(it has been suggested that with the many changes in this area that this policy needs to be regularly updated)