



# MOBILE PHONE & DIGITAL DEVICES POLICY

Review Date: September 2022

Ratified by School Board: \_\_\_\_\_ SEPTEMBER 2019

## Vision Statement

*At St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, we strive to provide an education of excellence, through commitment to the Catholic tradition and living in a community where respect, justice and faith are celebrated.*

Developed by: Staff and School Board All references to 'Staff members' include Administration Staff, Support Teachers, Teachers and Temporary Relief Teachers.

## **INTRODUCTION**

At St Anthony's Catholic Primary School we aim to educate students holistically so they are able to act with respect, justice and empathy toward both adults and peers.

Mobile Phones and Portable Digital Devices (PDD) such as IPODS and smart watches etc. have extending capabilities (including chat groups, email and social media platforms) which can have positive benefits, however, these forums can be also be used negatively.

Social media applications do have an age appropriate allocation and it is an expectation that these recommendations are considered by all families.

Mobile devices, while an important modern communication tool, can impact on students feeling unsafe in the educational setting.

## **RATIONALE**

The use of mobile phones and communication devices is not seen as necessary while at school. As such, they are not allowed to be in the possession of any students while at St Anthony's Catholic Primary School.

Our aim, at all times, is to protect primary age students from seeing, viewing and hearing material that is obscene and inappropriate and creating ethical issues in conflict with the values and traditions of this school and our focus on the Mercy Keys of Mutual Respect, Justice, Loyalty, Integrity, Compassion and Responsibility.

The school will communicate directly with students and we ask that parents contact their students via the school. Internet connectivity, while an important aspect of life, has the capacity to expose children to material for which they are not prepared and emotionally not aware of the implications.

While students may be in the possession of devices at parental discretion after hours, we are mindful that some posting can cause immense damage to self-esteem and well-being. When these issues transfer into the school setting, it may become a matter for the school to manage via our Developing Personal Responsibility Policy.

Included in the definition of 'devices' are smart watches. Watches are to be plain, in line with school policy, and unable to perform any functions such as internet access, messaging, photographs or emails. No watches are to be connected to our school internet system. Any breaches of these conditions will lead to confiscation.

*NB: Any student whose medical condition requires the use of a portable device may have the device and it must be used for that purpose and that purpose alone. Any other interaction on the device will be in breach of school policy.*

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

To ensure that St Anthony's Catholic Primary School is able to provide a safe environment for all members of the school community, students, staff and families, must be aware of rights and responsibilities and are asked to comply with the school's Mobile Devices Policy.

## **GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

### **STUDENTS**

1. Students are not to bring personal devices to school unless permission from the Principal has been sought and granted following discussion with parents who have outlined the health, safety or personal reasons that justify the student being in possession of a mobile phone.
2. Devices brought to school after this permission has been obtained must be handed in at the office each morning. The student is responsible for collecting the device each afternoon.
3. The school does not accept responsibility for lost or damaged devices.
4. Students misusing any device at school or harassing fellow students after hours, with a direct impact on their well-being, should always be brought to the attention of the staff.

[Cyber bullying (over the internet) is sending or posting a harmful or cruel text or image using the internet or other digital communication devices. Cyber bullying can include creating websites that have stories, pictures and jokes that ridicule others based on/are hatred or bias].

5. If a device is used inappropriately, it will be retained in the office until it can be collected by a parent
6. Children who are using a device for medical conditions may have their device with them during school hours as deemed necessary by their medical management plan
7. The Principal may revoke a student's privilege of bringing mobile phones/devices to school

### **STAFF**

Teachers and support staff are obligated to attend to the needs of their students

Staff mobile phones can remain switched on silent and may be used in emergency or critical situation, and to assist in monitoring student medical needs.

Staff mobile phones should not be used for personal communications during class time.

Should a staff member need to be contacted during such times, that contact must be made through the Administration Office or via SeeSaw

Any student found in possession of a mobile phone/device or other electronic equipment at school or at a school function will have the phone confiscated by a staff member

Consequences for breach of this policy will be implemented in line with our Developing Personal Responsibility Policy.