

# Wonthaggi Secondary College

## McBride Campus

### Acceptable Use of Communication Devices Policy

#### 1. Purpose and Rationale

- 1.1 The widespread ownership of computers and mobile phones (and similar devices such as tablets and iPods) among students requires that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure that such devices are used responsibly at school. This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving communication devices can be clearly identified and addressed,
- 1.2 Wonthaggi Secondary College acknowledges that some teachers use communication devices as an educational tool. The school also accepts parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety.
- 1.3 The Acceptable Use Policy for communication devices provides teachers, students and parents, guidelines and instructions for their appropriate use during school hours.
- 1.4 Students, their parents or guardians are invited to read and familiarise themselves with the Acceptable Use Policy if students intend to bring communication devices to school.
- 1.5 The Acceptable Use Policy for communication devices also applies to students during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities.
- 1.6 The Acceptable Use Policy is fundamental in supporting the anti-bullying policy of the school.

#### 2. Responsibilities – Students and Parents

- 2.1 Students and their parents or guardians should read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy before students are permitted to bring communication devices to school.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of students who bring communication devices to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy.

#### 3. Acceptable Uses of Mobile Phones at School

*Using communication devices responsibly at school:*

- 3.1 Communication devices should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school.
- 3.2 Students should not use computers or mobile phones to make or receive calls or messages during lesson time or while engaged in other school activities. Accessing the internet and photographing or recording activities should only occur if directed to by a teacher.
- 3.3 Except when mobile devices are being used as part of the lesson plan or with the express permission of a teacher, they should be placed into “silent mode” and kept in the designated phone box during classroom lessons and school activities to minimise distractions. Mobile phones must not disrupt classroom lessons with ringtones or beeping
- 3.4 Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.
- 3.5 Mobile devices are not to be used in transit during class time or in changing rooms or toilets.
- 3.6 Students are reminded to protect their phone numbers by only giving them to close friends and family. It may help younger students to keep a note of who they have given their phone number to. This can help protect the student’s number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against cyber-bullying.
- 3.7 Computers and mobile phones must not be used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to their fellow students, staff or visitors to the school

### ***Cyberbullying***

- 3.8 Using communication devices to bully (also known as cyberbullying) and threaten other students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour. Students and parents are reminded that it is a criminal offence to use a communication devices to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.
- 3.9 Mobile phones or other mobile devices must not be used to take photos/video of any other student or teacher without their consent. It is also prohibited to upload photos/video of other students/teachers to social media websites or email photos/videos to others if doing so would embarrass, humiliate or cause discomfort to the subject of the photo/video. Students are reminded (see 3.6) that mobile phones are not to be used in toilets or changing rooms

### ***Theft or Damage***

- 3.10 To avoid disputes and assist in finding owners, students may want to mark their computers and mobile devices clearly with their names or an identifying sticker. All students are advised to have their name and another contact number stored on the phone so that it can be more easily returned if lost.
- 3.11 Students who bring a computer or mobile device to school may want to leave it locked away in their locker/bag or the school safe when they arrive to prevent loss or theft. Computers and mobile devices that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located, should be handed to the school office.
- 3.12 Wonthaggi Secondary College accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged computers or mobile devices. This includes incidents that occur while travelling to and from school.
- 3.13 It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that other students cannot gain unauthorised access if they are stolen). Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential.
- 3.14 If a mobile device is lost or stolen, parents and students are advised to report the loss/theft to their mobile carrier so that they can de-activate the SIM card and block the mobile phone from use across all networks. Blocking a lost/stolen phone will make it unusable to anyone else within Australia.

#### **4. Sanctions/Consequences of unacceptable/inappropriate use**

- 4.1 Students who infringe the guidelines and rules set out in the school's Acceptable Use Policy could face having their computers or mobile devices confiscated by teachers. These devices would be taken to a secure place and the student will retrieve them at the end of the day. Repeated infringement of the guidelines will require parents to collect the device.
- 4.2 Students using computers or mobile devices to harass or bully other students will face disciplinary action.
- 4.3 Any student/s caught using a computer or mobile device to cheat in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action.
- 4.4 Repeated infringements may result in the withdrawal of the agreement to allow the student to bring the computer or mobile device to school.
- 4.5 Failure to heed the rules set out in Wonthaggi Secondary College's Acceptable Use Policy may result in an alleged incident being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent or guardian would be notified immediately.

**Effective Date : Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June**

**(Day one, Second Semester)**