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| Responsibility: | Deputy Principal – Pastoral Care |
| Date approved by Advisory Council: | 15 August 2019 |
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| Related policies: | |



Mount Lilydale Mercy College

Mobile Phones and Other Devices – Acceptable Use Policy

1. RATIONALE

- 1.1. The widespread ownership of 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 mobile phones and other devices can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones and other devices provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students.
- 1.2. Students at Mount Lilydale Mercy College (MLMC) will continue to have access to powerful learning technology by way of College provided devices and a variety of specialist equipment. Personal devices should not be required at the College for educational purposes; however, MLMC accepts that parents give their children mobile devices to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. Parents may also be concerned 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 contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently.
- 1.3. The benefits of the technology rich world we live in are incalculable, and in many ways adds enormously to the lives of students. In the context of education, this technology enables students to access extraordinary information, share work in the classroom, collaborate on global projects, create multimedia content, and engage in complex problem solving. There is, however, a growing volume of research that indicates a real need to limit the amount of screen time students have each day, for the sake of their physical and emotional wellbeing. Schools share that responsibility with families.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. MLMC has established with Acceptable Use Policy for mobile devices that provides teachers, students and parents guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of these devices during school hours.
- 2.2. The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile devices also applies to students during school excursions, camps and co-curricular activities, and other College related events - (i.e. house swimming / athletics days, Mercy Day, etc).



3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1. This policy explains the circumstances whereby student use of devices is acceptable within the school setting, as well as ensuring students and parents understand the responsibility that goes with the use of such a devices.
- 3.2. Devices, other than the portable electronic devices (i.e. MacBook or Chromebook) issued by the College, or a BYO device agreed upon by the College, are not to be used or carried by students between the hours of 8:45am and 3:15pm.
- 3.3. By limiting access to personal devices, students will be:
 - 3.3.1.1. enabled to concentrate and engage more fully in their learning away from notifications, distractions, and the urge to check their phone;
 - 3.3.1.2. in a safer, more supportive learning environment, as personal mobile devices (not on the school network) cannot be monitored and inappropriate sites cannot be blocked;
 - 3.3.1.3. encouraged to develop stronger social skills and build deeper relationships with their peers; and
 - 3.3.1.4. empowered to improve their physical and mental health by unplugging during the day.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1. A mobile device is defined as any electronic device, other than the College provided laptop device. This includes (but is not limited to) mobile phones, computers, dedicated games consoles and any other internet connect devices.
- 4.2. A laptop refers to portable electronic devices (i.e. MacBook or Chromebook) issued by the College, or a BYO device agreed upon by the College.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 5.1. Students and their parents or guardians should read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy before students are permitted to bring their mobile devices to school.
- 5.2. It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile devices to school to abide by the Implementation Guidelines outlined in the MLMC Acceptable Use Policy.
- 5.3. The decision to provide a mobile device to their child should be made by parents or guardians.
- 5.4. Using mobile devices to bully (also known as cyberbullying), harass or threaten other students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour.

Note: Implementation Guidelines is a separate document which outlines the protocols and procedures needed to implement the policy

