

STUDENT MOBILE PHONES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS POLICY

Policy

“The Department of Education does not permit student use of mobile phones in public schools unless for medical or teacher directed educational purpose”.

Our Purpose

At Mindarie Senior College, we cater to the needs of our young adult learners so that they can take their next important steps in their life. Our primary goal is to move students to increasing independence where they understand, appreciate and accept responsibility for the choices they make and in doing so, make the most of their opportunities.

A cornerstone of this approach is our emphasis on a ‘young adult ethos’ through promoting personal excellence, the building of positive relationships and social responsibility. This approach prepares students for what they will experience when they move to higher education, training and employment. It is hoped that by developing independent and responsible young adults, they will be better equipped for the next phase of their life. At Mindarie Senior College, everyone has an important role to play, and central to our approach is the understanding that students, just like staff, are accountable for their roles and overall performance, as they will be in life after MSC. As part of this workplace approach, we seek to teach our students to be responsible and accountable for their actions in all aspects of college life, including mobile phone and other device usage.

Conditions of Use at Mindarie Senior College

Department of Education policy states that students are permitted to be in possession of their mobile phone during the school day, but they should be turned off and put away all day (“turned off and neither seen nor heard”). This includes before school and at break times. All smart watches must also be “off & away” so phone calls and messages cannot be sent or received during the day. For the purpose of this policy, ‘mobile phones’ includes smart watches and devices, associated listening accessories, such as (but not limited to) headphones and ear pods.

With this understanding, and given our workplace approach at MSC, the following conditions of use apply:

College Day Procedures:

1. Before College

Students are allowed to access their emails, arrange work shifts or contact their parents/guardians on college grounds until 8:25am only. After this time, their mobile devices are expected to be turned “off & away”.

2. During Class Time

The Principal and staff are responsible for determining when a mobile phone can be used by a student for educational or other specific purposes. Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Researching educational topics
- Viewing web based material, recordings, catalogues
- Photo taking such as lesson notes
- Reading text

As such, during class time, phones are to be **“off & away”** before the student enters the classroom. This includes the time in which students need to leave class (toilet, collecting printing or photocopying, attending a meeting etc.)

Devices can only be used with the explicit permission of the teacher.

The listening of music on any device, as well as the use of headphones/earphones is not permitted. The use of headphones/earphones for the purpose of ‘cancelling noise’ will only be permitted with a formal exemption, as agreed to by the College (see ‘Exemptions and Parent/Guardian Communications’). Should headphones be seen then they will be confiscated along with the student’s mobile phone.

3. Recess, Lunch, Private Study and In-between Classes

- Phones are to remain out of sight during these times. However, students are permitted to have their phones on them during this time to enable communication between the College and student.
- The listening of music on any device, as well as the use of headphones/earphones is not permitted.
- Students may check their phones with permission from the duty teachers during the College’s allocated break times. If a student is seen using their device during these times, and they have not sought teacher permission, they will be asked to put their phone in their bag. Devices will not be actively confiscated during recess and lunch, unless a student wilfully refuses to follow staff instruction to put their phone away. Refer to ‘breaches’ for consequences.

4. Wednesdays

Those students attending College on a Wednesday must adhere to the “off & away” policy when attending a lesson which is led by a teacher (see “during class time”).

5. After 3:40pm (Mon & Fri) and 4pm (Tues & Thurs)

Students are permitted to use their mobile phones after the end of the school day, unless involved in an activity which is teacher led and therefore ‘during class time’ conditions apply.

Exemptions, Parent/Guardian Communications and Excursions

Exemptions to this ban include where a student requires a mobile phone:

- to monitor a health condition as part of a school approved documented health care plan; or
- under the direct instruction of a teacher for educational purposes; or with permission of a teacher for a specified purpose.

Whilst at Mindarie Senior College, students are the responsibility of the school. All communication between parents/guardians and students during school hours, should occur via the College administration. In emergencies, where students need to urgently make contact with parents/guardians/work, students are to notify the appropriate college staff.

Guidelines for the use of mobile phones as well as headphones/earphones whilst on excursions, will be outlined in the documentation of each excursion and remain at the discretion of the teacher in charge.

Breaches of this Policy

Breaches of this policy will be managed in accordance with the College's *Mobile Phone Policy Flowchart* and associated *Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures*.

1. Students will have their device confiscated.
 - 1st Offence – The device will be passed to Student Services where it will be kept in a locked cabinet, and parents will be notified. The student will be able to collect the device at the end of the day.
 - 2nd & 3rd Offence – The device will be passed to Student Services and the student's parents will be notified that they will be required to collect the mobile phone. Parents can nominate a responsible adult to collect the phone on their behalf and they should contact the College to notify if this is the case. (Collection times are **no later than** 4pm on Monday & Friday and **no later than** 4:15pm on Tuesday & Thursday). A meeting with the Principal or Associate Principal is required. All unclaimed devices will be returned to Student Services for secure storage.
 - Ongoing breaches (4 or more) will result in the student being suspended. On return, the student will be required to attend a compulsory educative session on 'mobile phone use'
 - Ongoing breaches will result in parents/guardians being invited to the College for a case conference.
2. In the event that a student becomes defiant when asked to hand over the device, the College will deal with the incident under the Behaviour Management Policy and will result in a suspension and subsequent Loss of Good Standing.
3. At the end of each term, all student's mobile phone breaches will be re-set.
4. Students who use a mobile phone (still and video) to film people and their activities without their knowledge and/or permission and any student found to be involved in recording, distributing or uploading inappropriate images, videos of students, parents or staff on college grounds will be suspended immediately.

Assessments

The use of smart devices (including head phones/earphones) is not permitted by the student and must be turned off in student's bags. The penalties are:

- 10% deduction if a mobile phone goes off in the student's bag, or if the mobile phone is found to be **on** the student and not in their bag, as requested.
- Up to 100% deduction if the student is caught using a mobile phone during an assessment.
- Listening to music is not permitted during assessments.

The College will take no responsibility for lost, damaged or stolen mobile phones.