



MOBILE PHONES, USE BY CHILDREN POLICY

Latest DET Update: 07/07/2017

First Developed in This Format: August 2016

Updated: January, May & August 2017

Rationale

- Mobile phones are important modern day communication tools, essential in providing a safe and effective school environment. However, they can easily be improperly used, lost or damaged and must therefore be effectively managed.
- Schools that allow the use of mobile phones must clearly and regularly advise children and parents/carers of their expectations and policy requirements, including use during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities.
- Mobile phone cameras (still and video) must not be used in banned spaces for example changing rooms, toilets, gyms and swimming pools or to film people and their activities without their knowledge or permission.
- Mobiles phones must not be used to send harassing or threatening messages.
- The school recognises that access to a mobile phone by children is viewed as important by many of our families. The school also recognises that their use, for travel, re-confirming after school arrangements, etc. is again viewed as important by many families.
- While the school does not support the banning of new technologies which are commonly supported in the community, children and families are still urged to be cautious about bringing mobile phones to school and children do so at their own risk.
- As with all privileges there is responsibility and if children do bring mobile phones to school, they must be managed according to this policy and our school expectations or they will have the privilege removed.
- Schools can:
 - develop policies about what students can and cannot bring to school
 - ban anything illegal, dangerous or likely to cause disruption or harm to the smooth running of the school.

Purpose

- To utilise the benefits of mobile phones whilst managing the problems they can potentially cause.
- To ensure Bourchier Street Primary School provides clear policy advice on the use of mobile phones.
- To ensure the school complies with DET policy and guidelines.

Implementation

- As a general rule, mobile phone should only be used by children in cases of genuine need and only outside of normal school hours.
- Mobile phones are brought to and kept at school entirely at their owner's risk. The school cannot accept any responsibility for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) resulting from mobile phone use.
- Children's mobile phones should not be seen at non-class times such as recess or lunch breaks. Mobile phones and children using them must not cause disruptions to classes or individuals, and must not cause a nuisance to the smooth running of the school.
- Children must display courtesy, consideration and respect for others when using a mobile phone.

- The school reserves the right to prohibit children from bringing mobile phones into certain spaces or during certain activities e.g. science rooms, technology rooms, physical education classes, toilets, etc.
- Mobile phones owned by children and staff are brought to school at their own risk. The school's insurance cover will not compensate damaged, lost or stolen personal mobile phones.
- Parents/carers may wish to ensure phones as personal property.

Misuse of Internet/Mobile Phones

- Children misusing personal mobile phones at school or causing a nuisance will be brought to the attention of the Principal and the device may be confiscated until such time as a parent/carer or other related adult collects the phone from the Principal.
- The Principal may revoke a child's privilege of bringing or using mobile phones whilst at school.
- Identification of child pornography sexting is a critical incident requiring immediate reporting to Victoria Police SOCIT Unit and Security Services Unit.
- The school will respond with the four critical actions as described in the *Responding to Student Sexual Offending Policy*.
- Failure to report may be deemed a criminal offence.

- Please refer also to the school's *Bullying & Harassment Policy*, *Responding to Student Sexual Offending Policy*, the *Photographing & Filming Children Policy* and the *Student Engagement Policy*.

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change (latest DET update early July 2017).

This policy was ratified by School Council in February 2018

Reference:

www.education.vic.gov.au/principals/spag/safety/pages/mobilephones.sapx