



# **DIGITAL DEVICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

## **VISION**

**Catherine McAuley School is a Catholic Faith community  
which promotes and celebrates excellence in education.**

**A spirit of reconciliation is encouraged  
through our experience of faith, growth and unity.**

**We endeavour to prepare children for a life  
that is lived in justice, dignity and mutual respect.**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Over the past few years, schools have seen a proliferation of digital devices that children bring to school.
- 1.2 These digital devices include electronic games/toys, MP3 players (eg iPods), USB/flashdrives, cameras, mobile phones, iPads, laptops, smart watches, (including camera enabled watches) other smart devices, tablets/notebooks etc.
- 1.3 Some of these items are for recreational use and some of these items may be required for medical or safety use by students.

## **2. Definition**

- 2.1 This policy covers all digital and electronic devices that children bring to school including but not exclusively:
  - electronic games/toys
  - MP3 players (eg iPods)
  - USB/flashdrives
  - cameras
  - mobile phones
  - iPads
  - laptops
  - children's watches capable of taking photographs
  - smart watches/devices
  - tablets/notebooks

## **3. Policy Statement**

- 3.1 The school does not allow digital and electronic devices to be brought to school on the grounds that they are valuable and may be lost, stolen, broken and that they can be disruptive to teaching and learning.
- 3.2 However, we recognise that some students require access to a mobile phone for medical reasons during school hours, or for safety reasons when coming to school and from school.
- 3.3 Please note: fitbits and trackers are excluded providing that the camera function is disabled by the student's parent/caregiver.
- 3.4 No school responsibility is taken for lost or broken digital and electronic devices.

## 4. Guidelines for Implementation

- 4.1 The possession and use of digital and electronic devices presents a number of challenges for the school, including:
  - 4.1.1 Digital and electronic devices can be valuable items and might render a student vulnerable to theft or the item being broken.
  - 4.1.2 Digital and electronic devices can make pupils more vulnerable potentially impacting wellbeing, safety and/or potential bullying.
  - 4.1.3 The use of a mobile phone/digital device with an integrated camera or video could lead to child protection and data protection issues with regard to inappropriate capture, use or distribution of images. (Should the student need access to a camera for school purposes the school will supply the camera).
  - 4.1.4 Even when apparently silent, the use of mobile phones for any purposes could potentially undermine classroom discipline.

## 5. Mobile Phones/Digital Device ~ Guidelines

- 5.1 Mobile phones may be required for medical, safety and security reasons by students.
- 5.2 Students are only permitted to keep a mobile phone/digital device on their person during the school day if it is required for medical reasons (eg diabetes management). The parent/caregiver should inform the school by completing and returning the **Mobile Phone Parent /Caregiver Consent Form** in Appendix A to the Front Office.
- 5.3 Students who require access to a mobile phone for safety reasons when coming to and from school, or for medical reasons whilst at school may bring them to school subject to the following conditions:
  - 5.3.1 The parent/caregiver should inform the school by completing and returning the **Mobile Phone Parent/Caregiver Consent Form** in Appendix A to the Front Office, and
  - 5.3.2 All mobile phones and digital devices (except USB's) must be signed in for safe keeping by the student as they arrive at school and be signed out at the end of the day by the student as they leave.

- 5.4 **Digital / Camera enabled Watches** – All camera enabled watches must be set to school mode, hence disabling the use of the camera and other external communication functions.
- 5.5 Students are only permitted to keep a digital/electronic device on their person during the school day if the class teacher(s) and the parent/caregiver have given permission for students to bring their own personal device (for use in the classroom only), for a designated classroom activity (assignment, last day of term).

## **6. Guidelines for the Usage of Mobile Phones**

- 6.1 Mobile phones are not to be used for any purpose on school premises, grounds or during off-site activities eg camps, sporting carnivals and excursions.
- 6.2 Students are to place on silent/turn off and sign in their mobile phone for safe keeping as they arrive at school and sign their phone out at the end of the day.
- 6.3 Parents/caregivers can contact students if required by leaving a message with the school Receptionist at the Front Office.
- 6.4 If students require the use of a phone in an emergency, they should request the use of the phone at the Front Office.

## **7 Consequence of children bringing digital/electronic devices to school**

- 7.1 Where a student is found to have an approved mobile phone, but has failed to sign the phone in, the phone will be confiscated and will be given back at the end of the day and the parent notified of the inappropriate use.
- 7.2 If a student is found to have a mobile phone without a completed Mobile Phone Parent/Caregiver Consent Form (Appendix A) on file, the mobile phone will be confiscated and a parent/caregiver will be contacted by a Member of the Leadership Team and asked to collect the mobile phone from school.

- 7.3 If a student is found to have any other electronic device, the item will be confiscated and a parent/caregiver will be contacted by a Member of the Leadership Team and asked to collect the device from school.
- 7.4 If a student is wearing a camera enabled watch, the classroom teacher will check with the child/ parent to ensure the watch is on 'school mode'. If the device is not, it will be confiscated and a parent/caregiver will be contacted by a Member of the Leadership Team and asked to collect the device from school and set it to 'school mode'.

**DATE FOR REVIEW**

**Ratified by School Board:** 24 June 2020 (*amended October 2020*)

**Next Review:** 2025

**Mobile Phone Parent/Caregiver Consent Form**

Some students require access to a mobile phone for safety when coming to and from school, or to support a medical condition whilst at school. Students may bring a mobile phone to school subject to the following conditions:

1. Mobile phones are not to be used for any purpose (*other than to support a medical condition*) on school premises or school activities eg camps, sporting carnivals and excursions.
2. Students are to place on silent/turn off and sign in their mobile phone for safe keeping as they arrive at school and sign their phone out at the end of the day.

I understand that the only exception to this requirement is if the student needs to keep their mobile phone on their person to support a medical condition.

3. Parents and caregivers can contact students by leaving a message with the school Receptionist.
4. If students in an emergency, require the use of a phone, they should request the use of a phone at the Front Office.

☐ **My child requires their mobile phone in case the need arises when coming to school and from school.**

**OR**

☐ **My child requires their mobile phone on their person to support a medical condition.**

**I have read the Digital Device Policy + Appendix A and understand the conditions regarding the use of mobile phones at school.**

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Roll Class \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Caregiver's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Caregiver's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_