

# Student Personal Electronic Devices Policy and Procedure

## Introduction

### Context

Personal electronic devices (PEDs) have become common place within Notre Dame College and the broader community as tools that provide a wide variety of ways to enhance communication. PEDs may include, but are not limited to; mobile phones, cameras, music players, personal notebook computers, tablets, headphones and smartwatches.

This policy is aligned with the Department of Education, Victoria guidelines, [link](#).

### The Hazard

Personal electronic devices can create a range of hazards when brought to the College:

- They are valuable items that can easily be lost, stolen or damaged in the College environment. No liability will be accepted by the College in the event of loss, theft or damage of a PED.
- Using electronic devices inappropriately to bully, intimidate or harass people can have serious consequences including police involvement; and
- Using personal electronic devices in the College not only disrupts the learning for the user but also for fellow students.

### Purpose

The aim of this policy is to provide all students with a positive school environment, free from disruption. All students are informed of the College's PED policy as part of their enrolment and through pastoral group when there are changes to the policy.

The policy is to provide:

- A safe environment for learning and teaching without inappropriate mobile phone use (including cyberbullying).
- A learning environment that is free from distractions caused by electronic devices.

- Greater opportunities for social interaction and physical activity during recess and lunchtimes.
- Compliance with Department of Education, Victoria guidelines.

## Policy

### Mobile Phones (including smartphones)

Notre Dame College acknowledges parents may wish their child to carry a mobile phone for personal safety reasons however, the following rules apply to their use at Notre Dame College:

- Phones are not to be used between the first bell of the day and the final bell in the afternoon. At the Knight Street campus this is between 8:47am and 3:15pm, At the Emmaus campus this is between 8:52am and 3:10pm. This includes: for making purchases at the Canteen/Café Emmaus; when on local excursions; at sports days (swimming, athletics, GMD etc).
- Students are required to have their phone switched off and stored in their secure locker during school hours. Students are not to be carrying their phone with them during school hours.
- Notre Dame College does not take responsibility for any mobile phone that students choose to bring to school or store in their locker during the school day.
- Parents and guardians are asked to not contact students during school hours via mobile phone. Students are able to access a phone at Student Reception and messages can be relayed to students in the case of an emergency.
- Mobile phones may be used on College grounds by students before or after school for appropriate usage, such as for a phone call or message. At Emmaus campus this is outside the buildings only.
- During examination periods and other College event days, the same rules apply to the use of mobile phones during the school day as outlined in this policy.
- Students who require access to their mobile phone for managing a health issue during school hours need to arrange permission from their Head of House/Head of Community and provide supporting medical documentation. This exception to the mobile phone rules will be communicated to staff, however, rules around appropriate use still apply.

### **Mobile phones must not be used:**

- During the school day including: class, assemblies, school activities (including athletics and swimming sports), excursions, and recess, or lunch.
- To send inappropriate, harassing, or threatening messages, social media posts/comments or phone calls.
- To instigate, contribute to, comment on, or display to others any form of cyber bullying.
- To engage in social media.
- To capture video, voice recording or images of people, including students, teachers, and members of the school community without their permission.
- To record or distribute acts of violence, vandalism, or arguments between others.
- To capture video or images in the school toilets, changing rooms and gym.

In line with the Department of Education, Victoria guidelines, schools are not permitted to allow students access to mobile phones from the beginning until the end of the day (Knight Street campus: 8:47am to 3:15pm, Emmaus campus: 8:52am to 3:10pm). Any exceptions must be validated with medical documentation and approved by a Head of House/Head of Community, Directory of Year 9 Programme, Director of Students, Deputy Principal – Wellbeing, or Principal.

## **Headphones and Earbuds**

Unless required by the class teacher for the documented delivery of curriculum, headphones, including earbuds and wireless earbuds, are not to be used or visible in any class. Nor are they appropriate to be used or visible during school gatherings.

To maintain an environment where people are able to communicate easily, headphones are not to be worn around the College grounds, including at Student Reception, at the Canteen/Café Emmaus, in corridors and at lockers. The only exception is students may wear headphones or earbuds to support their study in the Library, however they must be connected to their laptop (not a PED) and they must not disrupt the learning environment for others.

## **Smartwatches**

Smartwatches may be worn as watches in class. However, notifications must be disabled. They also cannot be used to pay at the Canteen/Café, listen to music or make calls. If smartwatches are employed as a wireless device, they will be treated as a smartphone.

Any watch, including smartwatches are not to be worn during any assessment, School Assessed Coursework (SAC) or examination.

### **Music players (including mobile speakers)**

All students have the right to enjoy their time at school and travelling to/from school, free from sound produced by an individual or group using a portable speaker or other mobile music device (including phones and laptops).

Students are not to bring portable speakers or other mobile music devices to school or use them to/from school, including on public transport and when waiting at bus stops.

*The Year 12 speaker, is a privilege. To play music using this speaker, Year 12 students will need to connect it to a laptop, not a PED. Furthermore, the Year 12 speaker can only be used during recess or lunchtimes and music must be appropriate for school.*

### **Camps and Excursions**

In most circumstances, students will not be allowed to use their personal electronic devices on school excursions or overnight camps. Notre Dame College will provide students and their parents and guardians with clear information about items that can be brought to special activities and events, including electronic devices. The excursion permission form will clearly specify the requirements for PEDs.

## **Procedure**

### **Consequences**

Students who are in breach of this policy, must hand their PED to a teacher when requested. It will then be taken to Student Reception for collection at the end of the school day. All breaches of this policy will be logged in SEQTA and communicated to parents/guardians.

Repeat confiscations (three times in a Term) will lead to further consequences, including a meeting with parents/guardians to discuss non-compliance with a College policy, handing the device over at the start of the school day, or other consequences in line with the CES behaviour framework.

Where the use of a PED involves cyber bullying or any other illegal activity, the appropriate involvement of Police will be considered.

Any student detected using a device in assessments or exams will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Director of Learning and Teaching, Deputy Principal –

Learning and Teaching or Principal. VCE students will be followed up in accordance with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).

Students who choose to carry their mobile phone during the school day are in breach of this policy and will be asked to hand their phone to the requesting staff member.

## **Staff Responsibilities**

Notre Dame College staff will:

- Actively model the appropriate use of electronic devices, as per the Staff Code of Conduct and Expectations
- Ensure students are not using their personal electronic devices unless clear permission has been granted for health-related management
- Respond to all reported and observed incidents of inappropriate personal electronic device use in accordance with this policy
- Ensure that any incident of inappropriate use of a personal electronic device that they observe or is reported to them, is recorded using SEQTA
- All confiscated phones are taken to Student Reception

## **Parent Responsibilities**

Notre Dame College asks that parents/guardians:

- Reinforce and support our policy, by not communicating with their student using mobile phones during school hours

## **Review**

November 2025

## **Next Review**

November 2028

## **Responsibility**

Deputy Principal Wellbeing