



Catholic
Education
Commission
Tasmania

MOBILE PHONES, DEVICE AND WEARABLE TECHNOLOGIES POLICY

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1 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to manage student access relating to the use of mobile phones, devices and wearable technologies during school hours and at school endorsed activities.

1.2 For the purpose of this policy:

- a) **mobile phone** includes any kind of mobile phone or smartphone.
- b) **mobile device** includes any portable computing device including laptop, iPod, iPad, tablet or similar device with access to the internet and/or telecommunication network, with or without a sim card.
- c) **wearable technology** includes anything worn directly or indirectly by students that can access to the internet and/or telecommunication network, with or without a sim card, and includes (but is not limited to) any form of smart watches, Fitbits, smart jewelry, virtual reality technology, Bluetooth headsets, airpods.

The definitions above are not to be read so as to limit what may be a mobile phone, mobile device or wearable technology.

2 RATIONALE

2.1 Mobile phones, devices and wearable technologies are part of the everyday life of children and young people, influencing how they learn, communicate, work and play. However, there is strong evidence that such devices also can have negative impacts on students, including impacts that affect learning outcomes, social and emotional development and health and safety of students as well as teachers, family members and others in the school community.

The policy aims to support students learning by:

- 2.1.1 removing disruptions to their education through the receipt and transmission of calls, messages and other communication via mobile phones, devices and wearable technologies during school time
- 2.1.2 addressing privacy concerns in relation to unauthorised photographs or recording of interactions without the knowledge or consent of those being recorded
- 2.1.3 provide a safe environment to learn without inappropriate use of, or distractions from, mobile phones, devices and wearable technologies, such as cyberbullying, threats of violence, or accessing inappropriate materials via the internet
- 2.1.4 encourage greater opportunities for face-to-face social interaction and physical activity during school break times.

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3 WHO DOES THIS POLICY APPLY TO

This policy applies to all Catholic schools operating in the Archdiocese of Hobart.

4. POLICY PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Students who bring mobile phones, devices and/or wearable technologies to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours in accordance with the requirements communicated to families.
- 4.2 Exemptions to the policy may be granted by a Principal or their delegate, as set out in Part 5 of this Policy. Exemptions must be documented and communicated to parents and school staff.
- 4.3 Schools must have a Mobile Phones, Devices and Wearable Technologies Protocol (or equivalent) which has a process for the management of these devices at an operational level. The School Protocol must align with this Policy and its associated Procedures.
- 4.4 Schools must provide secure storage for the devices covered by this Policy as well as reasonable means for acknowledging receipt and return of the relevant device.
- 4.5 Schools will manage breaches of this Policy in accordance with the *Mobile Phones, Devices and Wearable Technologies Procedure* and the *Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Policy* and *Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Procedure*.
- 4.6 This Policy does not provide schools with the ability to search information contained in student mobile phones, mobile devices or wearable technologies. Where suspected unacceptable student behaviour occurs matters will be referred to the Principal Leads and/or CET Child Safety Officer, Chief Information Officer and/or Tasmania Police.
- 4.7 Any breaches of this Policy that are also criminal in nature will be reported to the appropriate authority, e.g. Tasmania Police.

5 EXEMPTIONS

- 5.1 Exemptions to this Policy may be granted by the Principal or their delegate during school hours, if (in their sole discretion) it is reasonable and necessary to do so.
- 5.2 Where an exemption is granted:
 - 5.2.1 it must be documented, together with any conditions. This requirement can be met by including the exemption in current school documentation, for example Individual Learning Plan.

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5.2.2 the student can only use the mobile phone, device or wearable technology for the purpose for which it was granted

5.2.3 it may be revoked at any time, at the discretion of the Principal

5.2.4 it will be revoked if the student fails to comply with any conditions of the exemption.

5.3 Without limiting the Principal's discretion to grant an exemption, there are generally four categories of exemptions. These, and the associated suggested documentation are as follows:

5.3.1 Learning:

5.3.1.1 Specific learning activities documented within a unit of work, for instance a unit plan or scope and sequence.

5.3.1.2 Reasonable adjustments to a learning program because of diagnosed disability and/or learning difficulty documented in an Individual Learning Plan.

5.3.1.3 Need to undertake cross campus travel confirmed by the student's timetable.

5.3.1.4 Are offsite, not on school grounds, and unsupervised with parental permission documented in the student record, for example senior secondary study line.

5.3.1.5 Students on school endorsed work experience, work placement or school-based apprenticeship/traineeship.

5.3.1.6 Students undertaking Vocational Education and Training not on a CET school campus, for example TasTAFE.

5.3.2 Health and well-being:

5.3.2.1 Students with a physical or mental health condition documented in the student record, including in medical action plans etc.

5.3.2.2 Students who are carers documented in the student record.

5.3.3 Risk related to managing students offsite:

5.3.3.1 Travel to and from excursions documented in the school's risk assessment plan.

5.3.3.2 An excursion or camp documented in the school's risk assessment plan.

5.3.4 Extenuating circumstances:

5.3.4.1 For students experiencing extenuating circumstances other than the above, Principals can use their discretion to provide an exemption based on individual

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circumstances. This will be documented by the Principal in the student record.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Student	<p>Students who choose to bring mobile phones, devices and wearable technologies to school must have them switched off and have them securely stored during school hours.</p> <p>Independent Students can apply for an exemption directly to the Principal, as per the exemptions listed above.</p>
Parents/Guardians	<p>Parents/Guardians are to support CET and encourage Students to comply and adhere to this Policy.</p> <p>Parents/Guardians are responsible for applying to the Principal for an exemption from this policy if applicable and must act reasonably when doing so.</p> <p>Parents/Guardians are to make this application in writing.</p>
Principals	<p>Principals must consider reasonable exemption requests, and if granted, must document exemptions and clearly communicate the parameters associated with the exemption to parents and school staff.</p> <p>Required to follow and ensure the implementation of the Mobile Phones, Devices and Wearable Technologies Protocol in their school.</p>
Principal Leads	Assist Principals if breaches of this policy are

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	escalated and require action being taken under the Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Policy and Procedure.
CET Child Safety Officer	Assist Principals and/or Principal Leads in responding to breaches of this policy that may involve child safety matters.
CET Chief Information Officer	Assist Principals, Principal Leads and Child Safety Officer in responding to breaches of this policy that may involve child safety matters, cybersecurity or criminal matters.

7 RECORD KEEPING

The school must maintain a record of all exemptions received.

8 COMPLIANCE (LEGISLATION AND OTHER DOCUMENTS)

This Policy relates to but is not limited to the following legislation and guidelines:

Commonwealth legislation

- (a) [*Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)*](#)
- (b) [*Disability Standards for Education 2005 \(Cth\)*](#)
- (c) [*Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)*](#)

Tasmanian legislation

- (a) [*Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 \(Tas\)*](#)
- (b) [*Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 \(Tas\)*](#)
- (c) [*Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 \(Tas\)*](#)
- (d) [*Criminal Code Act 1924 \(Tas\)*](#)
- (e) [*Education Act 2016 \(Tas\)*](#)

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- (f) [Education Act Regulations 2017 \(Tas\)](#)

Other

- (a) [Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Policy](#)
- (b) [Response to Unacceptable Student Behaviour Procedure](#)
- (c) [Student ICT Policy](#)
- (d) [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)
- (e) [Tasmanian Office of the State Archivists Notice of Disposal Freeze on Records Relating to Children \(Tas\)](#)
- (f) [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

9 DEFINED TERMS

Definitions for all key terms used in this document are included in the CECT Terms Definitions available on the CET Website [Policies – Catholic Education Tasmania](#)

10 FURTHER INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

For further information and assistance in relation to this Policy please contact Advisor: Governance Policy and Research policy@catholic.tas.edu.au

11 REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This Policy will be reviewed every four years.

Updated versions of this Policy will be available on the CET website and on request.

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