



# St Clare's College

## ACCEPTABLE USE OF MOBILE PHONES & DEVICES POLICY

St Clare's College recognises some of the benefits of bringing mobile phones to school. However the use of these devices must only occur while adhering to the conditions of the College's Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones and Devices Policy.

This policy is to be read and applied in conjunction with the SCS Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement and is based on the principles of mutual responsibility and respect for others. It is designed to assist in managing the safe and responsible use of mobile devices by students and involves parents as partners in assisting their children in the proper use of mobile phones and devices. It is underpinned by an overall requirement for students to exercise care and use their mobile phones and devices in a considerate manner and to be aware of situations in which others could be affected by their actions.

### 1. Purpose and Rationale

- 1.1 The widespread ownership of mobile phones (and similar devices such as tablets and iPods) among students requires that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure that such mobile devices are used responsibly at school. This Responsible Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students.
- 1.2 St Clare's College accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. Parents may also be concerned about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently *outside of school hours*.
- 1.3 St Clare's has established this Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, students and parents with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile devices during school hours.
- 1.4 Students, their parents or guardians are required to read and familiarise themselves with the Acceptable Use Policy if students intend to bring mobile devices to school.
- 1.5 The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile devices also applies to students during school excursions, camps and extracurricular activities.
- 1.6 This policy is aligned with and is supported by the SCS Student Acceptable Use Policy



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### 2. Responsibilities – Students and Parents

- 2.1 Students and their parents or guardians should read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy before students are permitted to bring their mobile phones to school.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile devices to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in the St Clare's College Acceptable Use Policy.
- 2.3 The decision to provide a mobile phone to their child should be made by parents or guardians.
- 2.4 Parents should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone (or other mobile device) to school.

### 3. Acceptable Uses of Mobile Phones at School

- 3.1 Phones should be switched to "aeroplane mode" and placed out of sight between the hours of 8:40am and 3:00pm to avoid distracting others and self.
- 3.2 Students are not permitted, under any circumstances, to use mobile phones to make calls, send text messages, access the internet or use social media during school time or while engaged in other school activities such as assembly or sport.
- 3.3 Mobile phones may ONLY be used during lessons at the **express** instruction of a teacher and must NOT be visible at ALL other times while at school.
- 3.4 Mobile phones or other mobile devices should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school.
- 3.5 Mobile phones must not disrupt classroom lessons with ringtones or beeping. Except when mobile devices are being used as part of the lesson or with the express permission of a teacher, they should be placed into "aeroplane mode" and kept out of sight during classroom lessons and school activities to minimise distractions.
- 3.6 Texting is a distraction in the classroom and is not permitted while students are at school. Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the Student Office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in an appropriate way. Any student sending text messages to anyone (including parents/guardians) will receive a Tuesday detention.
- 3.7 Mobile devices are not to be used in changing rooms or toilets or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to their fellow students, staff or visitors to the school.
- 3.8 Students are reminded to protect their phone numbers by only giving them to close friends and family. This can help protect the student's number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against cyber-bullying.



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### **Cyberbullying:**

- 3.9 Using mobile devices to bully (also known as cyberbullying) and threaten other students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour. This expectation is aligned and applied in conjunction with [Sydney Catholic Schools' Anti Bullying Policy](#).
- 3.10 Students and parents are reminded that it is a criminal offence to use the internet or a mobile device to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.
- 3.11 Mobile phones or other mobile devices must not be used to take photos/video of any other student or teacher without their consent. It is also prohibited to upload photos/video of other students/teachers to social media websites or email photos/videos to others if doing so would embarrass, humiliate or cause discomfort to the subject of the photo/video. Students are reminded (see 3.6) that mobile phones are not to be used in toilets or changing rooms.
- 3.12 Students and parents are reminded that St Clare's College reserves the right to capture, store and review all online activity and content created or accessed via school provided services. All materials collected will remain the property of St Clare's College and Sydney Catholic Schools. Bring Your Own (BYO) devices may be confiscated or accessed, and access to services withdrawn, where there is a reasonable belief that there has been or may be a breach of St Clare's College rules or policy; and/or there may be a threat of harm to a student or others.
- 3.13 St Clare's College will take all reasonable steps to investigate cyberbullying if it occurs on school grounds or through school-owned technologies. Where appropriate and as required under New South Wales and Commonwealth legislation and/or policies, St Clare's College will supply all unacceptable material to relevant agencies including, but not limited to, the New South Wales Police, the Department of Family and Community Services, the Office of the eSafety Commissioner and Sydney Catholic Schools.
- 3.14 St Clare's College will not investigate incidents of cyberbullying that occur outside of school hours and whilst the students are not under St Clare's Colleges' duty of care. Schools do not have the power to regulate communication occurring after school hours, off school premises and through non-school technology. However, where appropriate and as required under New South Wales and Commonwealth legislation and/or policies, we will recommend or refer matters of cyberbullying to the relevant authorities, including, but not limited to, the New South Wales Police, the Department of Family and Community Services, the Office of the eSafety Commissioner and Sydney Catholic Schools.
- 3.15 Parents and students are reminded that unacceptable and inappropriate conduct engaged in outside of school hours and whilst the students are not under the St Clare's Colleges' duty of care may still be subject to further actions pursuant to Sydney Catholic Schools' [Student Management: Suspension, Transfer and Exclusion Policy](#) and the [Supporting Students with Complex and Social and Emotional Needs Policy](#). St Clare's College will take all reasonable steps to restore relationships that break down as a result of alleged incidents of cyberbullying through our restorative practices.



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### ***Theft or damage:***

- 3.16 To avoid disputes and assist in finding owners, students may want to mark their mobile device clearly with their names or an identifying cover/mark. All students are advised to have their name and another contact number stored on the phone so that it can be more easily returned if lost.
- 3.17 Students who bring a mobile device to school may want to leave it locked away in their locker/bag when they arrive to prevent loss or theft. To reduce the risk of theft during school hours, students who carry mobile devices are advised to treat them as carefully as they would their wallet or purse.
- 3.18 Mobile devices that are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located will be handed to the Student Office.
- 3.19 St Clare's College accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile devices.
- 3.20 St Clare's College accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile devices stolen while travelling to and from school.
- 3.21 It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (eg by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile devices and/or passwords should not be shared.
- 3.22 If a mobile phone is lost or stolen, parents and students are advised to report the loss/theft to their mobile carrier so that they can de-activate the SIM card and block the mobile phone from use across all networks. Blocking a lost/stolen phone will make it unusable to anyone else within Australia.

### **4. Sanctions/Consequences of unacceptable/inappropriate use**

- 4.1 Any student/s caught using a mobile device to cheat in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Principal.
- 4.2 Students using mobile devices to bully other students will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Principal.
- 4.3 Students who infringe the guidelines and rules set out in the St Clare's College Acceptable Use of Mobile Devices Policy face having their mobile devices confiscated by teachers and being issued a caution slip. A verbal warning may be given to the student to put the phone on aeroplane mode and place it out of sight. Failure to put the phone away or on aeroplane mode may result in the mobile device being taken to the Student Office and the student's parent informed. Appropriate arrangements would then be made for the parents to collect the mobile device.
- 4.4 Repeated infringements may result in the withdrawal of the agreement to allow the student to keep the mobile phone on their person while at school.
- 4.5 Failure to heed the rules set out in the Acceptable Use Policy may result in an alleged incident being referred to the police for investigation. In such cases, the parent or guardian would be notified immediately.



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Please be advised that the interpretation of this policy and its sanctions are at the discretion of the Principal.

**Effective Date :** 22 June 2017

**Revised:** 4 April 2018



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### Permission Form

I have read and understand the St Clare's College Policy for Acceptable Use of Mobile Phones and Devices Policy at school.

I understand that this form will be kept on file at the school and that the details may be used (and shared with the appropriate authorities, if necessary) to assist in identifying a mobile phone or other device should the need arise (eg. if lost, or if the phone or device is being used inappropriately).

I give my child permission to carry a mobile phone (or other device) to school and understand that my child will be responsible for ensuring that the mobile phone is used appropriately and correctly while under the school's supervision, as outlined in the St Clare's Mobile Phones and Devices Acceptable Use Policy.

Parent name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile's IMEI number\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* An IMEI number is a globally unique 15 digit number assigned to all cellular devices, which identifies your device within the mobile network. We can use this number to block a mobile phone from being used by another person or phone company if it has been lost or stolen