



MOBILE PHONE AND SMARTWATCH POLICY

Title	1.25-014 Student Mobile Phone and Smartwatch Policy
Category	School Operations WHS
Policy Owner	College Leadership
Approver	College Leadership
Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mueller College Positive Culture Framework• Mueller College Assessment Policy• Mueller College Student Use of Technology Policy
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Revision Record					
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V23.8	August 2023	College Leadership	August 2023	2-yearly	2025

1. Rationale

The use and reliance on mobile phones require that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly. It is acknowledged that students are becoming more mobile than previously, involved in out of school traineeships and apprenticeships, university programs, part time work and other extra-curricular activities which take them off school campus more regularly. At the same time, it is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that their child can contact them in emergency situations or when involved in an at-risk situation involving personal security and safety.

However, this does not apply during the school day when students have access to school phones and personnel.

Mueller College aims to provide an environment that is safe and supportive for all its students. This includes protecting students where possible from outside negative influences and dangers being present in the school environment. Research shows that the increase in use of social media and dependence on technology (mobile phones etc) by young people, is resulting in significant and detrimental effects on their mental health and wellbeing. More recently it is acknowledged that the presence of mobile phones in schools and classrooms is disadvantageous and counterproductive to student learning.

Mueller College therefore provides a learning environment free from mobile phone use by students during the school day.

Smartwatches are permitted to be worn by students.

2. Responsibilities

- a) The decision to provide a mobile phone or smartwatch to students should be made by parents or guardians and parents should be aware if their child chooses to take it to school.
- b) Students are responsible for the security of their mobile phones and smartwatches when at school.
- c) Mueller College accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen, or damaged mobile phones and smartwatches.
- d) Mueller College accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones or smartwatches stolen while travelling to and from school.
- e) It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones and smartwatches to school or any school related extra-curricular events or excursions, to adhere to the guidelines outlined in this policy.
- f) All student mobile phones must be stored in student lockers at school. If parents prefer a more secure location, mobile phones can be handed in to Student Services at the start of the school day and collected at the end of the day.
- g) Tampering with, using, or stealing of another person's mobile phone or smartwatch is an offence and will result in consequences issued in accordance with the *Positive Culture Framework*.
- h) It is a criminal offence to use mobile phones to menace, harass or offend another person. Students who use their phones to engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person via messaging or social media platforms, taking or sending photos or objectionable images or bullying other students, or who use vulgar, derogatory, or obscene

language while using a mobile phone will be dealt with in accordance with the Positive Culture Framework. Students should note that in some cases, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

- i) Students who choose to act outside of the Mueller College *Mobile Phone & Smartwatch Policy* or the *Student Use of Technology Policy*, will be referred to the formal discipline process as outlined in the *Positive Culture Framework*.
- j) The Mueller College community will be made aware of this policy and any relevant updates by publishing it on Mueller Connect and Parent Portal.

3. Mobile Phones at School - During the School Day

Primary students can store their mobile phone in their school bag, or for a more secure option, hand them in to their class teacher for the day.

Secondary students are provided lockers and a padlock for the safe and secure storing of personal items and devices at school. Padlocks are required to be locked at all times during the school day.

It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure security on their phones. Students should keep their passwords/pin numbers confidential.

Mobile phones or smartwatches which are found at school and whose owners cannot be identified should be handed in to Student Services.

3.1 Acceptable Use

- a) A teacher may request their class or individual student to access or bring their phone(s) to a particular lesson in order to achieve a specific educational outcome (e.g. capture images and data). Phones may be accessed and used under teacher supervision for achieving this outcome. Students are required to return phones to their locker immediately after the lesson, they are not able to carry it or have it in their possession at the next class(es).
- b) Smartwatches can be used to pay at tuckshop and Hudsons, so long as it does not require phone connection.
- c) Students may be required to be in possession and use their mobile phone throughout the school day for specific health requirements, such as diabetes. These students will be provided provision and be expected to abide by their acceptable and appropriate use.
- d) If a student needs to contact home before school hours or when Student Services is not yet open or accessible, they may do so with teacher permission and supervision. An example is during before-school Academy training.
- e) Students can access and use their phones at the end of the school day (Primary - 3:05pm, Secondary - 3:10pm).

3.2 Unacceptable Use

- a) Students are not to be seen in possession of or using a mobile phone from the time they arrive on school grounds until 3:05pm (Primary students) or 3:10pm (Secondary students). This includes using it for listening to music using headphones/earphones, or by senior students who have signed out before 3:10pm to leave school grounds (e.g. during Block exams, leaving for appointments).
- b) Students found in possession of a mobile phone at school, before and during school hours, will be asked to put it in their locker and receive a consequence as per the *Positive Culture Framework*.
- c) Students are not permitted to wear smartwatches in exams or use them as a communication device while at school (emails, texting, phone calls).
- d) Mobile phones cannot be used to make purchases (e.g. Hudsons, tuckshop, Mueller shop).
- e) Students should not message or phone parents or guardians requesting to go home or be picked up from school. Such requests should be made at Student Services during school hours.
- f) Students are not permitted to use any recording or camera facilities while at school unless under direct instruction and direction of a supervising teacher. This action contravenes privacy laws.
- g) Any student caught using a mobile phone to cheat in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action in accordance with the *Mueller College Assessment Policy* and *Positive Culture Framework*.

4. Mobile Phones Out of School - Variations to Routine

4.1 Acceptable Use

- a) A teacher may request their students to access or bring their phone to a particular excursion or extra-curricular event in order to achieve a specific educational outcome (e.g. to capture images and data), or contact parents (e.g. returning late, pick up from a venue by a parent, change of location etc). Phones may be accessed and used under teacher supervision.
- b) A student may be granted permission to be in possession of and use their mobile phone for health reasons (e.g. diabetic students who requiring their phone for health updates and alarms).
- c) Some camps or tours allow or require students to have their mobile phones. Such camps and tours include New Zealand Ski Trip, Nepal Mission Trip, Melbourne Arts Tour, Biology Camp, Worship Band Tours, All-Schools Touch & Basketball etc. Reasons for this are:
 - to be able to communicate with teachers or staff;
 - to allow communication with home;
 - to collect data or evidence, or take photos, use while travelling.
- d) Camps or tours allowing students to have mobile phones for any of the above reasons, must communicate the following guidelines to students and parents, and ensure they are correctly implemented:
 - Mobile phones must be turned off (including alarms off) and handed in to staff each evening at the time specified by the event organiser (e.g. before or after dinner).

- Students are not to keep their mobile phones in their rooms overnight for any reason other than for a known medical condition (e.g. Diabetic CGM).
 - Student mobile phones will be stored in a secure location by staff overnight. This might include a labelled plastic storage container or bag, in which phones are signed in each evening and signed out each morning.
 - Mobile phones are returned to students each morning as required.
- e) Students are responsible to have their mobile phone fully charged either before handing in at night, or before departing for the day's program.
- f) The safe keeping and security of mobile phones are the responsibility of the student when in their possession throughout the day.
- g) Mobile phone use throughout each day's program must be considered and clearly communicated to students (e.g. turned on silent if seeing a show).
- h) Ordinarily the sharing of mobile phone numbers between staff and students is prohibited. There are a few cases where an appropriate level of student safety and accountability require them to have staff mobile phone numbers. This allows for students to communicate if running late arriving at a meeting location on time, a student has become lost or disconnected from their group, student safety concerns, injury sustained or illness. Students will be provided staff mobile numbers (e.g. in the form of a wrist band) to access in such times.

Where this occurs, explicit expectations must be communicated to students and parents around the use and ongoing possession of staff mobile numbers post camp or trip. Such expectations include:

- Students must destroy staff mobile numbers once camp or trip is over.
- At no time can students share or distribute staff mobile numbers to another person.
- Students are not to contact (call or message) staff on their mobile after the camp or trip for any reason.
- Staff will only contact (call or message) a student on their mobile phone during the trip or camp if in an emergency or critical situation.
- Staff are not to contact (call or message) students on their mobile after the camp or trip for any reason.

Communication of these expectations should be in written form to parents and written and verbal form to students as part of the Students Code of Conduct form for the relevant camp or tour.

4.2 Unacceptable Use

- a) Students are not permitted to bring mobile phones on any school Year level camps. This includes Primary sleepovers, Year 4 and 5 camp, Year 6 Cairns trip, Year 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 camps.
- b) Primary students are not permitted to wear/bring smartwatches to any sleepovers, camps or tours.
- c) Students are not permitted to bring mobile phones on other school camps including:
- Year 11 Survival Camp
 - Year 12 Wilderness Trek
 - Sport Camp
 - Academy Camps

- d) If attending an excursion or extra-curricular event that falls outside of the school day start or finish times, students are not to be seen in possession of or using a mobile phone between when they arrive and when they leave. This includes using it for listening to music using headphones/earphones travelling to or from venues, whilst at venues, making purchases (food or drinks).
- e) Students are not to access their phones or smartwatches for accessing social media, playing games, filming or taking photographs, emailing or communicating with parents or home without prior permission or teacher supervision.
- f) Students who are found to be handing in to staff a 'burner phone' in order to hide their real phone can expect to face disciplinary action in accordance with the Positive Culture Framework upon return to school.

It is acknowledged that phones and smartwatches are wonderful technological tools. We also acknowledge that as an educational institution, we provide an environment for students to learn and grow. The aim of this policy is to assist us in equipping our students with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in an increasingly connected digital world while maintaining a safe and engaging educational experience. Our desire is that our students learn, grow and thrive using technology responsibly and safely.