

Western Port Secondary College accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also ever-increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to the college. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can speak with their child. However, access to mobile phones in a school environment requires clear guidelines to minimise opportunities and occurrences of inappropriate use.

1. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones/iPods onto college premises to adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document. Permission to have a mobile phone/iPod at Western Port Secondary College while under the college's supervision is contingent upon students understanding and following this policy.

2. Acceptable Use

Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the College Office remains the vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way. Before and after school while on college premises, students should use soundless features such as text messaging, answering services, call diversion and vibration alert to receive important calls.

Year 7 and 8 students are not permitted to use mobile phones and iPods or have them on their person at any time during the school day.

Year 9 and 10 students are not permitted to have mobile phones or iPods on their person or use them at any time with the exception of recess and lunchtime.

Year 11 and 12 students are permitted to have mobile phones and iPods on their person but are not to use them during and between classes or in the Senior Study room. They may use them at recess and lunchtime.

3. Unacceptable Uses

Mobile phones/iPods must be switched off during the school day and during other educational activities such as excursions and camps. They are to be placed in the students own locker and remain there until the student is leaving the college at the end of their school day.

Mobile phones/iPods should not be used to take photographs or video footage in any school situation including students, staff or visitors to the college.

If a student has or uses a mobile phone during the school day, the responsible student will have the phone confiscated and will face disciplinary action. The phone will only be returned by collection of the phone/ipods by the parent or guardian.

4. Theft or damage

Students are required to mark all their mobile phones/iPods clearly with their name. Students who bring a mobile phone onto college premises should leave it locked away in their locker as soon as they arrive. Mobile phones/IPODS that are found in the college grounds and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to the front office.

The college accepts no responsibility for replacing mobile phones/iPods that are lost, stolen or damaged whilst on college premises or on college sponsored functions.

The college accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones/iPods stolen while travelling to and from college.

It is strongly advised that students use passwords/PIN numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/PIN numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords must not be shared.

5. Inappropriate conduct

(a) Any student/s caught using a mobile phone to cheat in exams or assessments will face disciplinary action.

(b) Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary action.

(c) It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, the college may consider it appropriate to involve the police. Hence, students with mobile phones must not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls.

(d) Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary action.

6. Sanctions

Students infringing on the rules noted above will have their phone/IPODS confiscated. It will be taken to the General Office and the parent/guardian(s) of the student will be required to collect the phone after a period of 24 hrs at their convenience.

Repeated infringements may result in forfeiture of the privilege of the student to bring a phone to the college. Infringements under section 5 (c) may result in the matter being referred to the police. In such cases, the parent will be informed as a matter of urgency.

Students who are not complying with the school policy by refusing to hand over their phone/IPODS to a member of staff when requested will have the following consequences:

First offence - Confiscation of phone/device and parent/guardian to be notified that it is at the office

Second offence - Confiscation of phone/device and after School detention

Third and further offences - Confiscation of phone/device and suspension

Please note that multiple suspensions may result in expulsion

We thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Please ensure your child is aware of this policy.

Endorsed by College Council, 13 October 2015