

MOBILE PHONE POLICY

Rationale

Horizon Christian School (HCS) seeks to outline the acceptable use of mobile phones for students while attending the school, such that it maintains a learning environment for its students and staff. This is in keeping with the standards now accepted within state schools.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to regulate the use of mobile phones so as to help create an appropriate learning environment and also limit some of the harmful effects of mobile phone usage, including various forms of harassment and bullying. This policy outlines the acceptable use of mobile phones for students of Horizon Christian School. The use of mobile phones in this policy includes but is not limited to; making or receiving a phone call, sending or receiving a text message/image/video, use of internet or social media on a mobile phone or other device, playing games, using applications, taking photographs and listening to music on a phone or a sim enabled or attached device such as a smart watch.

Policy statement

It is the policy of HCS that if students do bring a mobile phone to school, it is handed in to be stored for the day and is able to be retrieved at the end of the day. Where students bring mobile phones to school, HCS accepts no responsibility for damage caused by use of mobile phones outside the terms of this policy.

Scope

This policy seeks to direct all staff on how to instruct students and parents in acceptable mobile phone use while at School during school hours or out of normal hours School activities.

Definitions

At/to the School – this refers to being on the School grounds, School activities (e.g. Sports Days), School bus travel, or excursions/camps off site

School community – this includes but may not be limited to: students, parents of students, immediate family of students, authorised volunteers, authorised visiting speakers and guests, staff (whether temporary, contracted or permanent), staff spouses and dependent children (who are not staff or family), School leadership

Head of School – refers to an appropriate senior line manager (or delegate)

Mobile phone – also refers to any devices or applications that are able to function in the capacity of a phone, for the purpose of this Policy, it also refers to Smart Watches and earbuds/phones associated with the device

Parent – includes caregivers and guardians specified as the responsible person on the enrolment form

Staff, staff members – refers to any employee of Horizon Christian School

Student – any student enrolled at Horizon Christian School through a contract with their parent/guardian(s), regardless of their age

Teacher – refers to the student's class teacher or a paid School staff member who is responsible for supervising the student during School hours or activities

1. No School responsibility for personal devices

It must be understood by all members of the school community that any mobile phone brought to the school by a student is done so completely at the student's own risk, and the school accepts no responsibility for the loss of, damage to (accidental or deliberate) or theft of the phone. Additionally, the School will accept no responsibility for risk caused to the student either by the unauthorised use of a student's mobile phone or any other usage outside of the acceptable conditions outlined in this Policy.

2. Conditions of mobile phone use

When mobile phones are brought to school:

- 2.1. On a school day, all mobile phones must be handed in to the teacher during morning Home Group, where they will be stored in the office until afternoon Home Group. If a student arrives late, it must be handed in to the office.
- 2.2. Smart Watches (or similar devices) must also be handed in during morning Home Group, where they will be stored in the office until afternoon Home Group. If a student arrives late, it must be handed in to the office.
- 2.3. Mobile phones are not to be used to display images/material or take or capture any images, video or audio of students or staff or school events, during the schools day, or when on the school bus, or when on camps or excursions.
- 2.4. Prohibited on camps and excursions. Every aspect of student safety is considered while participating in School excursions including the use of school excursion phones by staff and provision of school devices for recording images. There is no reason for students to take phones with them on excursions, therefore these must either be left at the school prior to leaving or handed in to their supervising teacher as soon as they begin the excursion (e.g. upon boarding the bus to travel to the venue). These will only be returned when students are dismissed. Please note that there are a limited number of camps and excursions where phones are allowed, and this is always included in the permission forms.
- 2.5. Exceptions for special use. It is expected that the need to make calls or retrieve data during the school day will be rare, and permission may be granted at the discretion of the responsible staff member.

3. Consequences for inappropriate phone use

Mobile phones must not be used to invade the privacy of others or breach the law. Students who use a mobile phone either by a direct phone call, text message or other function to: bully, harass, threaten, abuse, vilify or embarrass other students or staff will face disciplinary action which may lead to suspension and/or police involvement or termination of enrolment.

Consequences for breaches of this policy may vary depending on the nature of the offence. Failure to hand in a phone will attract a different consequence to phone use, which will be different again to posting images or video and different again to harassment.

1. Failure to surrender phone:

- a. First offence – The phone must be surrendered immediately. Following this, the phone must be surrendered to the front office for 1 week, as soon as the student arrives at school each day.
- b. Second offence - The student will be internally suspended for the remainder of the day. If it is lesson 7 or afternoon home group, the suspension will be on the subsequent day.
- c. Subsequent offences – Will be handled by members of the school Leadership team who will determine an appropriate consequence and may lead to further suspensions.
- d. If the phone misuse is deemed to be serious, consequences outside of the above may apply at any stage of the process.

2. Phone use at School

- a. Depending on the nature of phone use, consequences may commence from Internal suspension for the remainder of the day or higher.
3. Offences that involve the invasion of privacy, such as the unwanted taking of photos, video, audio may commence at the level of Internal suspension or higher
4. Bullying or harassment using a mobile device may commence at the level of suspension or higher

Other relevant policies and documents

- HCS Anti-bullying & Anti-harassment Policy
- HCS Behaviour Management Policy
- HCS ICT Policy

Review

This Policy will be reviewed every three years.