



STUDENT MOBILE PHONE GUIDELINES

Statement of Context and Purpose

Huntingtower recognises the importance and usefulness of mobile phones as a tool for communication, learning, and enhancing student safety. Mobile phones have become an integral part of modern life, and as such, have become increasingly prevalent in schools. While mobile phones can be a valuable asset, inappropriate use can negatively impact student learning and wellbeing, leading to distractions and disruption in the classroom.

Additionally, the inappropriate use of mobile phones can contribute to cyberbullying, privacy breaches, and other forms of harmful behaviour. It is essential that students understand the appropriate use of mobile phones and the potential consequences of inappropriate behaviour. These guidelines are designed to manage student mobile phone and device use to promote a positive learning environment for all.

Application

The scope of these guidelines encompasses all students at Huntingtower, as well as personal mobile phones brought onto school premises by students during school hours, including recess and lunchtime.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones can create a range of hazards when brought to school:

- They are valuable items that can easily be lost, stolen or damaged in the School environment
- Using phones inappropriately to bully, intimidate, photograph or film people can have serious consequences including police involvement; and
- Mobile phone usage in the School not only disrupts learning for the phone user but also for fellow students
- Mobile phones are not to be used inappropriately to harass others in the form of taking photos, videos or sending communications relating to members of the school community. Any evidence that the phone has been used for bullying or harassment purposes will be seen to be infringing the Schools Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and will be treated as a serious offence
- Phone cameras are not to be used within the School grounds unless for educational purposes
- Students should never photograph or record any person without their express permission

Personal mobile phones, earbuds, headphone use

Huntingtower acknowledges parents may wish their child to carry a mobile phone for personal safety reasons however, the right of a student to have access to a mobile phone, earbuds and/or headphones at school must be balanced with the responsibility to use these items appropriately. Between the hours of 8.10am-3.10pm, it is the Schools policy that students:

- Junior School students to hand mobile phones, earbuds and/or headphones to their class teacher at the beginning of the day and will be returned to the student at the end of the day

- Upon departure in the afternoon, all students' mobile phones may be used for the purpose of coordinating travel arrangements.
- Mobile phones and earbuds/headphones are not to be used during the school day without permission. Mobile phones and earbuds and/or headphones are not to be used in the Library at any time.

Mobile phones, earbuds and/or headphones are not to be used at any other times for any other purposes whilst at school.

Enforcement

In order to maintain a conducive learning environment and ensure the proper use of mobile phones, earbuds and/or headphones, the following enforcement procedure will be implemented:

1. If any teacher observes a student using a phone, earbuds and/or headphones without explicit teacher consent during class or on school grounds, they are authorised to confiscate the device
 - If a student refuses, it will be immediately escalated to the Year Level Coordinator and constitutes a Third Offence consequence
2. The confiscated phone, earbuds and/or headphones will be placed in a special envelope provided for this purpose, clearly labelled with fields to be completed including the student's name, year level, time of confiscation, and any damage to the phone, earbuds and/or headphones
3. This envelope will then be taken to the school office
4. Students may retrieve their phone, earbuds and/or headphones from the school office upon departure in the afternoon
5. Once retrieved, the Student Administration Officer will email a list of students whose phone, earbuds and/or headphones have been confiscated, the following school day
6. Reports of all incidents of misuse of mobile phones will be recorded and retained on the student's pastoral care file by the Year Level Coordinator.

However, if a student has their phone, earbuds and/or headphones confiscated on multiple occasions, the following applies:

1. First offence
 - a. Student is provided with a misdemeanour
2. Second offence
 - a. Student is provided with a misdemeanour
 - b. Parent is informed by Year Level Coordinator
 - c. Parent informed of consequences of additional offences
3. Third Offence
 - a. Student is provided with a misdemeanour
 - b. Parent is contacted and required for in-person meeting
 - c. Parent and student are to agree to formal contract that includes student handing their phone, earbuds and/or headphones to reception upon arrival and collecting on departure for a minimum period of 2 weeks

Further breaches may result in additional disciplinary action.

This procedure ensures accountability and reinforces the School's policy regarding mobile phone, earbuds and/or headphones usage.

Smartwatches

If students are using their smartwatch to communicate during school hours, they are subject to the same consequences as they would for mobile phone use. Smartwatches should be turned to flight mode during school hours.

Exceptions

Staff should be alerted, and exceptions requested if a student requiring the use of their mobile phone during school hours (e.g., health issues). Unless specific permission is given, electronic devices should not be used for any purpose. This includes making calls, sending SMS's or listening to music during these times. Parents are informed that in cases of emergency, the School remains an appropriate point of contact.

Security of items

Students at Huntingtower who bring their mobile phones, earbuds and smartwatches to school do so at their own risk, as these devices are considered valuable items. It is expected that students store their phones in their lockers, which should be securely locked at all times.

It is important to note that Huntingtower will not accept liability for any loss, theft, or damage to a student's mobile phone, earbuds, or smartwatches. The School does not provide accident insurance for any accidental property damage or theft. Therefore, students and their parents are strongly encouraged to obtain appropriate insurance for these valuable items to ensure they are protected in case of any unfortunate incidents.

Camps, excursions and cocurricular activities

Huntingtower will communicate to both students and their parents about the permissible and prohibited personal items such as mobile phones, earbuds and/or headphones that can be brought along during camps, excursions, special activities, and events.

Exclusions

The following exclusions apply to these guidelines:

- School events, including those on or off campus and during and outside of school hours, at the supervising teacher's discretion
- Traveling to and from school
- Wearable devices with notifications turned off
- iPads, tablets, and other personal computers that are authorised for educational purposes
- Students participating in workplace learning activities, such as work experience
- Students undertaking VET (Vocational Education and Training) programs at the supervising teacher's discretion

Definitions

Mobile phone is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network

Earbuds are very small headphones worn inside the ear

Smartwatch is a mobile device worn on the wrist with a touchscreen display. Its primary advantage is providing continuous updates without the need to retrieve a mobile phone from a pocket or bag.

Related documents

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

Related legislation

- Ministerial Order No. 1359, Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Facilities
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)

Communication

These guidelines are available to staff, parents and the school community via the School's website. In addition, relevant aspects of these guidelines may be raised at staff and parent meetings.

Evaluation

The Principal is primarily responsible for monitoring Huntingtower's overall compliance with these guidelines, which will be reviewed as part of Huntingtower's policy review cycle (and otherwise as and when required).

Authorisation

These guidelines was authorised by the Principal in December 2021

Reviewed April 2024

Date of next review: April 2026