

Mobile Phone and Wearable Device Policy

RATIONALE

The widespread ownership of mobile phones and other smart devices (watches/wearables) among young people requires that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure that mobile phones and other devices are used responsibly at St Francis Xavier's Regional Catholic School (SFX).

The aim of this Policy is to help promote:

- Safe environments with reduced negative impacts of inappropriate use of devices at school, such as cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content, and critical incidents that involve mobile phones.
- Classroom environments where teachers can teach and students can learn, free from distractions caused by personal use of devices.
- Use of breaks as quality time away from screens, encouraging physical activity and play and meaningful face-to-face connections with peers.

Students are permitted to bring personal devices to school:

- as a measure to ensure their safety while travelling to and from school.
- so that parents can contact them outside of school hours.
- to be used during school hours in line with an exemption that has been approved by the school under this Policy.

It has been designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones and other 'smart' devices can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the *safety* benefits that mobile phones provide can continue to be enjoyed by our students *in a controlled manner*. SFX acknowledges that parents provide their children with mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that a mobile phone *is an effective tool* that provides parents and children reassurance that they can *be* contacted if they need to speak to them urgently outside of school hours.

SFX has established the following "Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones & Smart Devices" that provides teachers, students and parents guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.

GUIDELINES

Mobile Phones

- Students **must switch off their devices** when they enter the school gates, in the morning, ready for storage. (*note switching off the phone will ensure battery life is maintained and avoid connectivity with any wearable devices*)
- Students will place them in the lockable storage space provided in the morning at 8:50am and retrieve them when they go home at 3:05pm.
- During the school day students are NOT permitted to access or use their mobile phones. (*some exemptions may apply: refer below for clarification*)



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Watches / Wearables

NB: This is applicable to wearables which can be connected to a device wirelessly (either by Bluetooth, WIFI or its own connection which allows communication between that device and another. (Forms of communication may include, but are not limited to: voice, text, email, communications applications).

- *Wearables that do not have a communication function (e.g. Fitbit for counting steps), are not included in the definition.*
 - **Use of a wearable device as a means of communication is deemed to be the same as using a mobile phone.**
- Students / Parents must switch watches/wearables to watch only mode at 8:30am or when they enter the school grounds daily and they must remain in this mode until 3:05pm or they have left school grounds.
 - During the day students are NOT permitted to utilise any online functions of the wearable -, nor use them as a communication device. Any other use of these devices (e.g. calculator) is only done so with the express permission of the class teacher.
 - The use of camera / video recording features on wearables is also not permitted on school grounds.

Please Note

- The school accepts no responsibility for students who:
 - Lose or have their mobile phones or devices stolen
 - Damaged mobile phones or devices on school grounds
 - Damaged mobile phones or devices while travelling to and from school.
- This also applies to students travelling on Excursions, Camps/Retreats and SFX-related extra-curricular activities (e.g., sporting carnivals, choir, etc.).

Note: If there is an emergency, and you need to contact your child during the school day, the quickest and safest way is to call the Front Office on 8251 9500.

NON-COMPLIANCE OF GUIDELINES

If the student does not comply:

- Their phone/wearable device will be confiscated and stored in the lockable storage space in the classroom. The device will be returned at the end of the day and Parents/Carers will be informed via email of the non-compliance.
- Second offence, their phone/wearable device will be confiscated and stored in the office, and parents will be contacted. They will need to come and collect their student's mobile phone/wearable from the office at the end of the day.
- Repeated offences will result in the student being required to hand the phone/wearable device into the office, on a daily basis, to ensure they are not available during the day.
 - In addition, a meeting is to be held between parents, the student and a member of the Leadership Team to discuss appropriate consequences for failing to adhere to this Policy.

Where a student's misuse of a personal device is deemed serious, it may be necessary for the school to consider responses that are in line with Catholic Education South Australia's suspension and exclusion of student's guidelines, or to contact South Australia Police if the behaviour is suspected to be illegal.



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EXEMPTIONS

Exceptional Circumstances

Individual students may have extenuating reasons for needing access to their personal device during school hours, such as where:

- The device is used to monitor or manage a health condition in consultation with a relevant health practitioner, e.g., a diabetic insulin pump.
- The device is a negotiated adjustment to a learning program with applications that are unable to be added to school devices.
- The student has extenuating personal circumstances.

Please contact the school if you need to request an exemption due to exceptional circumstances. The Principal or Delegate will consider these requests on a case-by-case basis. The exemption will be recorded in the student's file and via the SEQTA Learning Management System if approved.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Principal is to ensure that:

- this Policy has been endorsed/ratified by the School Board and is clearly communicated and accessible to all students, staff and families.
- there is a process for regular review of the Policy.
- secure storage is provided for student personal devices that are given to school staff and will be appropriately secured during the school day.
- processes are in place for monitoring internet and school network use by all members of the school community.
- SFX will enforce the Policy and respond to instances of non-compliance.
- the school will report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with CESA guidelines and procedures and any legislative requirements.
- SFX staff support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible and respectful use of mobile phones and devices to their children.

School Staff

- Deliver learning opportunities and maintain a safe and productive learning environment. Take steps to minimise distractions from the non-educational use of personal devices in the learning environment.
- Respond to instances of non-compliance in line with the school's Policy.
- Report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with CESA guidelines and procedures and any legislative requirements.
- Make sure that any student personal devices handed in by students are stored in a secure location and are returned to the student (or their parent).
- Model appropriate use of mobile phones - ensure that mobile phones are not used for personal phone calls and messages during class time or on duty. When using mobile phones for educational reasons, make sure you have a dialogue with students so they can see the positive use of devices.
- Support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible and respectful use of mobile phones to their children.



Students

- Comply with the requirements of the school's Policy and follow all reasonable directions from the Principal and school staff.
- Switch all personal devices off, on arrival at school each day and store it away as specified in this Policy.
- Communicate respectfully with others and **MUST** not use a mobile phone or other personal device to Bully, Harass or Threaten another person.
- Respect others' rights to privacy and ***do not*** take photos, film or audio records of other people without their knowledge or permission.
- Speak with teachers or other school staff as appropriate should parents need to be contacted for sickness, appointments, early collection etc.

Parents

- Parents/Caregivers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone or other electronic equipment onto SFX premises.
- Reinforce to their children that phones/ and or smart devices must be turned off and handed into the teacher at the beginning of the school day for the duration of the day.
- Ensure that inappropriate material/content is not stored on the child's phone/device.
- Support the implementation of the school's Policy, including the consequences of non-compliance with the Policy.
- Use the school's formal communication channels (email, telephone, Seesaw) in all instances to communicate with the school.

COMMUNICATION & REVIEW

- This Policy has been viewed, discussed and ratified by the SFX School Board.
- The formal review period is set for three years from the date of ratification by the board. However, internal school review is to take place annually (or as required) to meet the changing technological developments and landscape.
- The Policy will be placed on the school website and parents will be informed of the new guidelines and how they can be accessed.
- Teachers will discuss with students the information and expectations of students within this Policy with all students as appropriate to year levels.

CONCLUSION

The terms of this Policy are not intended to be exhaustive, nor do they anticipate every possible circumstance in which this Policy may be referred to. As the evolution of technology is changing at a rapid rate, where circumstances are not covered in this Policy, school leadership will work with all relevant stakeholders to ensure the safety of all students at SFX in the digital and online space.

Document Control			
Approval date:	5/12/2023	Review Date:	Dec 2026
Replaces Version:	N/A	Approval Authority:	School Board