



St. Leonard's Catholic Primary School

Aspiring to Excellence

Mobile Phone and Internet Enabled Devices Policy

Rationale:

At St Leonard's Primary School, we aim to empower our students to engage and learn with confidence, courage and empathy by providing an education that inspires them to become global citizens. This policy acknowledges that technology is increasingly affecting how students learn and communicate, with both positive and negative implications.

An increasing number of parents/guardians wish to provide their children with mobile phones or internet enabled devices with messaging, internet and Bluetooth capabilities for safety, security and/or emergency. This policy details the conditions under which these devices are permitted at St Leonard's Primary School.

The school discourages students from bringing mobile phones, smart watches, and other internet enabled devices to school. We take the safe and responsible use of digital technologies, student safety and well being very seriously. We also have an emphasis on developing positive social skills and positive behaviours. Such devices can cause disruption in classrooms and the playground and can be used inappropriately to access social media and take photos without permission. This can cause distress and breach the privacy of others. The unregulated presence of personal devices in the school can undermine students' capacity to think, learn, remember, pay attention and regulate emotion. Mobile phones were banned for all students at Victorian state primary and secondary schools from Term 1 2020, to help reduce distraction, tackle cyber bullying and improve learning outcomes for students.

Definitions:

A mobile phone is a telephone or device with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a connection to the internet.

Internet Enabled Devices include portable and wearable devices with messaging, internet or bluetooth capabilities. They may include digital watches, fitness trackers, portable computer games, ipods, cameras and any other similar devices as they come into use.

Procedures:

1. St Leonard's discourages students from bringing mobile phones and internet enabled devices.
2. Permission must be granted for any mobile phone or internet enabled device to be brought to school.
3. If permitted by the school, mobile phones, portable and wearable internet enabled devices must be turned off during school hours. They must be handed to the class teacher before school begins and collected at the end of the day.
4. If students have permission to bring a mobile phone or device to school, the school will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that is locked and cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so.

5. Mobile phones and wearable devices with messaging, internet or bluetooth capabilities may only be turned on and/or used out of school hours, before 8:30am and after 3:15pm (when not on school property).
6. While at school, school staff have a duty of care towards all students. Any instances that require emergency contact with parents MUST be through the appropriate staff member or a member of administration, who will make the appropriate call to parents or carers.
7. If a parent or caregiver needs to contact a student at school as a result of an emergency, they are required to call the school's main office and a message will be given to the student in an appropriate manner.
8. Devices are not to be used by other students.
9. Phones and portable and wearable devices are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner's (student's or parent/carers) risk. The school does not have accident insurance for accidental property damage or theft. The school does not accept responsibility for any theft, loss or damage of mobile phones, portable or wearable devices.

Acceptable Use

St Leonard's Cybersafety Use Agreement defines what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.

Inappropriate use of phones or portable or wearable devices may result in:

- Confiscation of the mobile phone or internet enabled device until the end of the school day.
- The student will receive a formal warning or the I.C.T Indiscretions Procedure will be followed. Further breaches will result in an appropriate disciplinary action being taken.
- Confiscation of the mobile telephone or internet enabled device until such time as their parent or caregiver is able to attend school to collect the device.
- Other disciplinary action in cases where students have bullied or threatened or harassed other students or staff via the mobile telephone or other personal communication device or where the device has been used to take photographs or display inappropriate material.

Specific Exemptions

This policy applies to *all* students in the school unless there is a compelling reason, such as a health or wellbeing reason. Exemptions can only be granted by the Principal. Students will only be permitted to bring a mobile phone, portable or internet enabled device to school premises for serious health, safety, security or emergency purposes (*i.e. the child/ren walking or riding home from school without adult supervision or staying at another parent's home in the case of separated families*).

Where a student has been granted an exception, the student must use their mobile phone and internet enabled device for the purpose for which the exception was granted, and in a safe, ethical and responsible manner. The procedures listed above must be followed.

In order for a student to bring a mobile phone or wearable device with messaging, internet or Bluetooth capabilities to school, parents/carers need to write to the Principal requesting permission for the child to have the device at school. See Appendix 1. St Leonard's Mobile Phone Use Permission Note.

The categories of exceptions allowed are:

1. Learning-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Student Diabetes Management Plans and Health Support Plans Individual Learning Plans

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	Student Diabetes Management Plans and Health Support Plans

Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

St Leonard's Primary School will provide students and their parents and carers with information about items that can or cannot be brought to camps and excursions, including personal mobile phones and internet enabled devices. This will be determined by risk assessment planning documentation.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to:

- Out-of-School-Hours Care (OSHC)
- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school

Related policies and resources

- [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](#)
- [Personal Goods – Department policy](#)
- St Leonard's Student Wellbeing Policy
- St Leonard's Child Safety Policy
- St Leonard's Indiscretion Procedure
- St Leonard's Cybersafety Use Agreement
- St Leonard's Mobile Phone Use Permission Note

Related legislation

- Education and Training and Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

Appendix 1: Student Mobile Phone & Internet Enabled Device Permission Note



To The Principal,

I wish to apply for an exemption for my child _____ in Year _____ to have permission to bring the following device to school

_____.

Please provide a health, wellbeing or learning reason that a mobile phone is required at school for your child:

I have read the school's Mobile Phone and Internet Enabled Devices Policy and agree to the principles and sanctions. I understand that the school does not accept responsibility for any theft, loss or damage of Mobile Phones or Internet Enabled Devices.

Parent signature: _____

Parent Mobile Phone Contact: _____

Date: _____