

## MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE POLICY

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To explain to our school community the Department's and the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School (VCASS) policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours.

### 2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy applies to:

- a) All students at VCASS and,
- b) Students' personal mobile phones brought onto school premises during school hours, including recess and lunchtime.

### 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. A mobile phone is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network.

### 4. POLICY

- 4.1. VCASS understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.
- 4.2. At VCASS:
  - a) Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored in their lockers during school hours
  - b) Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see below for further information)
  - c) When emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school's office.

#### Personal mobile phone use

- 4.3. In accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at VCASS during school hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted.
- 4.4. Where a student has been granted an exception, the student must use their mobile phone for the purpose for which the exception was granted, and in a safe, ethical and responsible manner.

## Secure storage

- 4.5. Mobile phones owned by students at VCASS are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner's (student's or parent/carer's) risk. Please note that VCASS does not have accident insurance for accidental property damage or theft. Students and their parents/carers are encouraged to obtain appropriate insurance for valuable items. Neither the Department nor the school is responsible if any student's personal item/property is lost, stolen or damaged.
- 4.6. Where students bring a mobile phone to school, VCASS will provide secure storage in the form of student lockers. At VCASS, students are required to store their mobile phones in their lockers. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so.

## Enforcement

- 4.7. Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at VCASS may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.
- 4.8. At VCASS inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted, and, particularly, the use of a mobile phone:
- a) in any way that disrupts the learning of others
  - b) to send inappropriate, harassing or threatening messages or phone calls
  - c) to engage in inappropriate social media use including cyber bullying
  - d) to capture video or images of people, including students, teachers and members of the school community without their permission
  - e) to capture video or images in the school toilets and changing rooms during exams and assessments

## Exceptions

- 4.9. Exceptions to the policy:
- a) **may be applied** during school hours if certain conditions are met, specifically,
    - i. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions; and
    - ii. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite.
  - b) **can be granted** by the principal, or by the teacher for that class, in accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#).
- 4.10. The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#) are:

### 1. Learning-related exceptions

| Specific exception   | Documentation                   |
|--|---------------------------------|
| For specific learning activities (class-based exception) under teacher supervision | Unit of work, learning sequence |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty | Individual Learning Plan, Individual Education Plan |
|--|---|

## 2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

| Specific exception               | Documentation               |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Students with a health condition | Student Health Support Plan |
| Students who are Young Carers    | A localised student record  |

## 3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite

| Specific exception  | Documentation                          |
|---|--|
| Travelling to and from excursions   | Risk assessment planning documentation |
| Students on excursions  | Risk assessment planning documentation |
| When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission | Risk assessment planning documentation |
| Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel                  | Risk assessment planning documentation |

- 4.11.** Where an exception is granted, the student can only use the mobile phone for the purpose for which it was granted.

### **Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities**

- 4.12.** VCASS will provide students and their parents and carers with information about items that can or cannot be brought to camps, excursions, special activities and events, including personal mobile phones.

### **Exclusions**

- 4.13.** This policy does not apply to:
- a) Out-of-school-hours events
  - b) Travelling to and from school
  - c) Wearable devices
  - d) iPads and all other personal devices
  - e) Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience

## 5. FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- a) *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*
- b) *Bullying*
- c) [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](#)
- d) [Weapons and Other Harmful Items – Banning, Searching and Seizing](#)

## 6. POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

|                            |           |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Policy last reviewed       | 2023      |
| Approved by                | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | 2025      |