MOBILE PHONE POLICY

RATIONALE:
Mobile phones are an important communication tool. Mobile phone cameras can enhance communication by making it easy for people to take and transmit images. These technologies however have the potential to be abused at school by:

- disrupting the teaching and learning programs conducted by the school
- being a vehicle for bullying
- facilitating the invasion of privacy for both students and staff at a school through the use of mobile phone cameras.

AIM:
To provide a policy that respects the school’s right to manage mobile phones so that the school’s teaching and learning programs and duty of care are not affected.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Staff
- Staff are not permitted to use mobile phones for private use when they are supervising or teaching students because of their ‘Duty of Care’ legal requirements to students.
- During teaching time, while on yard duty and during meetings, mobile phones will be switched off or put on ‘silent’ or ‘discreet’ mode.
- Except in urgent or exceptional situations, mobile phone use is not permitted during teaching time, while on yard duty and during meetings.

Students
- All mobile phones brought to school must be signed in at the office before school and it is the student’s responsibility to collect it at the end of the day.
- If mobile phones brought to school by students are not to be turned on between 8.45am and 3.30pm or used in the schoolgrounds.
- The school recognises that parents and care givers/students may need to communicate by mobile phone. This can be done before school commences at 8.45am and after school finishes at 3.30pm but not in the school grounds. Between 8.45am and 3.30pm the school will contact parents if, and when, necessary and parents can contact the office when an important message has to be passed on to their child.
- Mobile phones, under no circumstances are to be taken by students to camps, sleepovers, excursions, extra curricular school activities, school sporting events etc. Staff carry mobile phones for all essential contact with the school, parents or emergency services.
- Mobile phones are brought to school at their own’s risk (students and staff). The Department of Education & Early Childhood Development (DEECD) does not hold insurance for personal property brought to schools and will not pay for loss and damage.
- The school will not interrupt programs to investigate damage, loss or theft of mobile phones.
- Disciplinary action will be taken when mobile phones are used in ways that do not abide by the school policy and school values. The Principal may revoke a student’s permission to bring a phone onto the school premises.
- Parents/care givers will be contacted if breaches of this policy are detected.

Inappropriate Use
Inappropriate use includes:
- disruptions or likely disruptions to the learning environment or interference with the operation of the school; threats or likely threats to the privacy, well being or safety of any person; the breach of any law
- use of the mobile phone as a connection to the internet during the school day.
- use of the mobile phone in the bullying, intimidation or harassment of other people through SMS or text messages, photographic, video or other data transfer systems available on the phone.
It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. The school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

**Exemptions**
Exemptions of this policy can only be approved by the Principal and then only in exceptional circumstances.

**EVALUATION:** This policy shall be reviewed as part of the ongoing policy and process review.

**REFERENCES:**