

MOBILE PHONES & OTHER DEVICES POLICY

PURPOSE

Hillcrest Christian College has established this policy for mobile phones and other devices, such as digital watches, which can be used for communication. This policy provides teachers, students and families with guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones and other communication devices on campus, and during other College activities.

The increased ownership of these devices requires that the College staff, students, and families take appropriate steps to ensure they are used responsibly. This policy takes into account the differences in Community expectations, in relation to the need and access to mobile phones by students.

For students to carry a mobile phone or similar device to Hillcrest Christian College, students and their parents or guardians must first read and understand this policy. This policy also applies to students during College excursions, camps, and extracurricular activities. The College reserves the right to adjust this policy to meet the educational needs of Hillcrest students.

RATIONALE

Hillcrest Christian College acknowledges that the provision of communication devices by parents, particularly in the Senior Learning Community, is a good measure against dangerous and emergency situations. Most students in the Junior Learning Community will generally not have access to a mobile phone or similar device on a daily basis.

It is the responsibility of students who bring these devices onto the College premises to adhere to the safety guidelines and expectations as outlined below.

RESPONSIBILITY

The decision to provide a communication device to their children should be made by parents or guardians. Parents should be aware if and when their child brings it onto campus. It is the responsibility of students who bring one of these devices to College, to abide by the guidelines outlined in this policy. Permission to have a mobile phone or similar device at Hillcrest while under the College's supervision is contingent on the parent/guardian and student accepting responsibility for the device, and the consequences of inappropriate use whilst on campus or at College activities.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

Junior Learning Community

Students in the Junior Learning Community who "need" to have a mobile phone or other communication device for parent contact before and after school, must have permission arranged between the family and the College prior to bringing it on campus, and will need to abide by the expectations of its use. This will be arranged through the Deputy or Head of Community. An online form is available to provide the relevant information.

Senior Learning Community

Students who bring a mobile phone or other communication device, such as a smart watch, onto College premises, are advised to keep the device in their locker for personal safety. If the student is unable to access their locker, the device must be handed into SLC Reception for safe keeping. Mobile phones are not to be kept in any place other than the student's locker or SLC Reception, whilst the student is on campus.

General

It is strongly advised that students lock their device using a password/PIN number, to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones by other students or users, if the device is lost or stolen. Students must keep their password/PIN numbers confidential, and mobile phones and/or passwords should not be shared.

Mobile phones and other devices which are found in the College and whose owner cannot be located, will be handed in to the SLC Reception.

Hillcrest Christian College accepts no responsibility for mobile phones or other devices which are stolen whilst travelling to or from the campus, or during any College activities. The College will not accept any liability for students' personal mobile devices in the event of loss, theft or damage of the device.

EXPECTATIONS

Junior Learning Community

If permission has been arranged for the student to have a mobile phone on campus, the phone is to be handed in to JLC Reception (near Main Reception) on the student's arrival, and no later than 8.25am each day they bring it to College. The phone can be collected from JLC Reception after 3.00pm.

Senior Learning Community

Any mobile phones, smart watches or other communication devices must be placed in the student's locker before the first activity of the day. This may be a rehearsal, sport practice or the start of the academic day. The device is not permitted to be used throughout the day until after 3.00pm. A teacher may permit students to use their phone to film or photograph for academic tasks. The phone is to be in clear view of the teacher during this time, and may only be used for the designated purpose.

General

Exceptions may be permitted only in unique circumstances if the parent/guardian specifically requests it. Such requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis and should be directed to the relevant Deputy or Head of Community. Staff will be alerted, and exceptions notified, if a student has special circumstances requiring the use of their mobile phone during College hours (e.g. for health issues). Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the College Administration remains the most appropriate point of contact, and will ensure a student is reached quickly and assisted in any appropriate way.

If a student uses a mobile phone, smart watch, or other communication device in classroom or on the College campus outside of the acceptable usage outlined above, the student will be required to hand the device into the relevant Reception Office for the remainder of the day. Confiscated devices will be placed in an envelope clearly labelled with the student's name and the date, and will be stored in the relevant Reception Office. The student will receive a slip indicating the device is at the Office and when they can collect it. Students will have their device returned to them at the end of the day on the first occasion, but parents will have to come to the College to collect the device for subsequent breaches.

Families who need to make contact with a student during the day should do so by phoning or emailing the relevant Reception Office.

UNACCEPTABLE USE

General

Unless express permission is granted, mobile phones, smart watches or other communication devices cannot be used to make calls, send SMS messages, access the internet, take photos, or use any other application during school hours and other educational activities, such as excursions, camps or sporting events. Students should only use their device before or after school.

Mobile phones, smart watches and other communication devices should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the College.

Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Deputy or Head of Community.

It is forbidden for students to “gang up” on another student and use their devices to take videos or photographs of acts, to denigrate and humiliate any student, and then send the pictures to other students or upload it to a website for public viewing. This also includes using mobile phones or other devices to photograph or film any student without their consent. It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

Mobile phones or any devices that can record images or sounds are not to be used or taken into changing rooms or toilets, or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to their fellow students, staff, or visitors to the College.

Using mobile phones or any other device to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In some cases, this can constitute criminal behaviour. In such cases the College reserves the right to pass this situation on to the relevant authority for action.

Policy Owner | College Executive