

Wodonga Middle Years and Senior Secondary College Policy Manual

000 STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

000 Mobile Phones & Audio Equipment

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| School Policy and Advisory Guide Reference: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/spag.aspx | Last Update Month Year |
| Last Ratified by School Council | Month Year |
| Line Manager | AP Student Operations |

Rationale

There are growing bodies of evidence showing that the possession and use of mobile phones in schools is having a detrimental effect on the learning of students. WSSC and WMYC have based their Mobile Phones & Audio Equipment policy around this research and DET advice.

Some of the research that has informed this policy is:

The Mere Presence of Your Smartphone Reduces Brain Power, Study Shows

Intro article <https://news.utexas.edu/2017/06/26/the-mere-presence-of-your-smartphone-reduces-brain-power>

Full study <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/691462>

Key points:

- the mere presence of one's own smartphone may occupy limited-capacity cognitive resources, thereby leaving fewer resources available for other tasks and undercutting cognitive performance
- these cognitive costs are highest for those highest in smartphone dependence
- participants with their phones in another room significantly outperformed those with their phones on the desk, and they also slightly outperformed those participants who had kept their phones in a pocket or bag
- it didn't matter whether a person's smartphone was turned on or off, or whether it was lying face up or face down on a desk - having a smartphone within sight or within easy reach reduces a person's ability to focus and perform tasks because part of their brain is actively working to *not* pick up or use the phone

Psychology and neuroscience blow-up the myth of effective multitasking

Intro article <https://www.inc.com/scott-mautz/psychology-and-neuroscience-blow-up-the-myth-of-effective-multitasking.html>

Key points:

- We sacrifice our power of full presence when we're multitasking, and we do so for a perceived benefit of improved productivity that simply doesn't exist.
- Research also shows that multitasking, i.e. trying to do two cognitive things at the same time, simply can't be done--the mind doesn't work that way.
- Studies have shown that it takes four times longer for the brain to recognize new things (further slowing down task completion) and that we have a much lower retention rate of what we learn while we are multitasking

Mobile phones in the classroom: A helpful or harmful hindrance?

Intro article <https://psychopaedia.org/learning-and-development/mobile-phones-in-the-classroom-a-helpful-or-harmful-hindrance/>

Key points:

- mobile phones can have a negative impact on learning through distraction and that their removal from the classroom can yield an improvement in student performance, especially for the most vulnerable
- students who did not use smartphones while participating in a lecture wrote 62 per cent more information in their notes and were able to recall more information than their phone-using counterparts
- With problematic phone use now considered a risk behaviour alongside alcohol, tobacco and marijuana use, schools should ensure they are addressing the psychological, social and health issues associated with technology (e.g. a lack of sleep from late night phone use, cyber bullying, sexting)

Wodonga Middle Years and Senior Secondary College Policy Manual

How smart is it to allow students to use mobile phones at school?

Intro article <https://theconversation.com/how-smart-is-it-to-allow-students-to-use-mobile-phones-at-school-40621>

Key points:

- After schools banned mobile phones, test scores of students aged 16 increased by 6.4% of a standard deviation
- It is important to note that these gains are prominent amongst the lowest achievers

DET Vic School Policy Advisory Guide – Students Using Mobile Phones

Available here <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx>

Points of note:

- Schools that allow the use of mobile phones must clearly and regularly advise students and parents/guardians of their expectations and policy requirements, including use during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities.
- Students should:
 - only use mobile phones when usage will not disrupt the normal school routine
 - have their mobile phones switched off and out of sight during classes
 - only use their mobile phones before or after school, or during recess and lunch breaks

Implementation/student use policy

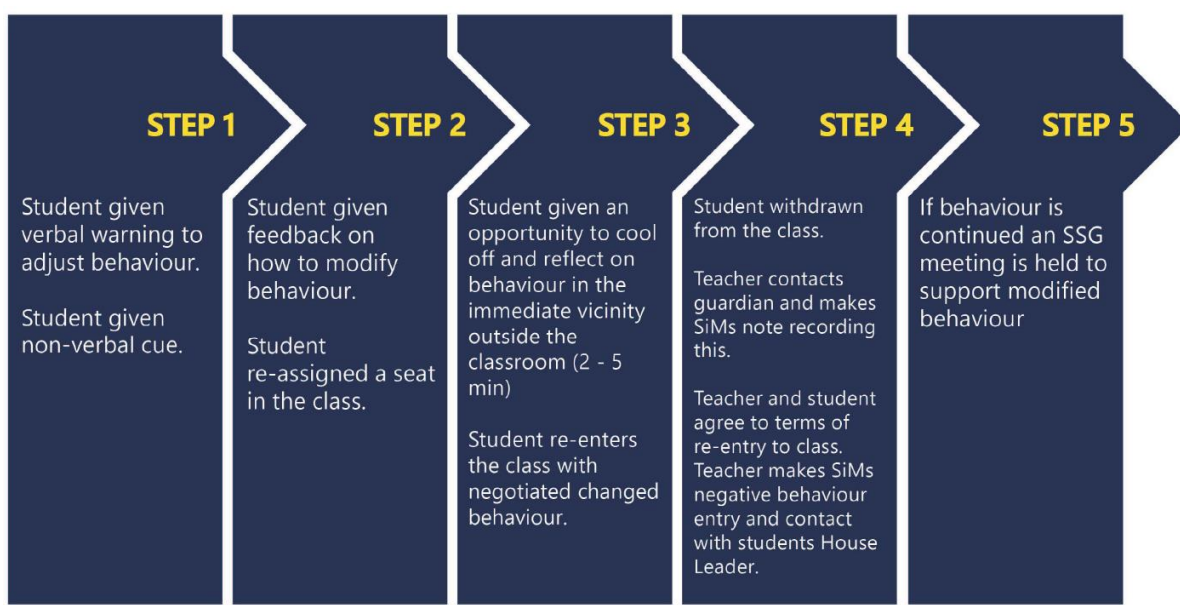
The College discourages students from bringing and using mobile phones and personal audio equipment. The College does not take any responsibility for the security of mobile phones or audio equipment.

- Should a parent wish to contact a student urgently, the General Office will deliver messages to students as required.
- Should a student wish to contact a parent urgently they can request use of an Assistant Principal or House Leader telephone.

If a student brings a mobile phone and/or audio equipment to college it is their responsibility to abide by the following:

- **The mobile phone/audio equipment must be turned off in class time unless specifically allowed by the classroom teacher for educational purposes.**
- **If the teacher requests, all students are to place their mobile phone/audio equipment into the eSmart box. All devices will be returned at the end of the lesson. Students are to collect their own phone only.**
- **Students who do not abide by the above will have their device confiscated by the teacher. It will be the responsibility of the student to collect it from the teacher at the end of the day.**
- **Repeat offenders will have the phone confiscated and a parent will be required to collect it from the front office at the end of the day.**
- **Students who refuses to comply with the above will automatically progress to steps 4 and 5 of the Student code of conduct below which may include having the device collected by a parent.**

The College advises students not to bring their phones to school and does not take responsibility for any loss or damage.



Maintenance

College staff will remain up to date with current research into mobile phone use and periodically provide information to parents and students of this research.

College staff will monitor mobile phone use in classes and support teachers and students to uphold the policy.

Parent information

Rationale – The College recognizes that a majority of students have a mobile phone and that they are a part of modern day life. We are also aware of the impact these devices can have on the learning of students

Break times – WSSC advises parents to contact the college directly if there is an urgent need to communicate with their child. To avoid distractions in class, all other communication should be carried out during break times or after school. The break times are:

Recess 10.10am to 10.35am
Lunch 1.10pm to 2.05pm

Expectations

It is an expectation of the College that parents support the mobile phone policy to enable their child to get the maximum benefit from class time.

Should parents need support or advice they are encouraged to contact the College or access the resources below

eSafety advice <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

iParent - Where you can learn about the digital environment and how to help your child have safe and enjoyable online experiences. <https://esafety.gov.au/education-resources/iparent>

Reporting Cyberbullying: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints/cyberbullying-a-guide-for-parents>

Wodonga Middle Years and Senior Secondary College Policy Manual

Student information

Young and eSafe <https://www.esafety.gov.au/youngandesafe>

Staff expectations

All WMYC and WSSC staff are expected to abide by the same expectations of parents and students and not use their devices in class other than for educational purposes.

Staff are required to maintain the school expectations of no devices in class and utilize the resources provided. Should staff require support to implement the policy they should seek this support from AP Student Operations or House Leaders.

Related Policies, Legislation and Regulations

It is against the law to photograph people without their permission in a college setting. Students who use their mobile phones to take photographs of people out of class and/or create disruption will be sanctioned.

Students who use mobile phones/text messaging for harassment purposes will be sanctioned and leave themselves open to prosecution by the police.

DRAFT