



## Mobile Digital Devices Policy

### 1 Context

- 1.1 Cabra aims to educate and support students to become informed, safe, respectful and responsible digital citizens and to learn healthy, moderated use of digital media and technologies.
- 1.2 Cabra is committed to optimising the conditions for connection and belonging, enabling students to learn how to be active co-contributors to a 'face to face' community.
- 1.3 Cabra is committed to reducing distractions in the learning environment, and optimising student learning.
- 1.4 **Mobile digital devices** are an important communication medium and have significant benefits for use in the broader community. Some recognised benefits include aiding: wellbeing; connection to peer networks and communities of interest; personal safety; digital literacy and; access to information (Carr-Gregg, 2018).

However, research has found that **Mobile digital device** use in schools has the potential to disrupt student wellbeing and affect the education of the 'whole child' (Griffiths & Williams, 2018). In particular, some of the significant risks and harms of **mobile digital devices** include: distraction from school work; impediment to good physical health; negative impact on mental health; decreased face-to face social interaction; exposure to inappropriate material and; cyberbullying. (Griffiths & Williams, 2018).

- 1.5 Cabra acknowledges that parents provide their children with **mobile digital devices** for convenience and protection when not at school. It is also acknowledged that mobile digital devices provide parents/caregivers reassurance should they need to contact their child outside of school hours.

### 2 Policy Statement

- 2.1 By setting expectations for students that personal use of **mobile digital devices** should not be seen or heard on College grounds (unless listed below), it is anticipated that students will be able to form habits of use that differentiate between when it is appropriate to use these technologies and when it is not.
- 2.2 The development of interpersonal skills is integral to the holistic educational approach at Cabra and **mobile digital devices** need to be managed so as not to impede this aim.
- 2.3 At all times use of **mobile digital devices** must be in keeping with legal requirements, the Catholic Dominican ethos, and policies of Cabra.
- 2.4 Laptops should only be used for educational purposes linked to a student's formal lessons. Gaming, downloading or watching personal films/programs is not permitted.



### 3 Definitions

**Mobile digital devices** include smartphones, smartwatches, wireless head/earphones and mobile tablets and other digital devices with capability of connecting to a cellular communication network, the internet or both. This policy makes a distinction between personal use devices that often have independent internet connectivity which bypasses the school internet filter and devices that are provided by the school and or authorised by the school as part of teacher-directed educational activities.

**School grounds** includes all area of the school property and extends to school excursions, sports carnivals and other events off the school site, where an approved school activity takes place.

### 4 Scope

This Policy

- 4.1 Applies to all students.
- 4.2 Provides clarity of expectations regarding the use of **mobile digital devices** whilst on school grounds.
- 4.3 Aims to enable students to focus on their learning without added distractions.
- 4.4 Aims to enable teachers to teach without distractions from unsanctioned technology.
- 4.5 Aims to promote safety, wellbeing, and privacy.

### 5 General Principles

- 5.1 Students are not to use **mobile digital devices** on College grounds.
- 5.2 Head/earphones can only be used in the school as an educational device. The discretion for their use for a learning activity or task (e.g. listen to podcasts, lectures and videos for learning) rests with the teacher.
- 5.3 There may be exceptional circumstances where students require a formal exemption from the policy. Exemptions include:
  - (a) The **mobile digital device** is used to help monitor or manage a health condition.
  - (b) The **mobile digital device** is a negotiated adjustment to a learning program for a student with a disability, learning difficulty or English as an additional language.
  - (c) A student has personal circumstances that require them to have more ready access to their **mobile digital device**, such as being the primary carer for younger siblings.

Requests for exemptions from parents/caregivers, will be considered by the Principal or their delegate on a case-by-case basis. Approved exemptions will be documented in the student's Health Care Plan, Individual Education Plan (IEP), Personal Learning Profile (PLP) or student file.

- 5.4 If students choose to bring their **mobile digital device** to school, they need to store it, in their locked individual student locker. To minimise disruption, it is recommended that they switch off or mute their **mobile digital device** before storing them.
- 5.5 Students who bring **mobile digital devices** to school do so at their own risk and the College accepts no responsibility for loss, damage or theft. Parents/caregivers are advised

to contact their insurance provider prior to allowing their child to bring any *mobile digital device* to the College.

5.6 Parents/caregivers wishing to contact their child must do so through the Student Services.

5.7 Students should advise their employers that they are not contactable in school hours.

## 6 Implementation

6.1 *Mobile digital devices* may only be used during school time with permission from a supervising staff member or by qualifying for an exemption as outlined in this policy.

6.2 No *mobile digital device* is to be brought into any exam or class assessment even if it is switched off or in silent mode.

6.3 Students using *mobile digital devices* will be asked to turn it off and put it away. If students continue to misuse *mobile digital devices* or cause a nuisance, they will be asked to surrender it, in keeping with the Mobile Digital Devices Procedure.

## 7 Breaches

7.1 Unauthorised use:

- (a) Students using a *mobile digital device(s)*, without permission or exemption, on College grounds.
- (b) Students using a *mobile digital device(s)*, without permission of the individual, to photograph, video/voice record any member of the College community. This includes sharing or uploading any type of material to a social media platform such as Snapchat.
- (c) Students using a *mobile digital device(s)*, to bully, menace, harass, or offend another person. Given this is a criminal offence, the College may consider it appropriate to involve the police in dealing with such situations.

## 8 Related Documents and References

- Cabra Dominican College Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy
- Cabra Dominican College Personal Responsibility Policy
- Cabra Dominican College Principles for Working Together
- Cabra Dominican College Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
- Cabra Dominican College Staff Handbook
- Cabra Dominican College Student Handbook



9 Revision Record

Document Title	Mobile Digital Device Policy						
Document Type	Policy						
Document Date	March 2023						
Process Owner	Deputy Principal: Student Wellbeing and Leadership						
Contact	Jason Thur ( <a href="mailto:jthur@cabra.catholic.edu.au">jthur@cabra.catholic.edu.au</a> )						
Approval Authority	Executive Leadership Team						
Review Date	March 2024						
Policy Distribution	Website	✓	MS Teams	✓	SEQTA	✓	BoardTrac
Revision History	<b>Edition Number</b>		<b>Date</b>		<b>Description of change</b>		
	1.0		2023		New policy		