

POLICY ON USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND PORTABLE LISTENING DEVICES

PREAMBLE

Como Secondary College recognizes that most students have a mobile phone which potentially is a powerful educational tool as well as a distraction and a behaviour management issue. Our approach to mobile phones is to educate students and parents on their appropriate use and to clearly communicate our expectations.

Listening to portable music devices has been shown to adversely affect a student's attention and concentration, and thus learning. Chronic multi-tasking impairs both long-term and working memory (Queensland Brain Institute).

POLICY

The school's policy on mobile phones is that of the Department; that is:

The Department of Education does not permit student use of mobile phones in public schools unless for medical or teacher directed educational purpose.

The school's policy on portable listening devices is that they are not to be used in classrooms unless specifically approved by the Principal.

Teachers are to model the appropriate use of mobile phones and other technology in the classroom.

POLICY RULES

In Class, Library, During a Lesson

- Students are not permitted to use their mobile phones in class except with the permission of their teacher and for an educational purpose approved by the Principal.
- Students must put their smart watches in 'aeroplane mode' so phone calls and messages cannot be sent or received during the school day;
- Students are not permitted to listen to portable listening devices during class. If there is a specific educational purpose or use of a device is part of a documented plan (eg a music lesson), then permission must be obtained from the principal.
- Headphones, ear plugs, bluetooth devices or any other listening apparatus must be off the body and in a bag out of sight.
- Mobile phones and portable listening devices are the responsibility of the student. The school accepts no responsibility for their damage or theft.

Recess, Lunchtime and Period Change-overs

Students are permitted to use their phones at these times for the following purposes:

- checking their timetables,
- checking notifications and communications received via Connect or the school's learning management system,
- researching for assignments and homework,
- revision and quizzes,
- responding to communications from school staff,
- facilitating and maintaining social-emotional well-being.

Students are not permitted to make or take telephone calls while moving between classes.

Illegal and Improper Use At Any Time

The sending of text or multi-media messages to insult, intimidate or threaten is prohibited.

The taking of photographs, videos or sound recordings at College, without permission, is prohibited and this includes the taking of any photo invading another person's privacy.

The taking of a video or photograph of a fight or bullying behaviour is prohibited.

PROCEDURES WHEN UNAUTHORIZED USE OCCURS

During Class Mobile telephones and other portable media devices are to be turned off and kept completely out of sight during class time unless the use is for educational purposes and sanctioned by the principal. If a teacher becomes aware that a student is using a device then the following steps are to followed:

Sanction: 1

The portable media or telephone device may be confiscated by the teacher and returned at the end of the lesson or at the end of the day.

Sanction 2

The device will be confiscated, placed in a mobile device envelope and lodged with the Receptionist for collection by the student at the end of the day. The Receptionist keeps a record of the number of offences.

Sanction 3

When the device has been lodged with the Receptionist for the third time, a parent or guardian will have to come to the school to collect the device.

If a student refuses to hand over their phone or device, they have escalated the situation. Support from the HOLA or other senior staff member should be sought. Refusal to hand over the telephone will result in detention or suspension depending on the circumstances.

Outside of the Classroom The following steps are to be taken if a student is using a device improperly, or is suspected of doing so, then the teacher is to take the following steps:

1. Query the purpose of the call if improper use is suspected.
2. If it is clear that the phone is being used improperly then direct the student to cease the call and put the phone away.
3. If the student does not comply then they have escalated the situation and the matter needs to be referred to the Rover if at recess or lunchtime, or a Deputy Principal.

Examples of improper use include ordering take-away food for lunch, or making or taking phone calls during period change-overs.

PROCEDURES WHEN ILLEGAL OR IMPROPER USE OCCURS

As per the Director General's Directive "Required Action to be Taken with Students fighting or Publishing Videos of Fighting" issued on December 3, 2018, students who video or photograph a fight will lose good standing and will not be permitted to participate in school non-curricula activities". Videoing a fight will also incur an automatic suspension. Students will also be required to delete the images from their phones.

The showing of offensive or obscene pictures on portable media devices is prohibited and referred to the Police if it is believed that an offence has been committed.

Sanction

The confiscation of the device whilst an investigation occurs. If the offence is confirmed by the College administration the mobile phone or the portable media player will be handed to the Police.

SECURITY OF MOBILE PHONES AND PORTABLE MEDIA DEVICES

The College accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage to students' mobile phones or portable media devices.

Guidance

For the purposes of this policy, 'mobile phones' includes smart watches, other electronic communication devices, and associated listening accessories, such as, but not limited to, headphones and ear buds.

Portable music devices include MP3 players, tablets, smart watches or any other device that can play recordings, as well as associated listening accessories such as, but not limited to, headphones and ear buds.