



Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones

Rationale

The widespread ownership of mobile phones among young people requires that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly at schools.

This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students without being misused by individuals for inappropriate purposes. The school also appreciates the dangers of the low power microwaves that are emitted by these devices and therefore discourage the use of them within the school, particularly in close proximity to the children.

Aims

The Blue Mountains Steiner School has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, students and parents guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours. Students, their parents or guardians must read and understand the Acceptable

Use Policy before students are given permission to bring mobile phones to school. The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.

The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or guardians.

Parents should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school. The phone needs to be dropped to the School office before class time and picked up after class time.

Examples of Equipment

- Mobile phones
- Portable computer games
- Software
- Walkman
- Ipods
- MP3 Players

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- and similar equipment

Parent / Student Contact Procedures

Parents who wish to contact their child during the school day may phone the school office on 02 47506044 and leave a message with office staff.

Staff will then relay the message to the child or answer the parent's inquiry.

At times, students may need to contact home whilst at school. Provided that it is satisfied that contact is necessary, staff will either make the phone call on behalf of the student, or allow the student to use the school phone, under supervision, to call home.

Reasons for Complying with the Policy

Student use of mobile phones or electronic equipment at school can result in:

- interference in the learning process
- misuse by students or callers
- inappropriate use of digital cameras built into the phone unit
- cyber bullying
- theft or damage
- accessing internet sites inappropriate to the age of school students
- by-passing by students or parents of the school's process for dealing with issues
- receipt of undesirable messages by minors
- invasion of the privacy of staff and other students
- a conflict of authority at school between parent and school in the student's mind

How to Bring a Mobile Phone or Electronic Equipment to School

If a student must bring a mobile phone or electronic equipment to school, it must be handed in at the School Office before school starts. It will be registered and stored. The mobile phone or electronic equipment may be picked up from the School Office at the end of the school day.

Inappropriate conduct

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. If a student uses a mobile phone inappropriately the student will face disciplinary action as sanctioned by the Principal and College of Teachers.

Acceptable Uses

- Mobile phones are not to be used by students during school hours.
- If phones need to be brought to school by students, parents need to send in written permission and the phone must be taken to the office to be stored during school hours, 9:00am -3:00pm.

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- Students need to turn off mobile phones on arrival at school.
- Mobile phones should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school.
- Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to friends and keeping a note of who they have given them to. This can help protect the student's number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice, text and picture messages.
- If parents need to get an urgent message to their child they need to contact the school office.
be used.

Consequences for Breaching this Policy

If a student is found to have used a mobile phone or electronic equipment at school the following steps will apply.

- First Offence.
 - The mobile phone or electronic equipment will be taken from the student and sent to the School Office where it will be kept for the day. The student's name, date and details of the equipment confiscated will be logged. The student may collect their phone or electronic equipment at the end of the school day. The student will be reminded of the school's policy, and future ramifications if they offend again.
- Second Offence.
 - The mobile phone or electronic equipment will be taken from the student and sent to the School Office where it will be kept for the day.. The student's name, date and details of the equipment confiscated will be logged. The parent / guardian will be requested to write a note requesting the confiscated equipment be returned to the child. The parent / guardian will be provided with a copy of this document.
- Further Offences.
 - These will be treated as a serious breach of BMSS's Student Welfare & Discipline Policy and may lead to serious consequences which could involve an ongoing referral to the TAP Room, an in-school suspension, or suspension.

Liability

***Blue Mountains Steiner School accepts no responsibility
for the loss, damage or misuse of
student mobile phones or electronic equipment.***

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Exemption

For a particular serious emergency or circumstance of a short nature, an exemption may be granted by the Principal to allow a student to use a mobile phone or electrical equipment at school, or on a school excursion or sports visit, without penalty under the following conditions.

- Prior arrangements with the Principal have been made by the parents.
- Circumstances are such that the normal school phone arrangements cannot be used.
- The mobile phone or electronic equipment is handed in to the School Office and is collected at the end of the school day. On excursions / sports visits, the mobile phone or electronic equipment is handed to the teacher in charge.
- Use of mobile phone or electronic equipment occurs in a designated place at an arranged time.
- The student is supervised by a designated member of staff.
- The call is directly related to the reasons outlined by parents.
- Misuse of a mobile phone or electronic equipment that breaches any of the 'Reasons for Complying with the Policy' will result in the exemption being cancelled immediately.

If parents need to contact the school, the school number can be given to them, not an individual staff member's mobile phone number.

For all school contact, parents of students should be directed to ring the school office number.

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Use at School of Mobile Phones & Electronic Equipment by Staff

Whilst it is accepted that mobile phones and electronic equipment are an important part of modern life and communications, it is important that all staff accept that their use during class time and on various other occasions at school is inappropriate.

Mobile phones and electronic equipment are to be switched to silent at the following times

- Staff meetings
- Training and Development sessions
- Class teaching time

Teachers are requested not to speak on mobile phones during teaching time and are asked not to receive mobile phone calls during this time unless there are special circumstances.

If a family member of any member of staff calls the school, SASS staff will take a message, or in emergencies, make arrangements for the staff member to speak to them.

Messages will be taken to staff in a timely manner.

Persons leaving messages for staff will be asked if it is an emergency or urgent message, in which case staff will be advised immediately.