

Palmerston Senior College Policy Acceptable Student Use of Mobile Phones and MP3 Players

1. Purpose

This policy covers mobile phones, mp3 players, or like technology that may become available.

The increased ownership of mobile phones and mp3 players requires that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure that mobile phones, mp3 players are used responsibly within the school environment and do not interfere with student learning. At Palmerston Senior College uninterrupted teaching and learning and the rights of all students and teachers in this regard are priorities.

This *Acceptable Student Use of Mobile Phones and MP3 players Policy* is also designed to ensure that misuses involving cyber bullying and privacy infringements are addressed. This policy intends to provide clear instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones and mp3 players during school hours and during all school and extra-curricular activities.

In order for students to carry a mobile phone or mp3 player during school hours, students already enrolled must read and sign the following policy agreement (endorsed by School Council). Current parents are provided with information about the agreement that students are asked to sign at school. Parents of future students and the new students themselves will be asked to read and sign the *Acceptable Student Use of Mobile Phones and MP3 Players Policy* agreement at the time of enrolment.

2. Rationale

Palmerston Senior College accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child quickly.

Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the Palmerston Senior College office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly, and assisted in any appropriate way.

This policy acknowledges the reality of MP3 players and other portable music devices as a piece of 21st Century technology.

We are also aware that listening to music at a loud volume and for sustained periods can result in hearing loss. Hearing specialists recommend that devices with an ear-bud be used no more than an hour per day at levels below 60% of maximum volume.

3. Phone and MP3 Player Security

Students who bring a mobile phone or mp3 player onto school premises should leave it locked away in their locker/bag at the start of lessons. Mobile phones or mp3 players which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to front office or student reception. The school accepts no responsibility for replacing mobile phones or mp3 players that are lost, stolen or damaged whilst on school premises, at school sponsored functions or while traveling to and from school.



4. Use of Phones and MP3 Players

4.1 Responsibility

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones and mp3 players to school to adhere to the guidelines outlined in this document. Permission to have a mobile phone or mp3 player at school is contingent upon students (current and future) and parent/guardians (future students only) signing the policy agreement which indicates an understanding of the acceptable uses of phones and mp3 players at school, the lack of school liability for loss or damage, and of sanctions for students who misuse phones or mp3 players.

4.2 Acceptable Uses

Phones and mp3 players may only be used in acceptable ways during breaks and before and after school. Mobile phones and mp3 players must be switched off and stowed away during classroom lessons and all other educational activities including assemblies unless otherwise instructed by a teacher.

Exceptions: *Students in the Special Education Centre (and students in the mainstream school from time to time) use mobile phones and mp3 players as part of their life skills training or education programs. In these cases students will receive permission and clear instructions from teachers on the purpose and use of phones and mp3 players for learning. Special Education Centre (SEC) students are not permitted to use their phones or mp3 players in breaks.*

4.3 Unacceptable and Inappropriate Uses

The following uses of mobile phones and mp3 players at school will result in disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the principal:

- taking photos or videos at any time (including in breaks) without teacher consent
- disruptions to lessons caused by a mobile phone's ringing, making warning tones or being used to text messages
- disruption to lessons caused by an mp3 player
- cheating in exams or assessments
- using derogatory or obscene language via phone functions
- to menace, bully, harass, personally attack, send private information, offend another person by using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, or phone calls.

(It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to send bullying or obscene messages or images. As such, if action sanctioned by the principal is deemed ineffective, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police).

5. Sanctions

Students infringing on the rules noted above will have the mobile phone or mp3 player they are misusing confiscated. The student misusing the phone or mp3 player will be subject to sanctions as will the owner (where deemed appropriate). Confiscated phones and mp3 players will be secured in the school office and parents/guardians informed. Confiscated phones and mp3 players may be collected from the administration office by parents/guardians at their convenience in office hours.

In the event of a student refusing to relinquish their phone or mp3 player at a teacher's request, the student will be subject to sanctions in accordance with the Palmerston Senior College *Wellbeing and Behaviour Policy and Management Plan*. For instance 'refusal to comply with a teacher's request/instruction' may result in detention. Repeated misuse or refusal to comply with guidelines for the use of phones or mp3 players at school may result in senior school staff revoking the privilege of bringing a phone or mp3 player to school (for short or longer periods).



Acceptable Student Use of Mobile Phones and MP3 Players

Parent/Guardian and Student Agreement (at time of enrolment)

I have read and understand the above information about appropriate use of mobile phones and MP3 Players at Senior College. I give my child permission to carry a mobile phone and mp3 player to school and understand that my child will be responsible for ensuring that it is used appropriately while under school supervision, as outlined in this document. I understand that the school takes no responsibility for damaged or lost mobile phones or mp3 players. I understand that in the event that my son/daughter's phone or mp3 player is confiscated for inappropriate use that I will need to collect the phone or mp3 player from the school office, in office hours, at my convenience.

Parent name (print) _____

Parent signature _____

Date _____

Student name (print) _____

Student signature _____

Date _____

Ratified by Palmerston Senior College Council