

SILVER TREE STEINER SCHOOL



Mobile Phone Usage Policy

2016

This policy applies to: The Administrator, staff and students.

AUTHORISED BY:	Administrator
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Table of Contents

ACCEPTABLE USE OF MOBILE PHONES POLICY.....	3
PERSONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY	4
YOUNG PEOPLE AND MOBILE PHONES.....	4
RESPONSIBILITY.....	4
ACCEPTABLE USES	5
UNACCEPTABLE USES	5
THEFT OR DAMAGE	5
INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT	6
PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION.....	6
Appendix A – Parent/Guardian Permission Slip.....	7
APPENDIX B - Mind Your Mobile Manners	8
REFERENCES	9

ACCEPTABLE USE OF MOBILE PHONES POLICY

The School does not encourage students to carry a mobile telephone as it is contrary to Steiner philosophy, however, there may be incidence when it is necessary.

With the increased ownership of mobile phones the school administrators, teachers, students, and parents must take steps to ensure that mobile phones are used responsibly. This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues (such as mobile etiquette) can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue.

Silver Tree 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.

In order for students to carry a mobile phone during school hours, students and their parents or guardians must first read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy.

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

PERSONAL SAFETY AND SECURITY

Silver Tree Steiner School accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also ever-increasing concern about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can speak with their child quickly at any time.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND MOBILE PHONES

The scientific evidence does not indicate the need for special precautions for either adults or children in the use of mobile phones. This view is supported by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and other leading experts and health authorities internationally.

Mobile phones sold in Australia are required to comply with the Australian Communication Authority's Electromagnetic Energy (EME) safety standard, which is for all people, including children. The safety margins on national and international guidelines are significant and already take into account any differences in exposure that could be experienced by children due to conductivity and head size.

RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones onto school premises to adhere to 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 onto school premises.

Permission to have a mobile phone at school/while under the school's supervision is contingent upon parent/guardian permission in the form of a signed copy of this policy. Parents/guardians may revoke approval at any time.

ACCEPTABLE USES

Mobile phones should be switched off during classroom lessons. Exceptions may be permitted in exceptional circumstances, should the parent/guardian specifically request it. Such requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis, and should be directed to the Administrator. Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency, the school office Registrar remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly, and assisted in any appropriate way.

While on school premises, students should use soundless features such as text messaging, answering services, call diversion and vibration alert to receive important calls.

UNACCEPTABLE USES

Unless express permission is granted to the contrary, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos or any other application during school lessons.

Students with mobile phones may not engage in sending group SMS messages to more than 10 people at the same time or send group SMS messages.

Mobile phones should not disrupt classroom lessons by ringing or beeping.

Should there be repeated disruptions to lessons caused by a mobile phone, the responsible student may face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Principal or student council.

THEFT OR DAMAGE

Students are required to mark all their mobile phone clearly with their names.

Students who bring a mobile phone onto school premises should leave it locked away in their locker/bag as soon as they arrive. In order to reduce the risk of theft during school hours, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not 'advertise' they have them.

Mobile phones which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to office.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

It is strongly advised that students use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (e.g. by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords may not be shared.

INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT

Any student/s caught using a mobile phone to cheat in exams or assessments will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Principal or student council.

Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Principal or student council.*

Students with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls. Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Principal or student council.*

Note - it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. As such, if action as sanctioned by the Administrator, Teacher or Governing Body is deemed ineffective, as with all such incidents, the school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION

Parent/Guardians should sign a declaration advising that they understand the Mobile Phone Policy. Refer to Appendix A.

Appendix A – Parent/Guardian Permission Slip

Parent/Guardian Permission

I have read and understood the Mobile Phone Usage Policy about appropriate use of mobile phones at the Silver Tree Steiner School and I understand that this form will be kept on file at the school and that the details may be used (and shared with a third party, if necessary) to assist identify a phone should the need arise (eg if lost, or if the phone is being used inappropriately).

I give my child permission to carry a mobile phone to school and understand that my child will be responsible for ensuring that the mobile phone is used appropriately and correctly while under the school’s supervision, as outlined in this document.

Parent name (print)

Parent signature

Date

Student name (print)

Mobile phone number _____

Student signature

Date

Teacher name (print)

Teacher signature

Date

APPENDIX B - Mind Your Mobile Manners

The Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association (AMTA) encourages individuals to use their mobile phones in a responsible manner and to be considerate and aware of situations where using their mobile phone might annoy others.

- 1. When in doubt, always go out:** When possible go outside or to another room to make your call if your call might disturb others. Also, features such as text messaging answering services, call diversion and vibration alert can be used to receive important calls without disturbing others.
- 2. If you can't turn it off, use silent mode:** If you need to keep your phone on for important calls, then turn it to silent or vibrate mode. It's the ring of a mobile phone in inappropriate places and times such as at the tennis or in restaurants which annoys people the most.
- 3. When required turn your phone off and check it's off:** There are some places where people should never talk on a mobile phone or send text messages and where the ringing of a mobile phone or message alert is considered highly unacceptable, such as: movies, stage shows, weddings, funerals, concerts, speeches, classrooms and lectures. In these cases, turn your phone off and remember to check it's off before you enter the venue. You can always check your voicemail, text messages or your answering service afterwards.
- 4. Keep your conversations private:** People's sense of personal space varies in each situation. Making a call in a busy pub may be okay, but talking loudly in a confined space like a lift or on a train tends to infringe on others personal space. Be aware of where you are and who you are with and what others are doing before deciding to make or accept a call. In some situations it might be better to send a text message.
- 5. Speak softly:** Mobile phones have very sensitive microphones that can pick even the softest voice, so there is no need to shout. If you are having trouble hearing the other caller, check that you have the volume on your phone set high enough.
- 6. You don't always have to answer- use your messaging service:** It's a natural reflex to answer your phone if it rings, however, if you forget to put your phone on silent or vibrate mode and it rings at an inappropriate moment, send the call to voice mail or your answering service (usually by pressing the hang-up key).

7. Talk to the one you're with: If you receive a call during a conversation, send the call to your voicemail or answering service. Your first priority should be to the person you are with. However, if you are expecting an important call let the person you're with know before the call arrives and excuse yourself before accepting the call.

8. Don't send inappropriate messages: Don't send offensive or threatening text because it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace or harass someone. Also receivers can save messages and easily identify you as the sender.

9. [Respect others' privacy](#) when using in phone cameras: In-phone cameras shouldn't be used anywhere a normal camera would be considered inappropriate, such as in change rooms or toilets. You should ask for permission before you take someone's picture.

10. Ban the ring: not the phone: Wherever conversations are normally acceptable, venues can help by asking people to turn their phone to silent or vibrate mode rather than turning it off. This approach will help with compliance, especially for people who need their phone for important calls. Venues can also assist by reminding people to set their phone to silent mode, before they enter.

REFERENCES

AISWA – Mobile Phone, Email and Internet Usage Guidelines
Available: <https://www.ais.wa.edu.au>