ASCOT VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL
MOBILE COMMUNICATION DEVICES
Passed by School Council 19th September 2011

Mobile communication devices (MCD) are important modern day communication tools. Many MCD’s now include cameras (both video and still), sound recording capabilities, music players and can even track where you are. The ‘always on’ nature of these devices means that risks, such as cyber bullying, accessing inappropriate content and being distracted from learning, are always present. They can easily be improperly used, lost or damaged and must therefore be effectively managed. Ascot Vale PS wishes to utilise the benefits of these MCD’s, including mobile phones whilst managing the problems they can potentially cause. Any member of the school community misusing a MCD, whilst on school property or engaged in school activities, will be brought to the attention of the Principal. Please also refer to the:
  o AVPS Cyber Bullying policy (3/2010)
  o ICT Student Acceptable Use policy (2010/11)
  o DEECD Acceptable Use Policy for Information, Communications and Technology systems (2006)

Guidelines
Staff

• Teachers in charge of all excursions and trips involving students must ensure a mobile phone accompany each trip
• A school mobile phone is available, from the principal if needed
• Mobile phones are not to be used for private use during teaching hours, with the exception of an emergency, or when needed on an excursion or school camp
• Students are not to use staff phones or MCD’s without the direct permission of the staff member in charge
• Staff must comply with the ICT acceptable use policy when using the internet and email facilities that many MCD’s have
• Staff will have access to professional learning for staff relating to all forms of cyber bullying
• Each classroom teacher will clarify with students at the start of each year the school policy on cyber-bullying and ensure that all Internet Usage forms are explained and signed by students and parents

Parents

• Parents assisting with school programs and activities are required to put their phones on silent, including at school assemblies
• Parents assisting with school programs, including excursions will not let students use their mobile phone
• Parents are not to take photos of students unless consent is given by the staff member in charge
• Parents are encouraged to be involved with their child’s use of new technologies by:
  o Finding out what the MCD can access and any other services it can provide
  o Talking to their child about their own experiences using MCD’s, the good and the bad
Students

- Student MCD’s must not be used during class time or other activities (such as excursions, camps) unless permission is given by the teacher in charge (i.e. it must not interfere with learning) This includes mp3 music players that most MCD’s today have
- Any MCD’s with mobile phones must be turned off upon arriving at school and must remain off during school hours
- The school will not be responsible for incoming or outgoing calls or messages, or lost or damaged mobile devices The DEECD does not hold insurance for personal property brought to schools and it will generally not pay for any loss or damage to such property. Students are discouraged from bringing any unnecessary or particularly valuable items to school.
- Students will not take any MCD that has mobile phone capabilities outside during recess or lunchtime
- Student will comply with the ICT students acceptable use policy when using the internet, email and taking photos whether they are using school technologies or personal MCD’s (with teacher permission)
- All students will be made aware, through classroom programs and curriculum, about the seriousness of cyber bullying, its impact on those being bullied and how this behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Consequences for inappropriate use will be enforced, depending on the seriousness of the breach and any repeat behaviours. Parents/ Carers may be contacted if a students misuse any MCD as stated above. Students may loose their rights to bring any MCD to school.

Safety and Risk Management**
“Research is currently being undertaken concerning the level of electromagnetic fields to which the brain is being exposed when using mobile telephones. Electromagnetic fields are invisible lines of force that surround all electrical devises and wiring. Evidence that exposure to electromagnetic fields from the antennas of mobile telephones may increase the risk of leukaemia, brain cancer and loss of memory is inconclusive. Further studies are needed to draw a more complete picture of possible health risks. Nevertheless, it has been established that mobile telephones can have an effect on people using hearing aids, people who have cochlear implants and those with cardiac pacemakers.
Any person with a cardiac pacemaker should consult their doctor about the possibility of interference from external electromagnetic fields. When an incoming call is received, the mobile telephone switches automatically to an activated mode. It is in this mode that digital mobile telephones may interfere with pacemaker signals. As a precaution such persons should not carry the mobile telephone in the breast pocket of their shirt or jacket.” ** taken from DEECD mobile phones- safety and risk management http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/schadmin/environment/4-4.pdf

References:
How to be phone smart (and stay safe) ACMA – phone 1800 880 176

Evaluation:
This policy was last ratified by School Council September 19 2011.
This policy will be reviewed with staff, students, parents and community in September 2014.