



Personal Electronic Device Policy - Students

Context

St Patrick's College is a Catholic day and boarding school for boys in the Edmund Rice tradition, established in 1893. St Patrick's College is committed to providing a caring, supportive, and safe environment where every student has a place, a voice and their story is known. Edmund Rice Education Australia is committed to providing safe and supportive environments where all children and young people entrusted to our care are affirmed in their dignity and worth as a person.

Background

Edmund Rice Education Australia – Victorian Schools Limited (EREA-VSL), as St Patrick's College's governing authority, sets the policy framework for all EREA-VSL schools. These policies have been contextualised for St Patrick's College's particular school environment so that our policies reflect the needs of our students*.

*Student includes any person enrolled in the College, either as a day pupil or as a boarder.

Purpose

This policy sets clear expectations for the responsible management and use of personal electronic devices by students during school hours. It aims to promote a focused, respectful, and distraction-free learning environment.

Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled at St Patrick's College and includes but not limited to:

- Mobile phones
- Smartwatches
- Tablets and iPads
- Personal laptops
- Portable gaming devices
- Personal audio/visual equipment (e.g. headphones, Bluetooth speakers)

School Hours Definition

School hours are defined as the period between first bell (before Homeroom) and the final bell of the school day, including recess and lunch.

Policy Statement

- All personal electronic devices must be switched off and securely stored in student lockers during school hours.
- Devices must not be carried on the student's person, including in pockets or bags, during the school day.
- Students may access their personal devices only after the final bell, unless express permission is granted by a teacher for an approved educational activity.

- Smartwatches with messaging or communication functions are subject to the same restrictions as mobile phones.

Exceptions

Use of personal electronic devices during school hours may be permitted only under the following conditions:

- When explicitly approved by a staff member for a curriculum-based activity.
- When a student has a documented medical or accessibility need, approved through the Enhanced Learning Team.

Consequences of Breach

First or Second Offense

- Electronic device will be confiscated, placed in an envelope which will be labelled with student's name and home room and handed into Student Services for collection at the end of the day (after 3:25pm).
 - The breach will be recorded in SIMON in student incidents.
 - Lunch detention to be issued.

Third Offense

- After 3 known infractions of this policy, electronic device will be confiscated, placed in an envelope which will be labelled with student's name and home room and handed into Student Services.
 - Communication with parents/guardian to be made regarding the collection of the device.
 - After-School Detention will be issued.
 - The breach will be recorded in SIMON in student incidents.

Continued Offenses

- Same guidelines as third offense, however discretion will be used to issue a Saturday detention if offenses continue.

Responsibility and Liability

- Students bring personal devices to school at their own risk.
- The College takes no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged personal devices.
- Students are encouraged to clearly label devices and ensure lockers are always kept secure.

Acknowledgement

Students are required to read and sign the Personal Electronic Device policy at the start of each school year, or upon commencement if starting at the College during the year.

Status of Policy

Policy owner	St Patrick's College - Ballarat
Approving authority	Principal
Approval date	16 July 2025
Risk rating	HIGH
Date of next review	July 2026
Publication details	School website

