

Years 7-12 Screen-Free Week

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are excited to announce our upcoming '**Screen-Free Week**', which will take place from **19th to 25th February**, spanning Weeks 4 and 5 of Term 1. This initiative aims to foster a healthier and more engaging learning environment for our students. During this week, students will not be using laptops or devices across all classes. All work will be completed with pen, paper or via other non-digital mediums. Below are the key details and guidelines for the week:

Key Details of Screen-Free Week

- **Dates:** 19th to 25th February
- **Duration:** Week 4 (Thursday and Friday) and Week 5 (Monday to Wednesday) of Term 1

This initiative will also continue in Terms 2, 3 and 4 in Weeks 2 and 3. See dates below:

- **Term 2:** 30th April to 1 May (Thursday and Friday) and 4th to 6th May (Monday to Wednesday)
- **Term 3:** 30th to 31st July (Thursday and Friday) and 3rd to 5th August (Monday to Wednesday)
- **Term 4:** 22nd to 23rd October (Thursday and Friday) and 26th to 28th October (Monday to Wednesday)

Reasoning, Research and Goals

The primary goal of Screen-Free Week is to enhance the health and learning outcomes for our students. Research indicates that reducing screen time can significantly improve concentration, reduce stress, and promote better sleep patterns. According to a study by the American Academy of Pediatrics, limiting screen time can lead to improved academic performance and social interactions. By encouraging students to engage more with their peers and teachers, we aim to create a more dynamic and interactive learning environment.

Current Australian research also supports these findings. A 2019 study by the University of Southern Queensland highlights that excessive screen time is linked to negative health outcomes, such as increased risk of depression and poor sleep quality. Additionally, the Growing Up Digital Australia study found that excessive screen time has a profound impact on students, making them more distracted and less ready to learn. By reducing screen time, we aim to mitigate these negative effects, break unhealthy habits and support students' overall wellbeing and academic performance.

What Students Need to Bring

During Screen-Free Week, students are required to bring the following items to school:

- Writing material for each subject (e.g. exercise books, textbooks, etc...)
- Pens, pencils, an eraser and ruler
- Other relevant equipment for each subject (e.g. Mathematics, Technology, PDHPE)
- A reading book - fiction or non-fiction on their person for every lesson during this week

Home Learning and Timetables

- Home Learning will be issued and run as normal. Students may use laptops for their work at home.
- Students should aim to print their timetables in advance, or copy them into their diaries, to ensure they are prepared for each day.
- Room changes will be displayed on the screens around the college each day.

Email Etiquette

Students are allowed to access their emails before and after school if required. This ensures that they can stay updated with any important communications without disrupting the Screen-Free environment during school hours. Staff will also focus on limiting email communication with students during this time and formats such as the video screens and CCC time will be used to deliver important information.

Parent Communications

As normal and inline with our Mobile Phone Policy, all parent communications intended for students should come through Reception. Messages can be delivered on a parent's behalf to ensure smooth and efficient communication.

Evaluation and Future Applications

We will continue to evaluate the impact of our Screen-Free Week both during and after the event. This evaluation will help us understand the benefits and challenges of reducing screen time and inform future iterations of Screen-Free initiatives within the college.

We appreciate your support in making this Screen-Free Week a success. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the college.



Everybody Has a Book Campaign

Mrs Mary Ryan, Literacy Coordinator will be sending out communication regarding the 'Everybody Has a Book' Campaign which she will be launching in Term 1. All students will be required to take a reading book, fiction or non-fiction, to every lesson during the Screen-Free Week. Students can bring a book from home or borrow one from the College Library.

Sincerely,

Ms Rebecca Gair
Director of Student Wellbeing

Ms Martina Cooper
Director of Curriculum