

PRIMARY STUDENT USE OF MOBILE PHONES AND PERSONAL DEVICES POLICY 2021

Purpose

This policy provides direction to students, staff and families about managing mobile phones and other digital devices that students choose to bring to school. Digital devices include, but are not limited to, smartwatches, tablets or laptops that are not part of a separate Bring Your Own Device arrangement. This policy applies while students are at school, or attending an authorised school activity such as an excursion, during school hours.

Additional school activities would include camps, sporting competitions both within and beyond school hours, whole school events and performances both on and off school grounds.

Mobile phone use for primary school students

The department's position is that primary aged students cannot use their mobile phones and personal devices at school during school hours. The department and the school recognise that there are legitimate reasons for students to bring a mobile phone or personal device to school. This may include:

- to ensure their safety while travelling
- so that parents can contact them outside of school hours.

During the school day, students are not permitted to access or use their mobile phones or other personal devices. Students must switch off their devices before storing them at the beginning of the school day. They will not be able to access their device until they are off school grounds at the end of the school day or at the conclusion of the event.

Storage of personal devices

On entry to the class area, student's mobile phones/personal devices will be given to the class teacher and placed in a locked storage location within the learning area.

If the student does not comply

- Any student found not complying with this policy will have their mobile phone confiscated IMMEDIATELY. The phone/device will remain in a locked facility at the school office until the parent is able to collect it. Collection will only be available Monday - Friday during school office hours of 8.30am - 4pm.
- Repeated misuse or non-compliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action, which includes but is not limited to Internal and External Suspension and Exclusion.

Roles and responsibilities

Principal

- This policy will be clearly communicated and a copy provided to all students, staff, and families as part of the enrolment procedure. It will be communicated via the school website and will be distributed to families at the beginning of each school year.
- Governing Council will review this policy in Term 2 of each year.
- Secure storage is provided for student personal devices that are handed in to school staff
- Processes are in place for monitoring internet and school network use by all members of the school community.
- Enforce the policy and responses to instances of non-compliance.

Report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legislative requirements.

Consider requests for exemptions from the policy from parents on a case-by-case basis. Approved exemptions will be documented and relevant staff informed about students' exemptions.

Exemptions will be considered under strict criteria when a recognised health need indicates that a device/phone is required to monitor a health condition and is documented as part of a formal Health Care Plan.

Model appropriate use of mobile phones and support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible and respectful use of mobile phones to their children.

School staff

Deliver learning opportunities and maintain a safe and productive learning environment. Take steps to minimise distractions from the non-educational use of personal devices in the learning environment at times when a student in line with an approved exemption or in circumstances is using a device where students' devices are stored in the classroom.

Respond to instances of non-compliance in line with the school's policy.

Report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legislative requirements.

Make sure that any student personal devices handed in for their care are stored in a secure location and are returned to the student (or their parent as per non-compliance with policy).

Model appropriate use of mobile phones and support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible and respectful use of mobile phones to their children.

Students

Comply with the requirements of the school's policy, follow all reasonable directions from the Principal and school staff.

If permitted to use a mobile phone or personal device in line with an exemption under this policy, do so in a safe, responsible and respectful way and support peers to do the same.

Communicate respectfully with others and do not use a mobile phone or other personal device to bully, harass or threaten another person.

Respect others' rights to privacy and do not take photos, film or audio records of other people without their knowledge or permission.

The use of the phone/personal device is to enable the purpose of the exemption only. All other use will be considered non-compliance with this policy.

Parents

Support the implementation of the school's policy, including the consequences for non-compliance with the policy.

Use the school's formal communication channels in all instances to communicate with the school (including where a student requires early collection from school).

Encourage their child to always report to a school staff member if they become unwell or experience an issue at school.

Recognise the important role they play in supporting their child to use their mobile phone (or other personal device) in line with this policy and in a safe, responsible and respectful way outside of the school.

Communication and review

- As the formal parent body, the Governing Council is responsible for endorsing this policy.
- Governing Council Members have developed this policy statement to ensure it aligns and reflects the expectations of the Department for Education.
- Governing Council have provided the draft policy to the broader school community for comment and feedback. The Governing Council members will consider feedback prior to finalising and endorsing the policy.
- Governing Council will engage in consultation annually when the policy is reviewed in Term 2. When it is time to review the policy, Governing Council will ensure community members are aware of the review and the policy requirements
- The school's policy can be accessed as part of the enrolment process and via the school website.
- The policy will be distributed to families each year.

Supporting information

It is recommended that this policy be read in conjunction with the school ICT user agreement.

