**Student Use of Mobile Phones and Personal Devices Policy**

**Scope**

This school policy is implemented in line with the Department for Education’s [Student use of mobile phones and personal devices policy](https://www.education.sa.gov.au/doc/student-use-mobile-phones-and-personal-devices-policy), which applies to all government schools. This document provides direction to students, staff, and families about managing personal devices that students choose to bring to school.

For the purposes of this policy, personal devices include mobile phones, smart watches and other digital devices that are capable of sending or receiving messages or calls and/or able to connect to the internet, and personal laptops or iPads that are not owned by the school and have not been brought to school by the student under a separate Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) agreement.

**Personal devices at school**

Students are permitted to bring personal devices to school:

* as a measure to ensure their safety while travelling to and from school
* so that parents can contact them outside of school hours
* to be used during school hours in line with an exemption that has been approved by the school under this policy.

While students are at school, or attending school activities, they must comply with any reasonable directions given by school staff in line with this policy regarding their personal devices.

The Department for Education’s policy requires all students at all department schools to keep personal devices ‘off and away’ between the start and end of each school day, and while they are attending school activities off-site, such as camps and excursions.

Students will not be able to access their personal devices at any time during school hours, unless they have received an approved exemption from the school to use the device for a specific, agreed reason. This means both physical access and remote access (e.g. connecting with the personal device via hotspot or using paired headphones).

**Storage of personal devices at school**

Students will turn their devices off or place them in flight mode before putting them away. This includes taking off and storing any wearable technology that fits the definition of this policy, such as smartwatches.

Students must sign their device in at the Front Office, where it will be kept secure by the front office admin staff and pick it up at the end of the day.

**Responses to Non-Compliance**

Where students use a personal device at school without an approved exemption, or use it inappropriately, a response will be provided in line with the school’s Behaviour Policy.

Students caught with a personal electronic device during school time or who are unwilling to comply with the above request will be subject to the school’s Behaviour Policy. For example, misuse of personal devices may result in disciplinary action which includes but is not limited to:

* In the first instance, students will be verbally reminded to take their personal devices to the office and be handed to the front office staff for secure storage.
* Where a student repeatedly and intentionally breaches the requirements of this policy, or refuses to follow a staff member’s direction to hand over a personal device that has been used inappropriately, a member of the school leadership team will contact home.
* Where a student’s misuse of personal devices is serious, it may be necessary for the school to consider responses in line with the Department’s Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion of students procedure, or to contact South Australia Police if the behaviour is suspected to be illegal.

**Exemptions**

Exceptional Circumstances

Individual students may have extenuating reasons for needing access to their personal device during school hours, such as where:

* the device is used to monitor or help manage a health condition
* the device is a negotiated adjustment to a learning program for a student with disability or learning difficulties
* the device is used for translation by a student with English as an additional language.

Please contact the school if you need to request an exemption due to exceptional circumstances. These requests will be considered by the principal (or delegate) on a case-by-case basis. If approved, the exemption will be recorded in the student’s file or health care/learning plan as appropriate.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Principal

Make sure:

* the school’s policy has been endorsed or ratified by Governing Council and is clearly communicated and accessible to all students, staff, and families
* there is a process for regular review of the school’s local policy
* 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
* consider requests for exemptions from the policy from parents or independent students due to exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis. Make sure that approved exemptions in this category are documented and that relevant staff, including temporary relief teachers, are informed about students with an exemption
* model appropriate use of mobile phones and support school staff to do the same. Support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible, and respectful use of mobile phones to their children
* report and respond to incidents of inappropriate or illegal use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legal requirements.

School Staff

* 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 legal requirements
* ensure students who are given permission to access their personal device use it appropriately and only for the specified purpose, and store their personal devices away after the exempted activity has concluded
* make sure that any student’s personal devices handed in for their care are stored in a secure location and are returned to the student (or their parent) by the end of the same school day
* 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. When students are in their care, use mobile phones for work-related/emergency purposes only.

Students

* comply with the requirements of this policy and follow all reasonable directions from the principal and school staff
* switch all personal devices off, or into flight mode, on arrival at school each day and store it away as specified in this policy
* 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.

Parents

* support the school’s implementation of this policy, including the consequences for non-compliance
* encourage their child not to bring a personal device to school unless necessary.
* understand that the department does not provide insurance for accidental loss or damage to personal property that is brought onto school grounds (however, claims may be met under the department’s public liability insurance where the loss or damage can be attributed to a negligent act or omission on the part of the school – the school will contact the department for advice if this may be the case)
* recognise the important role they play in supporting their child to use their mobile phone (or other personal device) in a safe, responsible, and respectful way.

**Questions, Concerns and Further Information**

This policy has been implemented by the school in line with the Department for Education’s ‘Student use of mobile phones and personal devices policy’. You can find more information about this policy, and links to further resources for parents about personal devices and online safety, on the department’s website: [Mobile phones and personal devices at school (education.sa.gov.au)](https://www.education.sa.gov.au/parents-and-families/safety-and-wellbeing/bullying-and-cyberbullying/using-mobile-phones-and-personal-devices-school).

Endorsed by Governing Council Date: Sept 2024

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