**MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE**

**The text included in this policy should be amended to reflect your school community.**  Please ensure that you insert information relevant to your school where prompted in yellow, and amend references to “Example School” so that they are replaced with your school name. You are encouraged to amend the font and text styles used in this template to reflect your school style/formatting, and include your school logo where possible.

**Text highlighted in green is for instructional purposes only and should be removed prior to finalising this policy document**

**Purpose**

To explain to our school community the Department’s and Example School’s policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones [and other personal mobile devices] during school hours. [NOTE: schools may want to expand the scope of this policy to include other personal mobile devices. The Minister’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx) applies only to mobile phones but schools may decide whether to expand the scope to include other personal mobile devices such as smartwatches, etc. If you wish to expand the scope, you may consider including the additional words ‘and other personal mobile devices’ where needed]

**Scope**

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Example School and,
2. Students’ personal mobile phones [and other personal mobile devices] [NOTE: see more detailed explanation in green section above in relation to expanding the scope of this policy to include other mobile devices] brought onto school premises during school hours, including recess and lunchtime.

**Definitions**

**A mobile phone** is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network. [NOTE: This wording should be tailored to the needs of your school. For example, if you only want this policy to cover mobile phones and wearable devices e.g. smartwatches, you could add the following the wording to the definition: “For the purpose of this policy, “mobile phone” refers to mobile phones and any device that may connect to or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone such as smart watches.”]

**Policy**

[This section of the policy should be amended to reflect the rules that you intend to apply at your school in relation to mobile phones, for example, where students should store their mobile phone and when they are permitted to access it. Note that the text included below in yellow can be tailored to suit your school community].

Example School understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

At Example School:

* Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours
* Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see below for further information)
* When emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school’s office.

**Personal mobile phone use**

In accordance with the Department’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Example School during school hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted.

Where a student has been granted an exception, the student must use their mobile phone for the purpose for which the exception was granted, and in a safe, ethical and responsible manner.

**Secure storage**

Mobile phones owned by students at Example school are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner’s (student’s or parent/carer’s) risk. Students are encouraged not to bring a mobile phone to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Please note that Example School does not have accident insurance for accidental property damage or theft. Students and their parents/carers are encouraged to obtain appropriate insurance for valuable items. Refer to the [Example School’s Personal Property Policy AND/OR the Department’s [Personal Goods](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/personalgoods.aspx) policy.] [If your school wants a local Personal Property Policy that is consistent with the Department’s policy, there is a template available on the [School Policy Templates Portal](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/cp/SitePages/SchoolPoliciesDetail.aspx?CId=61)].

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Example school will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Example school students are required to store their phones [insert appropriate wording here to reflect your school’s arrangement for mobile phone storage. For example, either in their lockers or handed into the school administration office to be placed in a lockable cupboard etc].

**Enforcement**

[This section of the policy should be amended to reflect the rules your school intends to apply in the case where students fail to comply with the policy. An enforcement option must comply with the Department’s [Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/property.aspx) policy relating to ‘other items’ which states that staff “should instruct the student to hand over the item(s) and if the student refuses to hand over the items, implement the relevant disciplinary provision within the student code of conduct.”]

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Example school may be issued with consequences consistent with our school’s existing student engagement polices [insert the name of the relevant policy/policies at your school *e.g. Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and/or *Code of Conduct* or *Bullying* policies.]

At Example School inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted, and particularly use of a mobile phone:

* in any way that disrupts the learning of others
* to send inappropriate, harassing or threatening messages or phone calls
* to engage in inappropriate social media use including cyber bullying
* to capture video or images of people, including students, teachers and members of the school community without their permission
* to capture video or images in the school toilets, changing rooms, swimming pools and gyms
* during exams and assessments

**Exceptions**

Exceptions to the policy:

* may be applied during school hours if certain conditions are met, specifically,
  + Health and wellbeing-related exceptions; and
  + Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite.
* can be granted by the principal, or by the teacher for that class, in accordance with the Department’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx).

The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx) are:

[Note: The documentation types listed below have been highlighted in yellow as these are suggestions only. Schools can amend those highlighted words if these are not the documents that they wish to use locally to record this type of information.

Note: In practice, schools may choose never to allow the use of mobile phones for specific learning activities for the whole class as listed in the first exception below.

Note: Some examples of health and wellbeing related exceptions may include: a student with diabetes may use their mobile phone to monitor their blood sugar; a young carer providing care to a parent with health issue may need to use their mobile phone to discuss health issues with medical professionals and the person they are caring for, during the school day].

***1. Learning-related exceptions***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Specific exception | Documentation |
| For specific learning activities (class-based exception) | Unit of work, learning sequence |
| For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty | Individual Learning Plan, Individual Education Plan |

***2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Specific exception | Documentation |
| Students with a health condition | Student Health Support Plan |
| Students who are Young Carers | A localised student record |

***3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Specific exception | Documentation |
| Travelling to and from excursions | Risk assessment planning documentation |
| Students on excursions and camps | Risk assessment planning documentation |
| When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission | Risk assessment planning documentation |
| Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel | Risk assessment planning documentation |

Where an exception is granted, the student can only use the mobile phone for the purpose for which it was granted.

**Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities**

[This section of the policy should be amended to reflect the decision that you intend to apply at your school for camps, excursions. Note that the text included below in yellow is a sample only and should be tailored to your school community].

[Example School will provide students and their parents and carers with information about items that can or cannot be brought to camps, excursions, special activities and events, including personal mobile phones.]

**Exclusions**

[Delete the circumstances or programs that are relevant to your school. For example, if your school does not run an Out-of-School-Hours Care program, then you can delete this dot point.]

This policy does not apply to

* Out-of-School-Hours Care (OSHC)
* Out-of-school-hours events
* Travelling to and from school
* Wearable devices
* iPads and all other personal devices
* Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience
* Students who are undertaking VET

**Related policies and resources**

* [Insert links to your school’s relevant policies e.g. *Student Wellbeing and Engagement, Code of Conduct, Personal Property, Bullying etc.*]
* [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx)
* [the below are optional references to Department policy ]
* [Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/property.aspx)
* [Personal Goods](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/personalgoods.aspx) – Department policy

**Review period**

This policy was last updated on [insert 2019] and is scheduled for review on [month/2022].