

MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE POLICY



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Saltwater P-9 College on 03 8366 7700 or saltwater.p9.co@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department of Education's and Saltwater College's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices, such as smartwatches, during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Saltwater College, and
 2. Students' personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices, such as smartwatches, brought onto school premises during school hours, including recess and lunchtime.
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DEFINITIONS

A mobile phone is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network. 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 smartwatches.

POLICY

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

At Saltwater College:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours *including recess and lunch breaks*.
- *Students must not use mobile phones while onsite, including during class time, assemblies, or any other structured learning activity unless an approved exception applies.*
- 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 issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must *not* be used at Saltwater College 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 Saltwater College are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner's (student's or parent/carer's) risk. *The school does not take responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged devices.*
 - Students are encouraged *not* to bring a mobile phone to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so.
 - Saltwater College *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.
 - Students are expected to hand over their phones to their teachers, who will store their phones in a *securely locked location*.
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Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Saltwater College *will* be issued with consequences consistent with our school's student engagement policies, e.g., *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and/or *Code of Conduct* policies.

At Saltwater College, inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Any use that disrupts the learning of others.
 - Sending inappropriate, harassing, or threatening messages or phone calls.
 - Engaging in inappropriate social media use, including cyberbullying.
 - Capturing video or images of people, including students, teachers, and members of the school community, without their permission.
 - Capturing video or images in school toilets, changing rooms, swimming pools, and gyms.
 - Using mobile phones during exams and assessments.
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Exceptions

Exceptions to the policy:

- May be applied during school hours if certain conditions are met, specifically:
 - *Health and wellbeing-related exceptions.*
 - *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.

The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department's *Mobile Phones Policy* are:

1. Learning-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
For specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Unit of work, learning sequence
For students who require a reasonable adjustment to a learning program due to disability or learning difficulty	Individual Learning Plan, Individual Education Plan

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition (e.g., a student with diabetes monitoring blood sugar)	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 (e.g., if travelling via public transport)	Risk assessment planning documentation (excursion proforma)
When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students with dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel	Risk assessment planning documentation

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

Camps, excursions, and extracurricular activities

Saltwater College will provide students, 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

This policy does not apply to:

- Out-of-School-Hours Care (OSHC).
- Out-of-school-hours events.
- Travelling to and from school.
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities (e.g., work experience).
- Students undertaking VET programs.

Policy Review and Approval

Policy last reviewed	May 2025
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2028