

Student use of mobile phones and personal devices at Woodville Gardens School

Scope

This school policy is implemented in line with the Department for Education's [Student use of 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.

Rationale

With the widespread and increasing ownership of mobile phones and other devices among students it is critical that schools, in partnership with families, provide clear guidance for students to become informed, safe, respectful, and responsible digital citizens.

It is the Department for Education's position that access to personal devices during school hours must be managed so that students can be fully present in their learning and in their interactions with their teachers and peers.

The aim of this policy is to help promote:

- safe environments with reduced negative impacts of inappropriate use of devices at school, such as cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, and critical incidents that involve mobile phones
- classroom environments where teachers can teach, and students can learn, free from distractions caused by personal use of devices
- use of breaks as quality time away from screens, encouraging physical activity and play and meaningful face-to-face connections with peers.

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 are required to hand in their personal devices to teaching staff upon arrival at school each day, to be securely stored. Students will be able to collect their device from teachers at the end of the school day, or when being signed out early by a parent.

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 support policy.
- Where a phone or device has been confiscated, the phone will be held by a member of the senior leadership team eg. Principal or Heads of School in The Administration building.
- Families or carers will be contacted by Senior Leaders and phones will be returned to a parent or carer. • The student will be asked to sign an agreement that they will adhere to the schools mobile phone policy if they wish to continue to bring their phone or device to school.
- If a child refuses to surrender their phone, a parent /carer will be called immediately and asked to retrieve the phone.
- The student will be supported to re-engage using safe and respectful behaviours through the schools behaviour code. Consequence for not following the policy will be in line with: ongoing and persistent refusal to follow the school's behaviour code. These consequences range from Time out through to Suspension for ongoing persistent behaviours.
- Students will be asked to work in a supervised space to ensure that the rights of staff and students are respected until their phone or device has been handed to a parent or carer. 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
- the student has extenuating personal circumstances that require them to have more ready access to their personal device, such as being a parent themselves or a primary carer to a younger sibling or unwell family member.

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 will make sure:

- This policy is clearly communicated and accessible to all students, staff, and families
- There is a process for regular review of the policy
- Secure storage is provided for student personal devices that are handed in to school staff and
- 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.
- Make sure that approved exemptions are documented and that relevant staff are informed about students' exemptions.
- 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 will:

- 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 device is being used by a student in line with an approved exemption or in circumstances 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).
- 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 will:

- Comply with the requirements of the school's policy and 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.

Parents will:

- 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 in the first instance 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 a safe, responsible and respectful way.

Supporting information

- WGS, B-6 School behaviour code,
- Bully busting program
- Student ICT user agreements.

Communication and review

Leadership, staff and School Ambassadors have contributed to the local context of the policy.

- The policy is ratified by Governing Council and then published as part of the School newsletter and website.
- The schools policy is made available on enrolment.
- The policy will be reviewed annually by students in Years 3-6, and every three years by Governing Council.

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 \(education.sa.gov.au\)](http://education.sa.gov.au).

If you have any questions or concerns about the department's policy, you can contact the department at:

Email: education.customers@sa.gov.au or submit an [online feedback form](#)

Phone: Free call: 1800 088 158

Please contact the school directly to discuss the possibility of an exemption if your child has exceptional circumstances as outlined in this policy.