



# Primary student use of mobile phones and personal devices

## Purpose

This policy provides direction to students, staff and families about managing mobile phones and other personal devices that students choose to bring to school. Personal 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 or camp.

At Athelstone School teachers and students use a wide range of devices including Chromebooks, iPads, laptops, computers, smart phones, cameras and interactive panels on a regular basis to support student learning. Our aim is to provide this technology in balance with optimal amounts of outdoor learning opportunities. However, some technologies, for example personal mobile phones and devices such as smart watches are problematic in a school setting. Mobile phones and personal devices can be a distraction and present safety and privacy concerns. In supporting the Department's position and developing local processes we aim to minimise the negative impacts caused by personal devices brought to school from home.

## 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. These may include:

- to ensure safety while travelling to and from school
- so that parents can contact them outside of school hours
- monitoring of particular health conditions (e.g. blood glucose monitoring)

During the school day students are not permitted to access or use their mobile phones or other personal devices while on school grounds or participating in or attending school activities. Students must switch off or mute their devices and hand them to their class teacher at 8.50 am for secure storage during the day. Student's devices will be returned at 3.10 pm, however devices are expected to remain in school bags until after they have exited school grounds.

Exemptions from the policy are considered on a case-by-case basis (e.g. using a device for blood glucose monitoring, an agreed learning adjustment in their One Plan) and approved by the principal.

All students bringing a mobile phone or personal device to school are required to have a signed consent form. All devices/device cases are to be labelled clearly with the student's name.

## Storage of personal devices

At Athelstone School

- Mobile phones and personal devices brought to school by students are to be handed to the class teacher upon entry to class each day. Devices will be stored securely, in the classroom. Students may collect devices from their teacher at the end of the school day.

### If the student does not comply

- If a student is observed or reported as using a mobile telephone or personal device during school hours, on school grounds or on excursion/camp, the student will be asked to report to the front office or teacher in charge, and the device will be safely and securely stored away to be collected at the end of the day/activity.
- Persistent non-compliance with the policy will require further discussion involving parents/caregivers and additional education regarding school policies, expectations and any further consequences to be applied.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Principal

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
- 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

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**

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**

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.

Contact the school principal (8337 3300) and discuss if there are any special circumstances around their child's requirement to use a mobile phone or personal device during school hours. All requests will be assessed on merit by the principal, leadership team and class teacher.

## **Communication and review**

- Families and students will be provided with this information at the beginning of each year by the class teacher and reminders will be provided during the year through the school newsletter. This information will also be included in parent information packs for new students (R-6) and included on the school website.
- The Athelstone School leadership team will review this policy in consultation with student leader executives, Governing Council and the wider school community on a two year cycle or as the result of changes directed by the Department for Education.

## **Supporting information**

For more information on our school policies please visit our website

- [Publications - Athelstone School](#)

Review: Term 2, 2023