



## **Use of Mobile Phones and Personal Devices Policy** ***formerly Personal Digital Device Policy***

### **Purpose**

This policy provides direction to students, staff and families about managing mobile phones and other digital devices that students choose to bring to school. Digital 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.

Auburn Primary School acknowledges that digital devices serve a purpose in both personal and professional contexts, and have a place in the lives of everyone in our community; however, also acknowledging that their use can present a serious risk to student safety, wellbeing and learning. These risks are clearly defined under the Department for Education's Legislative Framework that includes the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum, WHS, and Duty of Care responsibilities of education staff outlined in the Education Act.

It is our view that use of these devices must preserve social and emotional wellbeing of the user and must not hinder the education process. Programs on appropriate use of digital devices, including mobile phones, and encompassing safe and appropriate use of the internet are included in the Health and Physical Education, and Digital Technologies curricula for all year levels; as well as the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum. This policy has therefore been developed to:

- ensure that student learning outcomes and achievement continue to be our primary focus
- safeguard and promote the wellbeing of all school members
- assist students to be responsible for their own cyber safety choices.

### **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. This may include:

- to ensure their safety while travelling
- so that parents can contact them outside of school hours.

During the school day, students are not permitted to access or use their mobile phones or other personal devices. Students must switch off or mute their devices before storing them at the beginning of the school day. They will not be able to access their device until the end of the school day.

### **Storage of personal devices**

When a student is required to bring a mobile phone or personal device to school, the device must be turned off or silenced (mute) and delivered to the Front Office immediately upon arrival on site. The device will be stored securely in the locked Front Office pantry until collection by the student immediately prior to leaving the school grounds. Where there are multiple devices in storage, devices will be placed in a clearly named envelope prior to being locked securely in the pantry.

## If the student does not comply

Instances of non-compliance or inappropriate use of a personal digital device in breach of the Policy will result in:

1. Confiscation of the device - placed in a clearly named envelope and locked securely in the Front Office pantry until collected. An SMS will be sent to inform a parent/caregiver who will then be permitted to collect the device from the Front Office. *The student will not be permitted to collect the device.*
2. Disciplinary action - enactment of further Student Behaviour Management (SBM) procedures in line with the school's SBM Policy, which includes (but is not limited to) reinforcement and restoration of Policy expectations through conferencing in timeout and the development and implementation of a re-entry contract.

## Roles and responsibilities

### 1. Principal

The Principal is required to:

- Ensure this Policy is clearly communicated and accessible to all students, staff, and families
- Ensure there is a process for regular review of the policy
- Ensure secure storage is provided for student personal devices that are handed in to school staff
- Ensure 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.

### 2. School staff

Teachers, SSOs, non-departmental service providers and volunteers are required to:

- Deliver learning opportunities and maintain a safe and productive learning environment. And, in doing so, 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 school's devices for student use are stored in the classroom.
  - *In the event alternative digital devices that cannot be provided by the school are required from home, staff must ensure parents/caregivers and the Principal are aware of the intended use, including a proposed timeline for use. During this period, storage of the devices while not required for the learning program will remain in the Front Office as per the Policy storage requirements. Ad hoc or any request deemed non-educational will not be approved.*
- 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.
  - *Appropriate use: Staff are expected to refrain from using personal devices, including mobile phones, in class and on yard duty. Usage is to be limited to office spaces during break times (recess and/or lunch) and/or non-instructional time (NIT). For security reasons, it is reasonable for staff to keep their mobile phone on them for use in an emergency; or stored appropriately in staff personal pigeon holes in the staffroom.*

### 3. Students

Students are required to:

- 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.

#### 4. Parents and caregivers

Parents and volunteers are required to:

- 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, and therefore early collection of a device in storage).
- 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.
- If the possession and use of a mobile phone is required for a specific issue or matter of urgency by any student, or as part of the student's One Plan or Healthcare Plan, submit a formal request to the Principal in writing. The Principal reserves the right to reject such a request.

## Communication and review

Local decisions regarding storage of students' devices and what actions will be taken if students do not comply with the policy has been made in collaboration and consultation with staff, Kids' Council, Governing Council and parent representatives serving on the Parents & Friends sub-committee of the Council. The Policy is accessible in PDF on the school's website.

Staff regularly monitor the effectiveness of the Personal Digital Device policy, and review the requirements (when necessary) as a WHS agenda item at staff meeting.

More formally, at least every three years, the Governing Council and staff will review the local decisions in consultation with students and parents/caregivers, and revise the Policy for ratification. At this time, copies of the Policy are provided to all enrolled families and the update accessible on the school's website.

**Policy ratified: June, 2021**

**Date of next policy review: June, 2024**

## Supporting information

In support of implementation of this Policy, the following local (school) policies and procedures may be consulted:

- Student Behaviour Management policy
- Behaviour Support Policy (online)
- Bullying prevention policy and plan (online; includes cyberbullying)
- ICT user agreement.

