

Auburn Primary School



Student use of mobile phones and personal devices policy

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 and applies while students are at school, or attending an authorised school activity such as an excursion, during school hours.

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

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.

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 handed in to the Front Office immediately upon arrival at school each day, to be securely stored in the locked Front Office pantry by office staff. Students will be able to collect their device at the end of the school day, or when being signed out early by a parent/caregiver. Where there are multiple devices in storage, devices will be placed in a clearly named envelope prior to being locked securely in the pantry.

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.

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

1. Verbal reminder for inappropriate use – student reminded to put their personal devices “off and away.”
2. Confiscation of the device following a second reminder or continued use – student must proceed to the Front Office and hand in their personal device to be securely stored by staff. The device will be 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. Either the parent/caregiver or student are permitted to collect the device from the Front Office at the end of the school day.
3. Escalation to disciplinary action following repeated and intentional breaches, or refusals to comply with staff directions - 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 with the Principal contacting home.

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 only

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

1. Principal

The Principal is required to:

- Ensure this Policy has been endorsed or ratified by governing council and is clearly communicated and accessible to all students, staff, and families
- Ensure there is a process for regular review of this 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.
- Consider requests for exemptions from the Policy from parents on a case-by-case basis; making sure that approved exemptions in this category are documented and that relevant staff are informed about students with an exemption.
- Model appropriate use of mobile phones and support school staff to do the same. Support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible and respectful use of mobile phones to their children.
- Report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legal requirements.

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; taking steps to minimise distractions from non-educational use of personal devices in the learning environment.
- 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 legal requirements.
- Ensure students who are given permission to access their personal device use it appropriately and only for the specified purpose, and store their personal devices away after the exempted activity has concluded.
- 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 parent) by the end of the same school day.
- 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: Use mobile phones for work-related emergency purposes only when students are under their care. 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.
- Switch all personal devices off, or into flight mode, on arrival at school each day and store it away as specified in this policy.
- 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.
- Notify a school staff member as soon as possible if feeling unwell or experiencing any other issues at school. Use the school's sign-out processes in all cases where requiring early collection from school.

4. Parents and caregivers

Parents and caregivers are required to:

- Support the school's implementation of the policy, including the consequences for non-compliance.
- Encourage their child not to bring a personal device to school unless necessary.
- Understand that the department does not provide insurance for accidental loss or damage to personal property that is brought onto school grounds (however, claims may be met under the department's public liability insurance where the loss or damage can be attributed to a negligent act or omission on the part of the school – the school will contact the department for advice if this may be the case).
- Use the school's formal communication channels in all instances to communicate with the school or make contact with their child during school hours (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.

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 and in enrolment packs for new families.

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.

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'.

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.

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](#)).

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.

Policy ratified: March, 2023

Date of next policy review: March, 2026