

Mobile Phone Policy

Introduction

Whilst the Victorian Government acknowledges that we live in a technology-rich world where mobile phones are an important communication tool, research has found that mobile phones can be disruptive in classrooms and open to misuse at school. The unregulated presence of mobile phones in classrooms can undermine students' capacity to think, learn, remember, pay attention and regulate emotion.

Purpose

To clearly define the Department of Education and Training and Whittlesea Secondary College's requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students, enrolled, visiting or otherwise at Whittlesea Secondary College.
- Students' personal mobile phones brought onto school premises during school hours, including recess and lunchtime.
- Parents and guardians wishing to contact students via mobile phone communications and technology.

Definitions

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

Policy

At Whittlesea Secondary College:

- Mobile phones must be switched off and securely stored during school hours. Students who bring mobile phones to school must store them in the locked storage boxes provided by the school in each House Office. Parents or carers are to contact their child by calling the school's office.
- Personal mobile phones must not be used during school hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted. Students who are granted an exception must use their mobile phone for the purpose for which the exception was granted, and in a safe, ethical and responsible manner.
- Mobile phones owned by students are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner's (student's or parent/carer's) risk. Students are encouraged not to bring a mobile phone to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Whittlesea Secondary 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. Refer to the Department's Personal Goods policy.

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 Whittlesea Secondary 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 Whittlesea Secondary College are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner's (student's or parent/carer's) risk. Students are encouraged not to bring a mobile phone to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Please note that Whittlesea Secondary 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. Refer to the Department's [Personal Goods policy](#).

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Whittlesea Secondary College will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Whittlesea Secondary College students are required to store their phones in locked storage boxes provided by the school in each House Office.

Implementation

Implementation of this policy will be in accordance with the Mobile Phone Procedure.

Exceptions

Exceptions to the policy:

- may be applied during school hours if certain conditions are met, specifically,
 - Health and wellbeing-related exceptions; and
 - 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 for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Education Plan

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	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	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students on excursions and camps	Risk assessment planning documentation
When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel	Risk assessment planning documentation

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

Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

Whittlesea Secondary College will provide students and their 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 events
- Travelling to and from school
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience
- Students who are undertaking external VET

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Student Engagement, Wellbeing Policy
- Digital Technologies Policy
- [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](#)
- [Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items](#)
- [Personal Goods – Department policy](#)

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on 2023 and is scheduled for review on October 2026.