

Wallaroo Mines Primary School

Mobile Phone and Digital Devices 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 or camp.

As a school we require students to leave their phones at home, however, Wallaroo Mines Primary School accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. There is also ever-increasing concern about children walking or riding their bikes to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can speak with their child quickly at any time.

The responsible use of a mobile phone or like device with unconditional access to the internet extends beyond the school environment and is applicable at all times within the general community. At the same time, these things 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 Child Protection Curriculum, WHS, and Duty of Care responsibilities of education staff outlined in the Education Act.

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 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

Student devices will be locked in the front office cupboard at the start of the school day and returned to the student or parent (as negotiated) at the end of the school day.



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Unacceptable uses:

- Unless permission is granted to the contrary, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, browse the internet, take photos or use any other application during school lessons.
- Teaching and Learning are our core business and for this reason, mobile phones should not disrupt classroom lessons by ringing or beeping.
- Should there be repeated disruptions to lessons caused by a mobile phone the student responsible may face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Principal. This should be seen as a part of the school's discipline policy and is no different to other behaviours that breach this policy.

Theft or damage:

- Students are required to mark their mobile phones clearly with their names.
- Mobile phones which are found in the school and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to front office reception. They will be kept in a secure place until the phone is collected. For this reason all phones must be clearly labelled.
- The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.
- The school accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile phones stolen while travelling to and from school.

Inappropriate conduct:

- Students with mobile phones may not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls. Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary actions at school. Parents of students affected by any bullying or harassment will also be advised to lodge a complaint with their service provider as this type of behaviour contravenes the telecommunications act.
- It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person.

Consequences:

- Student is warned, the mobile phone is confiscated and a diary sticker is given to inform the parent/carer, with the student's name recorded on a log sheet. The mobile phone is placed in a clearly named envelope and locked securely in the cupboard in the front office. Student can collect at the end of the day.
- For a second offence the student is given a detention, the mobile phone is confiscated, and a diary sticker is given to inform the parent/carer, with the student's name recorded on a log sheet. The mobile phone is placed in a clearly named envelope and locked securely in the cupboard in the front office. Student can collect at the end of the day.
- For a third offence the student is given a detention, the mobile phone is confiscated, and the parent/carer is contacted to inform them that they are required to collect the device from the front office. The mobile phone will be placed in a clearly named envelope and locked securely in the cupboard in the front office.
- If refusal to hand over the phone occurs, a note is sent home requesting phone not to return to school for remainder of term.



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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 in the front office
- 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.
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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).
- Staff are expected to refrain from using mobile phones in class and on yard duty, unless required for school operations. Usage is to be limited to office spaces. However, it is reasonable that staff carry their phones as part of the protective practice, WHS and school/department processes.
- 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 record other people without their knowledge or permission.
- Whilst on school grounds no student is permitted to use a mobile phone device, this includes before school, recess, lunch and after school whilst on school grounds.
- The phone should be turned off at the front gate and not turned on again until the child is ready to leave the school grounds at the end of the day.

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.

Communication and review

Outline:

- how consultation has been undertaken with students and the broader school community to make local decisions regarding storage of students' devices and what actions will be taken if students do not comply with the policy, and how consultation will occur when it is time to review these local decisions and ensure community members are aware of the policy requirements
- This policy has been formed through consultation with the staff and Governing Council of Wallaroo Mines Primary School and has been communicated to students and families involved. All aforementioned parties will be involved with the review process.
- This policy can be viewed through our school website and internally through policies and procedures via teams and J common.



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Supporting information

For further information see the

- school behaviour code, behaviour support policy
- school anti-bullying policy
- BYOD policy, ICT user agreements.

Review date:

To be reviewed in 2023

