



# Mobile Phone Policy

## PURPOSE

Mobile phones and devices are important modern day communication tools, essential in providing a safe and effective school environment. However, they can easily be improperly used, lost or damaged and must therefore be effectively managed.

On Wednesday 26 June 2019 the Minister for Education, the Hon James Merlino MP, announced a new schools Mobile Phone Policy which will come into effect from Term 1, 2020. The new policy will require all students at Victorian state primary and secondary schools to switch off their mobile phones and store them securely from the start of the school day until the final bell.

## OBJECTIVE

To utilise the benefits of mobile phones/devices for staff and students.

To ensure the safety of students on their way to and from school whilst managing the problems they can potentially cause.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- all staff, including casual relief staff and volunteers
- all students who bring mobile phones/watches or devices to school

## DEFINITIONS

**A mobile phone** is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network. For the purpose of this policy, **“mobile phone”** refers to mobile phones and any device that may connect to or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone such as smart watches.

## POLICY

At Ringwood Heights Primary School:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours
- Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see below for further information)
- When emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school's office.

## EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to the policy:

- may be applied during school hours if certain conditions are met, specifically,
  - Learning-related exceptions
  - Health and wellbeing-related exceptions; and
  - Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite,

- can only be granted by the principal, in accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#).

### **1. Learning-related exceptions**

For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty

### **2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions**

Students with health and wellbeing related exceptions may include: a student with diabetes may use their mobile phone to monitor their blood sugar

### **3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite**

When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission

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

## **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 Ringwood Heights Primary School 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.

### **Students:**

- once students arrive at school they must hand their phones/devices to the office staff who lock them in a secure place for the day
- if contact to home is needed during the day this will be done by the staff at school
- students can collect phones/devices at the end of the day and leave the school grounds
- devices are not to be used to take photographs of students on the school premises
- the principal may revoke a student's privilege of bringing mobile phones/devices to school if there is inappropriate use of phones/devices on school grounds

### **Staff:**

- take mobile phones on yard duty, incursions, excursions, sporting events and camps to ensure immediate contact to the emergency services, the school office and parents if necessary
- use of mobile phones/ipad is necessary to photograph/record student progress for continuous reporting
- mobile phones should not be used for personal reasons during class time

## **INSURANCE**

Students and staff are responsible for their personal mobile device. Ringwood Heights Primary School is not responsible for any loss, theft or damage of a personal mobile device.

## **CAMPS, EXCURSIONS, AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Ringwood Heights Primary School 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.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

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

## **REVIEW PERIOD**

This policy was last updated on November 2019 and is scheduled for review on November 2022.