



MOBILE PHONE POLICY – STUDENT USE

Rationale

To explain to our school community the Department's and Armstrong Creek School's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

All students at Armstrong Creek School and,
Students' personal mobile phones brought onto school premises during school hours, including recess and lunchtime.

DEFINITION

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

Armstrong Creek School understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

At Armstrong Creek School:

- students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours as directed by the Learning Community Leader.
- 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. Parents will also be notified of any emergency or issue via school staff. Students will not have access to their mobile phone to call parents/carers/family members throughout the day.

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 Armstrong Creek 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.

Secure storage

Mobile phones owned by students at Armstrong Creek School 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 Armstrong Creek School 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.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Armstrong Creek School will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Armstrong Creek School students are required to hand mobile phones to a staff member in their learning community to store securely at the start of the school day.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Armstrong Creek School may be issued with consequences consistent with our school’s existing Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy and must comply with the Department’s [Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items](#) policy relating to ‘other items’ which states that staff “should instruct the student to hand over the item(s) and if the student refuses to hand over the items, implement the relevant disciplinary provision within the student code of conduct.”

At Armstrong Creek School inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted, and particularly use of a mobile phone:

- in any way that disrupts the learning of others.
- to send inappropriate, harassing or threatening messages or phone calls.
- to engage in inappropriate social media use including cyber bullying.
- to capture video or images of people, including students, teachers and members of the school community without their permission.
- to capture video or images in the school toilets.
- during assessments.

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)	Units of work
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Learning Plan

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	Student Health Support Plan

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

Armstrong Creek 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.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-School-Hours Care (OSHC)
- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school
- Wearable devices

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy has been developed in 2019 and is scheduled for review in June 2021.