

Bellarine Secondary College Mobile Phone Policy for Students

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Bellarine Secondary College's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices such as smart watches during school hours. 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

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Bellarine Secondary College and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices such as smart watches brought onto school premises during school hours, including recess and lunchtime.

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 purposes of this policy, a "mobile phone" refers to mobile phones and all devices that could access the internet, through either cellular, wired or wireless connection.

POLICY

While Bellarine Secondary College understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school, it is the advice of the school that students should not bring a mobile phone to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so.

If required parents/carers can make contact with their student by calling the general office. Students can also use school landlines to contact parents/carers if needed.

At Bellarine Secondary College:

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

Personal mobile phone use

In accordance with the Department's Mobile Phone Policy issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Bellarine Secondary College during school hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted.

For the purpose of this policy school hours at Bellarine Secondary College are defined as 8.55am until 3.10pm.

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 Bellarine 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 Bellarine 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.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Bellarine Secondary College will provide secure storage in the form of lockers. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Bellarine Secondary College students are required to store their phones in the locker that is allocated to them. Students are responsible for placing a suitable lock on their locker.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones during school hours at Bellarine Secondary College will be required to hand their phone in at the general office. Students will place their phone in a sealable container and sign a phone storage slip. Containers containing the phones will be appropriately marked and stored in a lockable cupboard/draw. **Parents/Carer's will be required to pick mobile phones up from the office. Phones will NOT be handed back to students.** A text message and email will automatically be sent parents/carer's when their student has had a 'mobile phone infringement'.

Students who refuse to follow staff instructions to securely store their phone at the office will not be permitted to return to class until a parent meeting has been held with a member of staff.

Repeated phone infringements will prompt a meeting with the involved student, parents/carer's and staff. Disciplinary action will follow.

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 and 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
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For specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Unit of work, learning sequence and approval from the Student Learning Team (SLT) and College Council
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Learning Plan, supported by written advice from a relevant medical professional

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	Student Health Support Plan, supported by written advice from a relevant medical professional
Students who are Young Carers	Student record in the office, supported by appropriate documentation

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 as well as students travelling to VET subjects offered off campus.	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

Not all camps and excursions will require the use of personal mobile phones to minimise risk. If the organising teacher/s has documented the use of personal mobile phones in their risk assessment, it will be clearly stated on the permission form and students will be permitted to take their phones on the excursion/camp.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school
- Student lap tops
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated December 2019 and is scheduled for review in December 2022.