MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact Roger Blackwell at roger.blackwell@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Outdoor School's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Outdoor School and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices brought onto program.

DEFINITIONS

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

POLICY

Outdoor School requires that students leave their mobile phone at home

At Outdoor School:

- 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.
- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored with a Visiting Teacher or in the School's front office.

Personal mobile phone use

In accordance with the Department's Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Outdoor 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 Outdoor 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 Outdoor 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. Refer to the [Outdoor School's Personal Property Policy AND/OR the Department's Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Outdoor School will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Outdoor School students are required to store their phones either in the Visiting Teachers room or the front office.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Outdoor School may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing Student Wellbeing and Engagement and/or Code of Conduct or Bullying policies.

At Outdoor 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, changing rooms, swimming pools and gyms
- during exams and 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 — Student Use Policy.

The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department's Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy are:

1. Learning-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Learning Plan, Individual Education 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

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

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website at http://www.outdoorschool.vic.edu.au/policies/3699/
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Included in Parent and Student Handbooks
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement https://www.outdoorschool.vic.edu.au/policies/3699/
- Code of Conduct https://www.outdoorschool.vic.edu.au/policies/3699/
- Bullying https://www.outdoorschool.vic.edu.au/policies/3699/
- Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	July 2026
Consultation	Prin Exec – term 2, 2026
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	July 30