

MAY 2025

Use of Mobile Phones by Students at School Policy

'Off and away all day'

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1 Purpose

This Policy outlines the requirements of the Minister for Education relating to students' use of mobile phones during school hours in Tasmanian Government Schools.

2 Policy Statement

The Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) takes the safe and responsible use of digital technologies, student wellbeing and the development of social and emotional skills very seriously. We live in a technology rich world where mobile phones are an important tool for life and work. However, research and consultation with the Tasmanian community found that mobile phones are a distraction from learning, and impact the development of positive personal relationships at school.

From Term 2 2020, subject to the exemptions set out below, Principals **MUST** implement restrictions on the use of mobile phones during school hours by all students from Kindergarten to Year 12.

These restrictions **MUST** be formalised in a specific policy for their school using the template 'Use of Mobile Phones by Students at School Policy' which **MUST** include how this policy will be implemented.

The restrictions **MUST** comply with the following elements:

- Subject to the exemptions set out below, students **MUST** have their mobile phones switched off and stored during school hours.
- Principals **MUST** determine an appropriate storage approach, in consultation with their School Association.
- Principals **MUST** require students with 'smart watches' to set them to 'aeroplane mode'.
- Where restrictions are not adhered to by students, Principals **MUST** utilise the Student Behaviour Management Policy and Procedure.
- All communication from families with students during school hours **MUST** be through the school office.

2.1 Exemptions

Principals **MAY** determine exemptions to the restrictions in accordance with this policy and the school's local policy on use of mobile phones by students at school.

Where an exemption is granted, students can only use their mobile phone for the purposes for which the exemption was granted.

Exemptions **MAY** be granted for reasons including, but not limited to:

- For students in Years 11 and 12, in consultation with their School Association.
- For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is required because of a disability and/or learning difficulty.
- For students with health conditions.
- For students who are young carers.

- For students undertaking school activities outside school hours that are not on school campuses.
- Where students have been given direct instruction by a teacher to use their mobile phone for educational purposes (including under the Bring Your Own Technology Policy and Procedures).
- For students experiencing extenuating circumstances other than the above, where agreed by the Principal.

2.2 Exclusions

This Policy does not apply in the following circumstances:

- Out of school hours care on school campuses.
- Travelling to and from school prior to the start of the school day, and after the end of the school day.
- For students on work experience or work placement. Students **MUST** comply with workplace policies.
- For students who are undertaking vocational education and training not on a school campus. Students **MUST** comply with the TAFE, Registered Training Organisation, or workplace policies.

3 Related policies

- [Student Behaviour Management Policy](#)

4 Related procedures

- [Student Behaviour Management Procedure](#)

5 Supporting information/tools

- Model School Policy – schools **can** adapt the model policy to suit their local context if it is consistent with this policy. This model policy includes information for Principals to inform their consultation with their School Association on appropriate storage options.
- Frequently Asked Questions for Families.

6 Definitions

Appropriate storage

Is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so.

***The Department for Education, Children and Young People does not accept liability for loss or damage to private property or personal effects used or stored in buildings owned or used by the Department for Education, Children and Young People.*

Mobile phone

Is a mobile device with access to a cellular (telecommunications) system, with or without a physical connection to a network. This includes smart watches, tablets, and associated listening accessories, such as, but not limited to, headphones and earbuds.

Principal

Is the person in charge of a school or their delegate.

Responsibilities: Must and May

The word 'MUST' is to be interpreted as being mandatory.

The words 'is to' and 'are to' are to be interpreted as directory (highly recommended).

The word 'may' is to be interpreted as being discretionary or enabling as the context requires.

School Activity

Refers to school-endorsed activities for students that are held:

- at a venue which is outside of school campus or school property; or
- on school campus but outside of school hours.

School activities may include a sports or swimming carnival, an excursion, school camp, or end of year concert.

School Association

Is made up of the parents, staff and approved community members of a school. An Association exists for each Tasmanian State School, including primary schools, high schools, district schools and colleges.

School Hours

Is the official start time of the school day for students, to the official end time of the school day for students.

7 Legislation

- [Secretary's Instruction No 3 for Unacceptable Behaviour of Students and Volunteers at, and Visitors to, State Schools or School Activities](#)
- [Secretary's Instruction No 4 for Suspension, Exclusion, Expulsion or Prohibition of State School Students](#)

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