



## MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE

### PURPOSE

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

### RATIONALE

Mobile phones are an increasingly common communication tool within our day to day lives, however their use by students within a school environment can have a negative impact on themselves and other members of the school community. In particular, this policy aims to minimise students' use of phones:

- 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

For this reason, students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Little Bendigo Primary School at any time, including outside of school hours, shall be issued with consequences consistent with our school's *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* and *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Little Bendigo Primary School and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones 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 purpose of this policy "mobile phones" 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

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

At Little Bendigo 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.

### **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 Little Bendigo 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.

### **Secure storage**

Mobile phones owned by students at Little Bendigo Primary 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 Little Bendigo Primary 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 Little Bendigo Primary School's Personal Property Policy AND/OR the Department's [Personal Goods policy](#)

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Little Bendigo Primary school will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Little Bendigo Primary, school students are required to hand their mobile phones in to the Principal or Business Manager to be placed in the school safe.

### **Enforcement**

At Little Bendigo Primary School inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours**, and/or on school grounds from 9.00am until 3.30pm, unless an exception has been granted. If a student is found to have a mobile phone within these times the following will apply:

- The student will be asked to turn the phone off and hand it to the staff member
- The phone will be taken to the Front Office for safe-keeping
- The phone will be kept securely at the Front Office until it can be collected by the student or parent/carer after 3.30pm.

Whilst this policy does not currently apply to wearables, eg. Smart watches, there is an expectation that should a student wear a smart watch that notifications be switched off during school hours.

### **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**

<b>Specific exception</b>	<b>Documentation</b>
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**

<b>Specific exception</b>	<b>Documentation</b>
Students with a health condition	Student Health Support Plan
Students who are Young Carers	A localised student record

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

<b>Specific exception</b>	<b>Documentation</b>
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**

Little Bendigo 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.

### **Exclusions**

This policy does not apply to

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

## **RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Personal Property Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy

The following resources also will provide useful information:

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

## REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated in May 2021 and is scheduled for review on May 2023