

MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE –

Hawkesdale P12 College



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Hawkesdale P12 College on 03 5560 7225 or hawkesdale.p12@education.vic.gov.au.



PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the policy requirements and expectations of the DET and Hawkesdale P12 College relating to student use of mobile phones and any other personal mobile data devices during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Hawkesdale P12 College and,
2. Student 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 phone” refers to mobile phones and any other device that may connect to or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone.

POLICY

Hawkesdale P12 College understands that students may need to bring a personal mobile phone to school for a variety of reasons, although our preference as a school is that students leave their phone at home - unless there is a specific and reasonable need for their phone to be at school.

At Hawkesdale P12 College:

- 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 on all occasions.

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 Hawkesdale P12 College 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 Hawkesdale P12 College are considered valuable items and are brought to school at student and parent/carer risk. Students are encouraged not to bring a mobile phone to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Please note that Hawkesdale P12 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; please refer to the Department [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#) for further information.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Hawkesdale P12 College will provide secure storage for these items. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Hawkesdale P12 College students are required to store their phones in clearly marked year level storage cubes as they enter the Admin Area of the school every morning, and to collect their phones from the Admin Area as they leave the school. Year level storage cubes are locked in a secure cupboard in the Admin Area of the school throughout the day and can be handed to students by Admin staff during the day if they are signing out of school early, and if they have a specific exemption to use their phone at agreed times of the day.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Hawkesdale P12 College will be instructed to hand their phone in to the Principal or their representative, who will securely store the device until a parent or guardian makes an arrangement to collect the device from the Principal or their representative.

At Hawkesdale P12 College inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted; inappropriate use includes the unauthorised use of a 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

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Hawkesdale P12 College will be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement policies.

Exceptions

Exceptions to the policy:

- may be applied through negotiation with the Principal during the school day and while on camps and excursions 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 specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Planning documentation for an activity involving a specific unit of work or learning sequence
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
Students who are Young Carers	A localised student record

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 the exemption was granted. Note also that phones will still need to be stored at the administration office from the beginning of the day. An exemption means that special arrangements will be made for exempt students to access phones during the day as required.

Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

Hawkesdale P12 College 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. This will depend on the type of event and its duration. If phones are permitted, they may only be used for a specific purpose with permission of the Teacher In Charge of the camp or excursion, and through prior discussion with the Principal.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to:

- Travelling to and from school
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website (or insert other online parent/carer/student communication method)
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in school newsletter
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

RELATED DET POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- [Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy](#)
- [Weapons — Banning, Searching and Seizing Harmful Items](#)
- [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	April 2025
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	April 2028