



MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE POLICY

PURPOSE

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

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Maffra Secondary College and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices 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' includes mobile phones and any device that may connect to, or have similar functionality to a mobile phone such as a smart watch and iPads/tablets.

During School Hours from 8.55 in the morning until students are dismissed from their last class

POLICY

Maffra Secondary College understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

At Maffra Secondary College:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours
- Students who choose to bring other mobile devices to school must have all notifications turned off 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 — Student Use Policy](#) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Maffra Secondary 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 Maffra 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 Maffra 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, Maffra Secondary College will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Maffra Secondary College students are required to store their phones in their lockers with a secure combination lock. Students are expected not to disclose their combination to anyone. If, for any reason, a student believes that their combination may be known by another person, it is strongly recommended that they reset their combination to a new one as soon as possible.

Enforcement

At Maffra Secondary College, if a personal mobile phone or mobile device is seen, heard or used during the school day, the following process will be applied:

- The student will be instructed to hand over the item(s) to the staff member
- The staff member will place the device in a specifically designed envelope for mobile devices and relevant information will be completed on the envelope
- The student will initial the envelope and be provided with a 'tear off strip' from the envelope with the envelope number printed on it
- The staff member will take the envelope to the front office where it will be stored securely

First offence:

- At the end of the school day, the student will come to the front office and meet with a member of the Principal team before collecting their mobile device
- A member of the Principal team will speak with the student and go over the school and DET expectations about mobile phones/devices, then return the phone/device to the student with a warning

Second and subsequent offences:

- The student will need to organise for their parent/carer to contact the school and organise a meeting with a member of the Principal team to discuss the mobile phone policy and identify support for the student to ensure they do not use their mobile phone or device during the school day
- The device will be returned to the parent/carer at the end of the meeting.

Refusal to hand over the device:

- Staff member will contact a member of the Principal team
- Principal team will meet with student and contact home if required.



- Consequences will be implemented in line with the school's existing student engagement policy and/or the DET Ministerial Order 1125 - grounds for suspension.

Devices used to film incidents:

- If it is established that a student has used mobile phone or other device to film an incident in which another person is being harmed or at risk of being harmed (eg. a physical altercation or verbal abuse) will be suspended from school. The process above around mobile phone use will also be followed.

Smartwatches and Earbuds

- Students who bring smartwatches (eg. Apple watch) to school must ensure that notifications are switched off. Use of the watch as a phone (to send messages or make calls) will result in the same process being followed as per mobile phones.
- In the classroom, headphones may be used in permission is given; however they may not be used in conjunction with a mobile phone (connect to laptop only). The same process will be followed as per mobile phones if students use them in connection with a mobile phone.

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 specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Principal approval at least 1 month prior to learning activity Unit of work, learning sequence
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Principal approval Individual Learning Plan, Individual Education Plan

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	Principal approval



	Student Health Support Plan
Students who are Young Carers	Principal approval A localised student record

3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite

Specific exception	Documentation
Travelling to and from excursions	Principal Approval Risk assessment planning documentation
Students on excursions and camps	Principal Approval Risk assessment planning documentation
When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission	Principal Approval Risk assessment planning documentation
Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel	Principal Approval 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

Maffra Secondary 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.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience
- Students who are undertaking VET

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in school newsletter
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request



RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

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

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2024
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2028