Maffra Secondary College

More than you imagine

MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES – STUDENT USE POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy explains our requirements and expectations relating to the student use of personal electronic devices during school hours and school activities outside school hours, in accordance with:

- **the department's Mobile Phones and Personal Electronic Devices – Student Use Ministerial Policy**
- **the department's Smart Glasses and Covert Filming Devices Ministerial Policy**
- **Ministerial Order No. 1515 – Personal Electronic Devices in Victorian schools**
- **the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006.***

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. **All students at Maffra Secondary College and,**
2. **Students' mobile phones, smart glasses, wearable devices (smart watches) and personal audio devices (wireless headphones / earbuds) airpods and wireless earbuds,**

DEFINITIONS

Assistive hearing device means a device manufactured for the primary purpose of assisting a person with a hearing impairment to hear, including hearing aids, cochlear implants, external sound processors and remote microphones designed for use with hearing aids or cochlear implants.

Mobile phone means a telephone with the capacity to connect to cellular telecommunication systems.

Personal audio device means wired or wireless headphones, earphones or headsets.

School hours means the hours within which a student is expected to attend the school at which they are enrolled.

Smart glasses means a device that is designed to be worn as spectacles and has the capability to send, receive, store, record or process digital information.

Wearable device means a device that is designed to be worn on the body and that has the capability to send, receive, store, record or process digital information, including a smartwatch, but does not include an assistive hearing device, a surgically implanted medical device, or smart glasses.

During School Hours: the policy applies from the first bell of the day, until students are dismissed from their last class of the day.

POLICY

At Maffra Secondary College, the following requirements apply to students' personal electronic devices:

- **Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours**
- **Wearable devices, such as smart watches, must have notifications, cellular connections and recording functions turned off during school hours.**
- **Students who choose to bring other mobile devices to school, such as smart watches or wireless earpods, must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours.**

Smart glasses must not be worn or used on school premises or at any school organised activity or event. This includes school organised activities that occur outside school hours or offsite. If they are brought to school or to a school activity, they must be switched off and stored securely.

Other covert filming devices must not be used on school premises or at any school organised activity or event.

During school hours, Example School will provide secure storage for mobile phones and smart glasses, if they are brought to school.

Exemptions to this policy may be granted 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. Smart watches and wireless airpods must also not be used during school hours, 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 of mobile phones, smart glasses and other personal electronic devices

Personal electronic devices owned by students or their parents/carers are brought to school at the owner's risk. Students should not bring smart glasses to school unless they have been granted an exemption as a reasonable adjustment for disability. Students are encouraged not to bring mobile phones to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so.

Our 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 department's Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy.

Where students bring a mobile phone, wireless earbuds or smart watches 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 any mobile devices 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. A combination lock is provided to all students upon enrolment at Maffra Secondary College. Students are required to keep their lockers locked at all times.

Enforcement and inappropriate use of personal electronic devices

At Maffra Secondary College, if a personal mobile phone, wireless earpods, headphones, or other 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**

Please note that this process, and the process below, will also apply to smart watches being used inappropriately (where a staff member observes the watch being used to send or receive messages, take or receive calls, or other uses indicating that cellular / mobile capability is active.

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 device**
- **A member of the Principal team will speak with the student and go over the school and DET expectations about mobile phones/wireless earpods/smart watches/other 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 and other device policy and identify support for the student to ensure they do not use their mobile phone / wireless earpods / smart watch / other 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 DE 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), the student will be suspended from school. The process above around mobile phone / other device use will also be followed.**

Exemptions

Exemptions to restrictions on personal electronic devices other than smart glasses may be granted to individual students or groups of students by the principal, in accordance with tis policy, under the following three exemption categories:

- **to support student learning, for example:**
  - **specific learning activities**
  - **reasonable adjustments because of a disability and/or learning need**
- **to support student health and wellbeing, for example:**
  - **students with a health condition**
  - **students who are young carers**
- **to manage risks to students relating to participation in offsite activities, for example:**
  - **travel to and from excursions and camps**
  - **activities not on school grounds and unsupervised**
  - **during inter-school travel**

Where an exemption granted, the student can only use the device for the specific purpose outlined in the exemption.

All exemptions will be documented in writing. Exemption documentation will include details about:

- **the student or group of students to whom the exemption applies**
- **the basis for the exemption**
- **the period for which it applies**
- **any limitations or conditions.**

Exemptions for smart glasses

An exemption for smart glasses can only be granted by the principal, and will only be granted:

- **where their use is a reasonable adjustment for a student with disability, for example,**
  a student with vision impairment, and
- **the adjustment cannot be reasonably provided by another device or approach.**

Any exemption will be limited to the functions and circumstances required for the adjustment. Before granting an exemption, the school will follow the department's protocols for smart glasses outlined in the Mobile Phones and Personal Electronic Devices – Student Use policy and the Smart Glasses and Covert Filming Devices policy. If an exemption is granted, a privacy notice must be issued before the smart glasses are used.

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, wireless earbuds, headphones and/or smart watches or other personal mobile electronic devices.

The policy restrictions on all personal electronic devices continue to apply during school hours when students are on excursions or camps, unless and exemption is granted.

The policy restrictions on smart glasses apply for the entirety of any camp or excursion.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- **Out-of-school-hours events (unless otherwise stated)**
- **Travelling to and from school**

Students undertaking workplace or curriculum-related offsite learning activities managed by an external provider, for example, work experience, a VET course or offsite VCE studies, must comply with any policies of the provider or employer responsible for the activity. While undertaking these activities, they do not need to comply with the personal electronic devices policy of Maffra Secondary College.

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	**November 2026**
Consultation	**School Council**
Approved by	**Principal**
Next scheduled review date	**November 2030**