**MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE**

**Purpose**

To explain to our school community the Department’s and Bulleen Heights’ policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal devices (connected to a cellular system or outside network) during school hours.

**Scope**

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Bulleen Heights School and,
2. Students’ personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices connected to a cellular system or outside network other than DET 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 device that may connect to or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone such as smart watches, or iPads.

**Policy**

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

At Bulleen Heights School:

* Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours; current procedure is to hand it to the main office.
* 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](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Bulleen Heights 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 Bulleen Heights 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 Bulleen Heights 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 [Personal Goods](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/personalgoods.aspx) policy.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Bulleen Heights School will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Bulleen Heights School, students are required to hand their phones into the school administration office to be placed in a lockable cupboard.

**Enforcement**

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Bulleen Heights School may be issued with consequences consistent with our school’s existing student engagement polices.

At Bulleen Heights School, inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted, and particularly use of a mobile 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

**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](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx).

The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx) are:

***1. Learning-related exceptions***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Specific exception | Documentation |
| For specific learning activities (class-based exception) | 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 | Individual Learning Plan, Individual Education 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 which it was granted.

**Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities**

Bulleen Heights 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
* 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
* Community reminders in school newsletter
* Included in staff Promapp
* Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
* Hard copy available from school administration upon request

**Related policies and resources**

* [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx)
* [Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/property.aspx)
* [Personal Goods](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/personalgoods.aspx) – Department policy

**Review period**

This policy was last updated on August 2021 and is scheduled for review on August 2022.