



Mobile Phone and Personal Devices Policy

This policy is based on the school's values of Respect, Quality, Commitment and Diversity

First developed: 2021	Reviewed: 2023	Next review: Following next DfE review
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Scope

This School of Languages policy is implemented in line with the Department for Education's 'Student use of Mobile phones and personal devices' policy which applies to all government schools. This document provides direction to students, staff, and families about managing personal devices that students choose to bring to school. For the purposes of this policy, personal devices include mobile phones, smart watches and other digital devices which can connect to the internet or telecommunication. It does not apply to school owned technologies, or personal laptops or tablets brought to school under our Bring Your Own Device agreement.

Rationale

With the widespread and increasing ownership of mobile phones and other devices among students it is critical that schools, in partnership with families, provide clear guidance for students to become informed, safe, respectful, and responsible digital citizens. It is the Department for Education's position that access to personal devices during school hours must be managed so that students can be fully present in their learning and in their interactions with their teachers and peers. The aim of this policy is to help promote:

- safe environments with reduced negative impacts of inappropriate use of devices at school, such as cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, and critical incidents that involve mobile phones
- classroom environments where teachers can teach, and students can learn, free from distractions caused by personal use of devices
- use of breaks as quality time away from screens, encouraging physical activity and play and meaningful face-to-face connections with peers.

Personal devices at school

Students are permitted to bring personal devices to school:

- as a measure to ensure their safety while travelling to and from school
- so that parents and part-time employers can contact them outside of school hours
- so they can be contacted about a person under their own care, where applicable
- to be used during school hours in line with an exemption that has been approved by the school under this policy.

While students are at school, or attending school activities, they must comply with any reasonable directions given by school staff in line with this policy regarding their personal devices.

The Department for Education's policy requires all students at all department schools to **keep personal devices 'off and away' between the start and end of each school day, and while they are attending school activities off-site, such as camps and excursions**, except in the circumstances outlined below in the Exemptions section.

During lessons, students may only access personal devices when given permission to use them, under the direction of the teacher, for designated learning activities that require their use. Students will not be able to access their personal devices in any other circumstances during the lessons or breaks, unless they have received an exemption from the school to use the device for a specific agreed reason.

Adult students* are permitted to use their personal devices whenever necessary, in a responsible and respectful manner, as outlined in other school documents in the Supporting Information section. To minimise disruptions for teachers and other learners, adult students are asked to keep their personal devices in silent mode during lessons, and step outside of the classroom if they need to take a phone call during a lesson.

*(*adult students at the School of Languages fall into 2 categories:*

- those who attend an adult re-entry college and are on a SACE Pathways Plan

- those who are over 18 and do not attend a mainstream school)

Storage of personal devices at school

Students will turn their devices off or put them on silent before storing them in their school bags. This includes taking off and storing any wearable technology that fits the definition of this policy, such as smartwatches. The devices must be kept stored away for the entire length of their School of Languages lesson, including the break.

Responses to non-compliance

Where students use a personal device at school without an approved exemption, or use it inappropriately, a response will be provided in line with the school's Code of Conduct.

In the first instance, students will be verbally reminded to put their personal devices 'off and away'. If the student continues to use their device without permission, the student will be asked to hand in their device to the teacher (or the teacher on yard duty if it occurs during the break; who will then give it to the relevant language teacher). The teacher will place it in a sealed envelope with the student name on it, store it and return it to the student at the end of the lesson. Where a student repeatedly and intentionally breaches the requirements of this policy, or refuses to follow a staff member's direction to hand over a personal device that has been used inappropriately, a member of the school leadership team will inform parents/carers.

Where a student's misuse of personal devices is serious, it may be necessary for the school to consider responses in line with the department's suspension, exclusion and expulsion of students procedure, or to contact South Australia Police if the behaviour is suspected to be illegal.

Exemptions

Exceptional circumstances

Individual students may have extenuating reasons for needing access to their personal device during school hours, such as where:

- the device is used to monitor or help manage a health condition
- the device is a negotiated adjustment to a learning program for a student with disability or learning difficulties
- the device is used for translation by a student with English as an additional language
- the student has extenuating personal circumstances that require them to have more ready access to their personal device, such as being a parent themselves or a primary carer to a younger sibling or unwell family member.

Please contact the school if you need to request an exemption due to exceptional circumstances. These requests will be considered by the Assistant Principal on a case-by-case basis. If approved, the exemption will be recorded in the student's file.

The following temporary exemptions may be made available to students at the discretion of individual teachers:

- teachers may give permission for students (on an individual or whole-class basis) to use personal devices in the classroom for a specified learning activity
- individual students can negotiate with their teachers on an ad-hoc basis if they wish to access a personal device for a non-educational purpose (such as expected contact from a part-time employer or for a wellbeing/illness reason or emergency family contact)

- students may be permitted to bring personal devices on an excursion for learning purposes and/or to facilitate contact with their families at specified and supervised times. Expectations regarding student use of devices on the excursion will be detailed in parent consent information.

All exemptions are subject to the device being used appropriately and only for the purpose specifically permitted by the teacher. Personal devices must be put 'off and away' immediately after the exempted activity has concluded, and not brought to future lessons/activities without explicit teacher permission.

Roles and responsibilities

Principal

The Principal will ensure that:

- the school's policy has been endorsed or ratified by governing council and is clearly communicated and accessible to all students, staff, and families
- there is a process for regular review of the school's local policy
- processes are in place for monitoring internet and school network use by all members of the school community
- the policy and responses to instances of non-compliance are enforced
- requests for exemptions from the policy from parents/carers or independent students due to exceptional circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis; and ensure that approved exemptions in this category are documented and that relevant staff, including temporary relief teachers, are informed about students with an exemption
- appropriate use of mobile phones is modelled by all staff
- families are supported to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible, and respectful use of mobile phones to their children
- incidents of inappropriate or illegal use of personal devices are reported and responded to, in line with department policy and procedures and any legal requirements.

School staff

School staff will:

- deliver learning opportunities and maintain a safe and productive learning environment. They will take steps to minimise distractions from the non-educational use of personal devices in the learning environment
- respond to instances of non-compliance in line with this policy
- report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legal requirements

- ensure students who are given permission to access their personal device use it appropriately and only for the specified purpose, and store their personal devices away after the exempted activity has concluded
- ensure that any student personal devices handed in for their care are stored in a secure location and are returned to the student (or their parent/carer) by the end of the lesson
- model appropriate use of mobile phones and support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible, and respectful use of mobile phones to their children
- use mobile phones for work-related/emergency purposes only when students are under their care.

Students

Students will:

- comply with the requirements of this policy and follow all reasonable directions from the principal and school staff
- switch all personal devices on silent or off, on arrival at the School of Languages lesson and store in their bag until the end of the lesson
- use their mobile phone/personal device in a safe, responsible, and respectful way and support peers to do the same, when permitted to use it in line with an exemption under this policy
- communicate respectfully with others and not use a mobile phone or other personal device to bully, harass, or threaten another person
- respect others' rights to privacy and not take photos, film, or audio records of other people without their knowledge or permission
- notify a school staff member as soon as possible if feeling unwell or experiencing any other issues at school. They will use the school's sign-out processes in all cases where requiring early collection from school.

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will:

- support the school's implementation of this policy, including the consequences for non-compliance
- use the school's formal communication channels in all instances to communicate with the school or to make contact with their child during school hours (including where a student requires early collection from school). They will encourage their child to

always report to a school staff member in the first instance if they become unwell or experience an issue at school

- recognise the important role they play in supporting their child to use their mobile phone (or other personal device) in a safe, responsible, and respectful way.

Accidental loss or damage

The department does not provide insurance for accidental loss or damage to personal property that is brought onto school grounds (however, claims may be met under the department's public liability insurance where the loss or damage can be attributed to a negligent act or omission on the part of the school – the school will contact the department for advice if this may be the case).

Supporting information

The following school policies and procedures, available on the school website, are to be read in conjunction with this policy:

- Code of Conduct
- Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedures
- Cyber Safety Policy
- Social Media Acceptable Use Guidelines

Consultation and Review

Consultation on this policy has occurred with all staff, and with parent and student representatives on Governing Council and the Student Council.

The school community is to be informed of this policy and any changes through the school newsletter, and by making this policy available on the school website.

This Policy will be reviewed at the time of the next departmental review, and will include consultation with staff, parents and students.

Questions, concerns, and further information

This policy has been developed by the school in line with the Department for Education's 'Student use of mobile phones and personal devices policy'. You can find more information about this policy, and links to further resources for parents/carers about personal devices and online safety, on the department's website: [Mobile phones and personal devices at school \(education.sa.gov.au\)](http://education.sa.gov.au).

If you have any questions or concerns about the department's policy, you can contact the department at:

Email: education.customers@sa.gov.au or submit an [online feedback form](#)

Phone: Free call: 1800 088 158