

MOBILE PHONE POLICY



Mobile Phone (and Connected Devices) Policy

Purpose

To explain to our school community the Department's and Montague School's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and any device that may connect to or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone such as smart watches, during school hours.

Scope

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Montague School 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.

Policy

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

At Montague School:

- 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 **9690 3535**.

Secure Storage

Mobile phones owned by students at Montague 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 Montague 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.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Montague School will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Montague School students are required to hand their mobile phone into the school administration office at the start of each day to be placed in a secure cabinet.

At Montague 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.

Personal Mobile Phone Use

In accordance with the Department's Mobile Phones Policy issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Montague 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.

Exceptions

Exceptions 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.

Exceptions 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 Phone - Student Use Policy are:

1. Learning-Related Exceptions

For specific learning activities (class-based exception).

Example: A teacher may design a unit of work that requires a student to use a mobile phone's camera to record the staged development of a product over several weeks, supporting the production of a folio) reasonable adjustments to a learning program because of a disability and/or learning difficulty, documented in an Individual Learning Plan or Individual Education Plan.

For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty.

Example: Some students may have difficulty with communication and may use a mobile device to aid/support communication. For example, a student may use an application on a mobile phone to participate in classroom discussions by selecting words or phrases to be spoken through their device.

2. Health and Wellbeing-Related Exceptions

Students with a health condition documented in the Student Health Support Plan.

Example: A student with diabetes may use their mobile phone to monitor their blood sugar and the administration of insulin.

Example: In the case of a young person providing care to a parent with health issues, their mobile phone may be used to discuss health issues with medical professionals and the person they are caring for. For example, the young carer may receive advice from a doctor on what medications to administer and when.

3. Exceptions Related to Managing Risk - Offsite

Example: An excursion that requires students and teachers to travel via bus poses the risk that a bus may be delayed due to break down or traffic. With an exception, students would be able to switch their phones on and use them to rearrange pick-up times with their parents/carers.

Example: Students undertaking a 'City Experience' excursion (or similar) may be permitted to carry mobile phones to manage the risk of separation from the group (students can use the phone to contact a designated contact).

Example: Where a student is considered sufficiently mature to leave the school grounds independently, with valid grounds and the consent of parents/carers.

Example: Where a student is considered sufficiently mature to leave the school grounds independently, to travel to another campus, with the consent of their parents/carers.

*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

Montague 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.
- Included in staff handbook/manual.
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings.
- Included in transition and enrolment packs.
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions.
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

Enforcement

In accordance with the Department's Mobile Phone Policy issued by the Minister for Education, Montague School will enforce the policy under our existing student engagement policies, for example, through loss of school-based privileges, where students fail to comply with the local school policy on mobile phones, including if they refuse to relinquish their phones to school staff when asked.

Where students have relinquished their mobile phones to school staff, the phone will be returned to them or parent/carer at the end of the school day. This is to support student safety when travelling to and from school, during which times carrying a mobile phone may help to manage risks of harm.

Consistent with Ministerial Order 1125, suspensions are to be reserved for serious misuses of a mobile phone in schools that:

- Meet the grounds for suspension, for example, cyberbullying.
- Are a last resort option that is considered after alternative interventions and support have been provided to the student to address the reasons for the behaviour associated with mobile phone use.

*Reporting of some incidents involving mobile phones to a relevant authority may be necessary under the department’s Reporting and Managing School Incidents Policy.

Policy Review and Approval

Reviewed	4 December 2024
Consultation	School council
Approved by	Principal
Review date	Term 1, 2027