



MOBILE PHONES POLICY (Student Use)

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Northern School for Autism's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Northern School for Autism 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

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

At Northern School for Autism:

- 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.

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 Northern School for Autism 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 Northern School for Autism 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

Reservoir Campus
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Reservoir Vic 3073
Phone: 03 9462 5990

Lalor Campus
2 - 4 Lyndon Street
Lalor Vic 3075
Phone: 03 9464 3480

northern.sch.autism@education.vic.gov.au
<http://www.northernautism.vic.edu.au>

there is a compelling reason to do so. Please note that Northern School for Autism 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 Northern School for Autism Personal Property Policy AND/OR the Department's [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#).

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Northern School for Autism will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Northern School for Autism students are required to store their phones in their lockers or handed into the Leadership Team to be placed in a lockable cupboard.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Northern School for Autism may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*.

At Northern School for Autism 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 — 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)	Individual Learning Plan
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Learning Plan

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	Student Health Support Plan

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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

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

Northern School for Autism 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
- Communication Devices
- 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 school newsletter
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Refer to NSA Policies: *Student Wellbeing and Engagement, Code of Conduct, Personal Property, Bullying Prevention and Response*

[Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy](#)

[Weapons — Banning, Searching and Seizing Harmful Items](#)

[Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	5 August 2024
Consultation	The School Council was consulted and recommendations, if any, were made by 8th August 2024.
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2027 – noting that the recommended minimum review cycle for this policy is 3 to 4 years]

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