

# MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE

## PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Bendigo South East College's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Bendigo South East College and
2. Students' personal mobile phones and communication 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

Bendigo South East College understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

At Bendigo South East College:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours (including lunch and recess)
- 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](#) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Bendigo South East College 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 Bendigo South East College 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 Bendigo South East College 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 policy.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Bendigo South East College will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Bendigo South East College students are required to store their phones in a mobile phone locker provided to the student.

**\*UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE CHARGING DEVICES TO BE STORED IN THESE LOCKERS\***

### **Enforcement**

If a mobile, communication or related device is either used, is visible in class, or heard in class time, the teacher will instruct the student to go to the Student Services Office where the student will lock their device in a locker and receive a form from the staff member there. The student can then collect the device at the end of the school day at 3.13pm by handing the form back to the Student Services Office staff member.

If the student refuses to leave their device in a locker in the Student Services Office, the Staff member or Student Services Office staff member will implement the relevant disciplinary provision within the student code of conduct policy. Disciplinary provision can result in but is not limited to a Lunchtime Makeup session, Afterschool Makeup session or for intentional misuse, filming or use of social media may result in a Suspension. Repeat breaches of this policy will result in an escalation of disciplinary procedures and parent involvement to support the management of student's device within a learning environment.

In addition, students are not required to use wireless earphones/buds or similar which are connected to a communication device, smart watches or any other form of communication personal device within school hours and the above enforcement applies.

### **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.
- must be directed to and can only be granted by the principal.

or

- by the teacher for that class only if for the use of educational purposes only – but to also ensure equity, monitor use carefully and not disadvantage any students that may not have a device, in accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#).

The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#) are:

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

<b>Specific exception</b>	<b>Documentation</b>
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, Education Support Plan

### **2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions**

<b>Specific exception</b>	<b>Documentation</b>
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**

<b>Specific exception</b>	<b>Documentation</b>
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**

Bendigo South East 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.

### **Exclusions**

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school
- iPads and all other computer/learning specific personal devices
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience
- Students who are undertaking VET at external venue/providers

## RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- BSE Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- BSE Child Safe Standards or Commitment and Code of Conduct Policy
- BSE Bullying Prevention Policy
- [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](#)
- [Weapons — Banning, Searching and Seizing Harmful Items](#)
- [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	October to December 2024
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	October 2026 to February 2027