

## MOBILE PHONES & OTHER DEVICES

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### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the front office on

### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Merri-bek Primary School policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones [and other personal mobile devices such as Smartwatches] during school hours.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Merri-bek Primary School and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones [and other personal mobile devices such as Smartwatches]

### DEFINITIONS

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.

### POLICY

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

At Merri-bek Primary 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.

### 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 Merri-bek Primary 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**

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Mobile phones owned by students at Merri-bek Primary 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 Merri-bek Primary 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. Please refer to the Department's [Personal Goods policy](#).

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Merri-bek Primary School will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Merri-bek Primary School students are required to hand in their Mobile Phones and Smartwatches to the main office. These devices are to be clearly named. Devices can be collected from the main office at the end of each school day by the owner of the device.

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Merri-bek Primary School may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's Student Wellbeing, Engagement and Inclusion Policy and Procedures. At Merri-bek Primary 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 or smartwatch:

- 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](#).

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

### 1. Learning-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
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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.

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### Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

Merri-bek Primary 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 and other devices such as smartwatches.

### Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Travelling to and from school

### RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](#)
- [Merri-bek Primary School Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy and Procedures.](#)
- [Personal Goods – Department policy](#)

### REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated on 28 January 2020 and is scheduled for review in the school's 3 year cycle or earlier if required.

### POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	10th March 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	March 2026

**\*\*This policy is to be reviewed each year.\*\***

The Principal will complete the Department's Annual Risk Management Checklist for anaphylaxis management to assist with the evaluation and review of this policy and the support provided to students at risk of anaphylaxis.