

MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE

PURPOSE

Ballarat High School is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment. This policy outlines expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices (excludes BYOD devices such as iPads and laptops) during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at Ballarat High School and their personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices brought onto school premises during school hours (**8.55am-3.15pm**), 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.

Ballarat High School defines a mobile phone to be any cellular internet connected device. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Mobile phones
- Cellular connected smartwatches and wearables
- Any device that allows other users to 'share' an internet connection that is not provided by Ballarat High School OR the Education Department (DET)

It is preferred that students who attend Ballarat High School in any year do NOT have a cellular connection available on their BYOD device.

POLICY

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

At Ballarat High School:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored in their locker or otherwise determined by the school during school hours
- Exemptions 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 Ballarat High School during school hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exemption has been granted by a member of the Principal class.

Where a student has been granted an exemption, the student must use their mobile phone for the purpose for which the exemption was granted, and in a safe, ethical and responsible manner.

Secure storage

Mobile phones owned by students at Ballarat High 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 Ballarat High 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, Ballarat High School will provide a locker that can be secured. Students have the responsibility of providing a padlock to secure the locker.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Ballarat High School may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement policy and mobile phone process.

The use of mobile phones at Ballarat High School is not permitted **during school hours** (may include camps, excursions and extracurricular activities), unless an exemption has been granted. This is to ensure mobile phones are not used:

- 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

Exemptions

Exemptions to the policy:

- may be applied during school hours if certain conditions are met, specifically,
 - Health and wellbeing-related exemptions; and
 - Exemptions 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 exemptions allowed under the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#) are:

1. Learning-related exemptions

Specific exemption	Documentation
For specific learning activities (class-based exemption)	Application form submitted to the <i>Assistant Principal of Teaching and Learning</i> .
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Education Plan

2. Health and wellbeing-related exemptions

Specific exemption	Documentation
Students with a diagnosed health condition	Individual Education Plan

3. Exemptions related to managing risk when students are offsite

Specific exemption	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

Where an exemption is granted, the student can only use the mobile phone for the purpose for which it was granted.

Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

Ballarat High 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 travelling to and from school and BYOD.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- [Student Engagement policy](#)

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated November 2019 and is scheduled for review on November 2022.