



## MOBILE PHONE POLICY – STUDENT USE

### PREAMBLE

This policy outlines the expectations pertaining to the use of mobile phones by students at Greensborough College (GC).

### RATIONALE

The Victorian Government takes very seriously the safe and responsible use of digital technologies, student safety and wellbeing, and the development of social skills and of positive behaviour. In line with the Victorian Government policy, GC acknowledges that we live in a technology-rich world, where mobile phones are an important communication tool.

Research has found that mobile phones can be disruptive in classrooms and open to misuse at school. The unregulated presence of mobile phones in classrooms can undermine students' capacity to think, learn, remember, pay attention and regulate emotion. The recess and lunchtime breaks are valued as opportunities for students to communicate with each other face-to-face, or be involved in other activities, rather than focused on their mobile phones, particularly when it is used to engage with social media.

This policy aims to remove a major distraction from our classrooms and from our schools, so that teachers can teach and students can learn in a more focused, positive and supportive environment.

### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and **Greensborough College** policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and smart watches during school hours.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Greensborough College and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones and smart watches 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. A smart watch is defined as a wearable device that may connect to or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone.

For the purposes of this policy:

- **school premises** are defined as the entire site, including buildings, locker bays and school grounds.
- **during school hours** is defined as from 8.55 to 3.10 pm and includes the hours allocated for scheduled classes as well as recess and lunchtime.
- **any use during school hours** is defined as a student in possession of a mobile phone.

## **POLICY**

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

At Greensborough College:

- 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 carer 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 Greensborough 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 Greensborough 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 Greensborough College does not have accident insurance for accidental or wilful property damage or theft. Students and their parents/carers are encouraged to obtain appropriate insurance for valuable items. In this context, students and parents are encouraged should refer to the Greensborough College [Personal Property Policy](#).

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Greensborough College will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Greensborough College students are required to store their phones in their Locker and ensure it is locked.

### **Enforcement**

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Greensborough College may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing [Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy](#) and/or our [Bullying Policy](#).

At Greensborough College 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 call;
- 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](#).

To ensure a consistent approach which can be transparent, clearly documented and effectively overseen by the Principal, all applications for exceptions will be submitted to the Admin Committee for approval.

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

### 1. Learning-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
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.

## Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

Greensborough 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 personal devices;
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience;
- Students who are undertaking VET.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

- [Staged Consequences for Inappropriate Mobile Phone Use](#)
- [GC Student Engagement & Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [GC Bullying Policy](#)
- [GC Personal Property Policy](#)
- [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](#)
- [Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items](#)
- [Personal Goods – Department policy](#)

## **REVIEW PERIOD**

This policy was last updated on 28 November 2019 and is scheduled for review on 28 November 2022.