

Mobile Phones – Student Use

Please note this policy is mandatory and staff are required to adhere to the content

Summary

Table 1 - Document details

Publication date	
Review date	
Related legislation/applicable section of legislation	Education and Training and Reform Act 2006 (Vic) Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
Related policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, frameworks	RSC Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy RSC Digital Technologies Policy RSC Preventing Bullying Policy
Approved by	
Approval date	
Version	1.1

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1. Purpose

To explain to our school community the Department of Education and Training's and Rowville Secondary College's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices during school hours.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Rowville Secondary College and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices brought onto school premises during school hours, including recess and lunchtime.

3. Definitions

A **mobile phone** is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network. For the purpose of this policy, "mobile phone" refers to mobile phones and any device that may connect to the internet or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone such as smart watches and audio devices.

4. Policy

Rowville Secondary College understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone or other personal mobile devices to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

At Rowville Secondary College:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones and other personal mobile devices to school must have them **switched off and securely stored during school hours, including recess and lunchtime**
- 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 or other mobile devices must not be used at Rowville Secondary 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 or other personal mobile devices owned by students at Rowville Secondary 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 Rowville Secondary 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 Rowville Secondary College's Personal Property Policy and the Department's [Personal Goods policy](#).

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Rowville Secondary College will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Rowville Secondary College students are required to store their phones in their lockers at their base campus or in the temporary lockers if they have travelled to the other campus. Phones and bags must be stored in lockers as soon as students arrive at either campus. Padlocks are provided to students (as part of the fees) and students must provide their Learning Mentor with the code in case of emergencies.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Rowville Secondary College may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy, Bullying Prevention Policy and Digital Technologies Policy. Please see Appendix A for implementation of this policy.

At Rowville Secondary 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 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 principal in consultation with key stakeholders, 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
For specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Unit of work, learning sequence and lesson plan
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 e.g. a student with diabetes using mobile phone to monitor blood sugar
Students who are Young Carers	A localised student record e.g. contact with medical professionals during the school day regarding the person they are caring for

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

Generally mobile phones will not be permitted at events during school hours such as excursions or camps. Exceptions will be made for events where students may be considered to need their phones to manage independent travel, for example.

Sports coaching off site

Students must leave their phones in their lockers when attending off site coaching sessions.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school
- iPads that do not have a SIM card
- Students travelling between campuses in order to undertake VCE or VET study
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience
- Students who are undertaking VET

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- [RSC Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](#)
- [Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items](#)
- [Personal Goods – Department policy](#)

5. Monitoring, evaluation and review

- This policy will be reviewed in November 2022.
- This policy will be approved by the RSC School Council
- This policy will be reviewed by the Policy and Planning Sub-committee

Appendix A: Mobile Phone Policy Implementation

All students will be allocated a lock on the first day of school if they don't already have one. From the time of being allocated a lock and a locker, phones must be turned off and stored securely in lockers during school hours, including recess and lunch.

Students are not permitted to bring school bags to standard classes. They will only be permitted to do so if they are required to get changed for Physical Education or Dance. Students are not permitted to have bags during recess and lunch time. They may only carry their bags immediately on their way to and from classes requiring them to get changed. Students must not bring phones or other valuables to these classes as no secure storage is provided.

Implementation of the policy at school

Students must lock their phones in their lockers as soon as practicable when they arrive at school. Students are not permitted to access their phone during the day and must keep it stored securely in their locker.

If a student needs to contact a parent or carer urgently, they are encouraged to go to an appropriate staff room (House Staff Room, Wellbeing, Admin) and ask to use a school phone.

If a student uses their phone during the school day or have their phone on them, they will be required to accompany a teacher or other staff member to the front office to relinquish their phone.

If a student brings a phone to class, the teacher is required to log it on the help desk so that a staff member can come and collect the student so that they can relinquish their phone at the front office. A record will be kept of the confiscation at the front office.

If a student is using headphones/earbuds, it is reasonable for a teacher to ask if they are connected to a mobile phone. If they are, students will be asked to relinquish both the phone and the headphones/earbuds. There are educational uses for headphones/earbuds in classes such as Media or Dance but students may not use headphones/earbuds connected to their mobile phone during the school day, unless they have a specific exemption to do so.

The only time students can use their phones on school grounds is directly after 3:15 pm when they have been dismissed from classes for the day. If a student is leaving before the end of the school day, they are not permitted to use their phone until they are off school grounds.

First Offence

- Student relinquishes phone or personal device
- Student reminded of the rule and consequences by staff member
- Office staff record the incident on Compass ensuring the Learning Mentor is included in the notifications

- Labelled device is kept in a secure store until the end of the day where the student can request it's return from the office staff

Second Offence

- Student relinquishes phone or personal device
- Student reminded of the rule and consequences by staff member
- Office staff record the incident on Compass ensuring the Learning Mentor and House are included in the notifications
- Labelled device is kept in a secure store until the end of the day where the student can request it's return from the office staff
- Parent contacted by House Leader
- Parent and student reminded that the third offence will result in the parent having to come and collect the phone

Third Offence

- Student relinquishes phone or personal device
- Student reminded of the rule and consequences by staff member
- Office staff record the incident on Compass ensuring the Learning Mentor and House Leader are included in the notifications
- Labelled device is kept in a secure store in the General Office
- Parent contacted by House Leader and arrangements made for them to collect the phone from the General Office
- Detention and exclusion for subsequent breaches

The above graduated consequences for breaching the mobile phone policy will apply within a school year. House Leaders will determine further consequences, as per our Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy, for students who breach the policy more than three times in one year. At the beginning of the next year, previous breaches will not count and any breach will be considered a First Offence.

In Assessments

- If a student has a phone in an assessment, the teacher will need to log it on the help desk so that another staff member can escort the student to the front office
- Student relinquishes phone or personal device
- Office staff will record a Chronicle on Compass
- Labelled device is kept in a secure store in the General Office
- Assessment consequence (determined in consultation with teacher, the House Leader and Assistant Principal)
- Parent contacted by House Leader

In VCAA Examinations

Students are sometimes required to sit Year 12 examinations on the other campus. A locked room will be provided for students use as storage. Bringing a phone into examination rooms is strictly forbidden by VCAA and outlined in their [examination rules](#).

A student who uses a mobile phone at any time during the school day (without an exception), and/or **inappropriately** (as defined under Enforcement in the policy), and/or after being given a clear instruction to relinquish their phone refuses this request, may be excluded from class or suspended from school as determined by the relevant House Leader in consultation with the Principal

Implementation of exceptions

Requests for Learning or Health or Wellbeing related exceptions should be made as early in the school year as practicable. Where the grounds for the exception are medical, documentation from the treating health practitioner will be required. Parents and students are encouraged to contact their Learning Mentor to begin this process.

Teachers who wish to seek an exception for a particular class based activity need consult with the Principal or delegate and ensure students and parents are aware of the exception prior to the class occurring. Students who are using their phone in these circumstances must wear a lanyard with a green card in it.

Students who have individual exceptions will be issued with a laminated card which explains the circumstances under which the exception is granted.

A student not using their phone for the purposes which the exception was granted may have to relinquish their phone and have their exception rescinded.