



PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Rutherglen High School's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students at Rutherglen High School and students' personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices brought onto school premises during school hours, including recess and lunchtime.

DEFINITIONS

A mobile phone is a telephone or device 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 or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone such as smart watches.

POLICY

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

At Rutherglen High School:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours (8.30am – 3.20pm) or when entering the school grounds including the bus drop off area.
- 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 Rutherglen High 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. After use, it must be returned to safe and secure storage as quickly as practicable.

Secure storage

Mobile phones owned by students at Rutherglen High School are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner'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 Rutherglen 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. This arrangement is consistent with the Department's [Personal Goods policy](#).

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Rutherglen High School will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Rutherglen High School students are required to store their phones in their lockers. If they wish, valuables including mobile phones can be handed into the school's General Office for secure storage.



Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Rutherglen High School may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement policies including *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and/or *Code of Conduct* or *Bullying* policies.

Specifically, if a staff member becomes aware that a mobile phone is not stored securely as per this policy, the staff member should instruct the student to hand over the item(s) and if the student refuses to hand over the item/s, implement the relevant disciplinary provision within the student code of conduct.

If a mobile phone is confiscated, it may be collected:

- by the student at the end of the day on the first occasion and parents are to be informed
- by the parent on second or subsequent occasions.

At Rutherglen High School inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted.

Even if an exemption has been granted, inappropriate use of a mobile phone includes:

- disrupting the learning of others
- sending inappropriate, harassing or threatening messages or phone calls
- engaging in inappropriate social media use including cyber bullying
- capturing video or images of people, including students, teachers and members of the school community without their permission
- capturing video or images in the school toilets, changing rooms, swimming pools and gyms
- possessing a mobile phone 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
For specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Use specified in 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. After use, it must be returned to safe and secure storage as quickly as practicable.

Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

Rutherglen 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.

For example, mobile phones are NOT permitted on the Year 9 Future Makers Camp but are permitted and even encouraged on the Year 10 Melbourne Urban Experience camp.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience
- Students who are undertaking VET studies at venues other than Rutherglen High School

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

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



REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Plan last reviewed	31 st January 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	31 st January 2026