**MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE**

**Purpose**

To explain to our school community the Department’s and Harrisfield P.S.’s policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices including smartwatches during school hours.

**Scope**

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Harrisfield P.S. and
2. Students’ personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices including smartwatches 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. “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**

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

At Harrisfield P.S.:

* Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored in the school administration office 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](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Harrisfield P.S. 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 Harrisfield P.S. 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 Harrisfield P.S. 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 Harrisfield P.S.’s Personal Property Policy.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Harrisfield P.S. will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Harrisfield P.S. students are required to store their phones in the school administration office.

**Enforcement**

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Harrisfield P.S. may be issued with consequences consistent with our school’s existing student engagement polices: Student Wellbeing and Engagement or Statement of Values and Bullying and harassment prevention.

At Harrisfield P.S. 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 the teacher for that class, in accordance with the Department’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx).

Of the three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx), the only one applicable to Harrisfield P.S. is:

***Health and wellbeing-related exceptions***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Specific exception | Documentation |
| Students with a health condition | Student Health Support Plan |

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**

Harrisfield P.S. 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.

**Related policies and resources**

* Student Wellbeing and Engagement, Statement of Values, Personal Property, Bullying.
* [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx)
* [Personal Goods](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/personalgoods.aspx) – Department policy

**Review period**

This policy was last updated February 2020 and is scheduled for review February 2023.

School council approved this policy on 17th February 2020.