

Riverbanks College Mobile Phones in School Policy



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Related Department for Education policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, frameworks	Department for Education Student Use of Mobile Phones and Personal Devices guidelines
Related Riverbanks College B-12 policies, procedures, standards	Positive Behaviour Policy BYOD policy, ICT user agreements.
Responsibility	School Leadership and Governing Council

Rationale

At Riverbanks College B-12 we believe that we are preparing students to thrive in their future world. We understand that mobile phones/devices are going to be a part of this world. As technology continues to evolve and our use of it expands, it becomes more and more important to teach young children to use it responsibly.

Riverbanks College has implemented the Mobile Phones In School policy based on the Department for Education's [student use of mobile phones and personal devices policy](#), which applies to all government schools.

Families need to be aware that students bring mobile phones to school at their own risk. The school will not take responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged phones.

Purpose

We aim to support students to become responsible and effective users of their phones and other forms of technology.

It is the Department for Education's position that access to personal devices during school hours must be managed so that students can be fully present in their learning and in their interactions with their teachers and peers.

The aim of this policy is to help promote:

- safe environments with reduced negative impacts of inappropriate use of devices at school, such as cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, and critical incidents that involve mobile phones
- classroom environments where teachers can teach, and students can learn, free from distractions caused by personal use of devices
- use of breaks as quality time away from screens, encouraging physical activity and play and meaningful face-to-face connections with peers.

This policy applies while students are at school or attending an authorised school activity such as an offsite learning experience, during school hours.

Storage of personal devices at school

Students will turn their devices off or place them in flight mode before putting them away. This includes taking off and storing any wearable technology that fits the definition of this policy, such as smartwatches.

Personal devices will be handed to their Thrive teacher at the beginning of the day and stored securely in a zipped pouch in a locked cupboard until the student collects their phone at the end of the day.

If a student is late to school their phone will be collected at Student Services as they sign in. The student will then collect their personal device from Student Services at the end of the day.

Responses to non-compliance

Where students use a personal device at school without an approved exemption, or use it inappropriately, a response will be provided in line with the school's behaviour support policy.

- Where a student is seen using their personal device by a staff member, the student will accompany the staff member to Student Services and hand over their device where it will be securely stored. The student will need to collect their device from Student Services at the end of the school day.
- Where a student repeatedly and intentionally breaches the requirements of this policy or refuses to follow a staff member's direction to hand over a personal device that has been used inappropriately, a member of the school leadership team will contact home.

If a student is asked to hand over their device to a staff member and the student refuses, confiscation is a possible consequence. Where a student's misuse of personal devices is serious, the school may consider responses in line with the department's suspension, exclusion policy, or to contact South Australia Police if the behaviour is suspected to be illegal.

Exemptions

Individual students may have extenuating reasons for needing access to their personal device during school hours, such as where:

- the device is used to monitor or help manage a health condition
- the device is a negotiated adjustment to a learning program for a student with disability or learning difficulties
- the device is used for translation by a student with English as an additional language
- the student has extenuating personal circumstances that require them to have more ready access to their personal device, such as being a parent themselves or a primary carer to a younger sibling or unwell family member.

Please contact the school if you need to request an exemption due to exceptional circumstances. These requests will be considered by the Principal (with a letter written by a doctor or psychologist) on a case-by-case basis. If approved, the exemption will be recorded in the student's file or health care/learning plan as appropriate.

Student Responsibility

It is the student's responsibility to:

- follow the requirements of the Riverbanks College Mobile Phones in Schools Policy and follow all reasonable directions from the school staff including handing up their personal device to their Thrive teacher each morning for it to be securely locked away for the day. Students will collect their phone at the end of the day from their Thrive teacher
- work in partnership with teachers to develop responsible digital citizenship skills
- if permitted to use a mobile phone due to an approved exemption, students need to do this discreetly, quickly and with the permission of a staff member
- promote the school's values of kindness and belonging through communicating respectfully with others and not using a mobile phone or other personal device to bully, harass or threaten another person
- respect others' rights to privacy and do not take photos, film, or audio records of other people without their knowledge or permission.

If a student repeatedly misuses their phone in class, a member of the school leadership will come to the class and confiscate their phone for the remainder of the day. The student's confiscated mobile phone will be securely stored at Student Services and the student will collect it from there at the end of the day. Parents will receive notification of this action via the school's preferred communication platform.

In the event of mobile phone misuse which involves bullying and/or illegal activity, the student's mobile phone is confiscated straight away whilst the incident is being investigated.

If irresponsible phone use becomes an ongoing issue for a student, the school and family may reach an agreement regarding the student losing the right to bring their mobile phone to school.

Support for Students

Staff will model responsible mobile phone use by not using their phone in class unless needed to support learning or safety.

Parents and caregivers will support our Mobile Phones in school Policy by reinforcing these expectations with their children. They will not attempt to contact students during the school day and contact the front office if they need to get a message to their children.

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

- the school's policy has been endorsed or ratified by Governing Council and is clearly communicated and accessible to all students, staff, and families
- there is a process for regular review of the school's local policy
- secure storage is provided for student's personal devices that are handed in to school staff
- processes are in place for monitoring internet and school network use by all members of the school community
- enforce the policy and responses to instances of non-compliance
- consider requests for policy exemptions from parents or independent students due to exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis. Make sure that approved exemptions in this category are documented and that relevant staff, including temporary relief teachers, are informed about students with an exemption.
- model appropriate use of mobile phones and support school staff to do the same. Support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible, and respectful use of mobile phones to their children.
- report and respond to incidents of inappropriate or illegal use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legal requirements.

School staff

- deliver learning opportunities and maintain a safe and productive learning environment
- respond to instances of non-compliance in line with the school's policy
- report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legal requirements
- ensure students who have an approved exemption to access their personal device, use it appropriately and only for the specified purpose and store their personal devices away after the exempted activity has concluded
- make sure that any student personal devices handed in for their care are stored in a secure location and are returned to the student (or their parent and/or caregiver) by the end of the same school day
- model appropriate use of mobile phones and support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible, and respectful use of mobile phones to their children. Use mobile phones for work-related/emergency purposes only when students are under their care.

Students

- comply with the requirements of this policy and follow all reasonable directions from the Principal and school staff
- switch all personal devices off, or into flight mode, on arrival at school each day and store it away as specified in this policy
- if permitted to use a mobile phone or personal device in line with an exemption under this policy, do so in a safe, responsible, and respectful way
- communicate respectfully with others and do not use a mobile phone or other personal device to bully, harass, or threaten another person
- respect others' rights to privacy and do not take photos, film, or audio records of other people without their knowledge or permission
- notify a school staff member as soon as possible if feeling unwell or experiencing any other issues at school. Use the school's sign-out processes in all cases, where requiring early collection from school.

Parents

- support the school's implementation of this policy, including the consequences for non-compliance
- encourage their child not to bring a personal device to school unless necessary. Understand that the department does not provide insurance for accidental loss or damage to personal property that is brought onto school grounds (however, claims may be met under the department's public liability insurance where the loss or damage can be attributed to a negligent act or omission on the part of the school – the school will contact the department for advice if this may be the case)
- use the school's formal communication channels in all instances to communicate with the school or to make contact with their child during school hours (including where a student requires early collection from school). Encourage their child to always report to a school staff member in the first instance if they become unwell or experience an issue at school
- recognise the important role they play in supporting their child to use their mobile phone (or other personal device) in a safe, responsible, and respectful way.