



Help for non-English speakers.

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school parent linkages worker / social worker on 03 9097 2000.

## **PURPOSE**

To explain to our school community the Department's and Western Autistic School's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Western Autistic School and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones

## **DEFINITION**

**Mobile Phone** is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network.

## **POLICY**

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

At Western Autistic School:

- 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 carers should reach their child by calling the school's office.

### **Personal Mobile Phone Use**

In accordance with the Department's Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Western Autistic 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.

### **Secure Storage**

Mobile phones owned by students at Western Autistic School 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 Western Autistic 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.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Western Autistic School will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Western Autistic School students are required to store their phones (unless there is an exemption) either in the classroom with the teacher or handed into the school administration office.

### **Enforcement**

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Western Autistic School may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement policies.

At Western Autistic School 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

### Exceptions

Exceptions to the policy may be applied during school hours if certain conditions are met. These can be granted by the Principal, or by the teacher for that class, in accordance with the Department’s Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy.

Specific exception	Documentation
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Learning Plan referencing the device as a communication tool

Where an exception is granted, the student can only use the mobile phone for the purpose for which it was granted.

### COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school’s website
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

### MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)

### POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed:	08.06.2023
Consultation:	Policy developed by working group including: Principal, Business Manager, Executive Assistant Draft policy communicated through Executive Team
Approved by:	Principal Adele Field 15/06/2023
Next scheduled review date:	June 2027