Student use of mobile phones and personal devices

Scope

This school policy is implemented in line with the Department for Education's Student use of mobile phones and personal devices policy, which applies to all government schools. This document provides direction to students, staff, and families about managing personal devices that students choose to bring to school.

For the purposes of this policy, **personal devices** include mobile phones, smart watches and other digital devices that are capable of sending or receiving messages or calls and/or able to connect to the internet, and personal laptops or iPads that are not owned by the school and have not been brought to school by the student under a separate Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) agreement.

Rationale

With the widespread and increasing ownership of mobile phones and other devices among students it is critical that schools, in partnership with families, provide clear guidance for students to become informed, safe, respectful, and responsible digital citizens.

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.

Personal devices at school

Students are permitted to bring personal devices to school:

- as a measure to ensure their safety while travelling to and from school
- so that parents can contact them outside of school hours
- so they can be contacted about a person under their own care, where applicable
- to be used during school hours in line with an exemption that has been approved by the school under this policy.

While students are at school, or attending school activities, they must comply with any reasonable directions given by school staff in line with this policy regarding their personal devices.

The Department for Education's policy requires all students at all department schools to **keep personal devices 'off and away' between the start and end of each school day, and while they are attending school activities off-site, such as camps and excursions.**

Students will not be able to access their personal devices at any time during school hours, unless they have received an approved exemption from the school to use the device for a specific, agreed reason. This means both physical access and remote access (e.g. connecting with the personal device via hotspot or using paired headphones).

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.

- Students are required to place their personal device/s in the classroom 'Mobile Hotel' at the beginning of each school day (8:50 am).
- Teachers will securely store personal devices placed in the 'Mobile Hotel'
- Students can collect their personal device(s) back from the 'Mobile Hotel' at the end of the school 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.

If these procedures have not been followed, logical consequences will apply:

- In the first instance, a verbal reminder / request to put their personal device/s off and place in the 'Mobile Hotel'.
- If the student continues to use their device/s the teacher will confiscate the device/s from the student for placement in the 'Mobile Motel', and returned at the end of the same 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, the teacher will notify the school leadership team who will contact home and request the parent/caregiver to collect the device/s from the school office
- Communication will be made by leadership with parents/caregivers regarding mobile communication device use at school
- Escalated or repeated misuse of personal devices may result in the student being banned from bringing a mobile communication device onto the school grounds.

Where a student's misuse of personal devices is serious, it may be necessary for the school to consider responses in line with the department's suspension, exclusion and expulsion of students procedure, or to contact South Australia Police if the behaviour is suspected to be illegal.

Exemptions

Exceptional circumstances

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.

These requests will be considered by the principal (or delegate) 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 and details about how and when the student is permitted to access their personal device will be shared with relevant staff members.

Temporary exemptions for other agreed purposes

The following temporary exemptions may be made available to students at the discretion of leaders.

- ad-hoc requests need to be accompanied by a parent note to the Principal.
- students may be permitted to bring personal devices on a camp or excursion for learning purposes and/or to facilitate contact with their families at specified and supervised times. Approvals to bring and expectations regarding the student use of devices on the camp or excursion will be detailed in parent consent information.

Roles and responsibilities

Principal

- Make sure:
  - 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 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 exemptions from the policy 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. Take steps to minimise distractions from the non-educational use of personal devices in the 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 are given permission 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) 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 them away as specified in this policy.
- Mobile phones are to remain off, or in flight mode, whilst on school grounds. Necessary phone calls can be made at the front office when requested.
- 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 and support peers to do the same.
- 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 so that staff can follow up appropriately and facilitate contact with families as needed. 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.

Supporting links

- BPS Bullying Prevention Policy and Plan, March 2026
- BPS Student Behaviour Education Policy, December 2025
- BPS Social Media Policy, August 2023
- Cyber-safety at Brompton Primary School – Cyber Safety Use Agreement for Students
- BPS Student ICT Acceptable Use Agreement, February 2026

Communication and review

- Staff and Leadership consultation is followed by ratification of Policy by Governing Council.
- The Student Use of Mobile Phones and Personal Devices Policy can be accessed on School Administration drive –
  - (J) :Quality Framework: Mobile Phones & Personal Devices
  - Curriculum Staff share (T): Quality Framework: Quality Framework: Mobile Phones and Personal Devices
- This Policy is to be reviewed every two years or as directed by DFE Operations and Management.

Questions, concerns, and further information

This policy has been implemented by the school in line with the Department for Education's 'Student use of mobile phones and personal devices policy'. You can find more information about this policy, and links to further resources for parents about personal devices and online safety, on the department's website: Mobile phones and personal devices at school (education.sa.gov.au).

If you have any questions or concerns about the department's policy, you can contact the department at:

Email: education.customers@sa.gov.au or submit an online feedback form

Phone: Free call: 1800 088 158

Please contact the school directly to discuss the possibility of an exemption if your child has exceptional circumstances as outlined in this policy.

Review
April 2023 Governing Council approved: 18 May 2023
August 2026 Governing Council approved: 26 October 2026