Seaford Secondary College Use of Mobile Phones and Personal Devices Policy

Created: May, 2023

Review date: November, 2023

Purpose

Please note that the purpose of this policy is to implement the Department for Education mandate to ban mobile phones in schools in 2023. Please see appendix 1 for more information regarding this.

This policy provides direction to students, staff and families about managing personal mobile phones and other digital devices that students choose to bring to school. For the purposes of this policy, the term digital devices includes, but is not limited to, mobile phones, smartwatches, wireless earphones, tablets or laptops that are not part of a separate 'Bring Your Own Device' arrangement. This policy applies while students are at school, attending an authorised school activity such as an excursion, or during school hours.

Mobile phone use for secondary school students

Our school recognises that there are legitimate reasons for students to bring a mobile phone or personal device to school. This may include:

- to ensure their safety while traveling

- so that parents can contact them outside of school hours

- identified students will be permitted to have their phone in class for specific medical reasons eg diabetes, other health concerns, or as indicated on a One Plan.

Storage of personal devices

- middle school students (7-9) are required to keep their mobile phones (or other digital device) in their **lockers or bags** during the whole school day. The phones must be turned off. Students will have their own individual combination lock.
- senior school students (10-12) are required to keep their mobile phones (or other digital device) in their **bags** during the whole school day. The phones must be turned off
- the whole school day is from the time the student enters the school gates at the start of the day to when they leave at the end of the day and includes all lessons, care group and break times.
- This also applied to onsite activities / events, incursions, excursions and school camps.

If the student does not comply

- in line with the school's behaviour policy, students accessing their personal devices at school will result in disciplinary action which includes, but is not limited to, handing in their phones to a secure location for the remainder of the day, being sent to time out for phone use in class, potential suspension from school for refusing to follow this policy or for repeat offenses

- if confiscation is required, the student will take their device to be securely stored in a locked cage in student service. The device will be returned to them (or their parent/caregiver) at the end of the school day.

- any damage to the device will be recorded on the envelope prior to the staff member taking possession of it. This will avoid any confusion on the physical condition of the phone once it is returned to the student.

Roles and responsibilities

Principal:

Makes sure;

- this policy is clearly communicated and accessible to all students, staff and families.

- there is a process for regular review of the policy

- processes are in place for monitoring internet and school network use by all members of the school community

- enforcement of the schools' and Department for Education policy takes place and responds to instances of non-compliance

- reporting and responding to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legislative requirements occurs

- requests for exemptions from the school policy from parents/caregivers, adult or independent students or reviewed on a case-by-case basis. and that approved exemptions are documented and that relevant staff are informed about students' exemptions

- appropriate use of mobile phones is models and families understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible and respectful use of mobile phones for their children.

School staff

- sensure clear messaging and consistent application of the policy and processes to minimise distractions from the non-educational use of personal devices at school

- respond to instances of non-compliance in line with the school's behaviour support policy

- report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legislative requirements

- 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.

Students

- comply with the requirements of the school's policy and follow all reasonable directions from the Principal and school staff

- 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.

Parents/Caregivers

- support the implementation of the school's policy, including the consequences for non-compliance with the policy

- use the school's **formal** communication channels in all instances to communicate with the school (including where a student requires early collection from school), ie **not contact their child via mobile** while at 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.

Communication and review

In the formation of the 2023 Seaford Secondary College Mobile Phone Policy, to ensure the school is meeting the Department for Education expectations in a way that suits the school community, the following process was followed:

- all students, staff and parents/caregivers were provided a link to a survey to give feedback.
- Parents / caregivers were also consulted through the governing council and an additional face-to-face parent forum
- a mobile phone working party of 9 members was created to analyse all feedback, research other school models and create a policy and process that best meets the needs of our school community
- the process has been ratified by the schools governing council
- the school's policy can be accessed on the school's website under 'Our School/Publications and Policies'. The initial review will occur in 6 months from this policies creation and it will then be reviewed every 3 years.

Supporting information

- https://www.seafordhs.sa.edu.au/our-school/information-technology/digital-learning-program
- https://www.seafordhs.sa.edu.au/files/SSC_Cyber_Safety_Policy_V2.pdf
- https://www.seafordhs.sa.edu.au/files/Anti-Bullying_and_Harassment_Policy_V1_3.pdf

Appendix 1 – Exerpt from Department for Education Mobile Phone Policy

Policy updates 2023

The state government has committed to banning student access to mobile phones at school across all year levels, aside from agreed positive uses.

This will ensure we 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.

Scope of policy updates

Under the incoming policy updates, all students must keep their mobile phones and other personal devices off and away at school, unless granted an exemption by their school under the department's policy. This also applies on school activities such as camps and excursions.

There will be no change to the existing provisions for schools to approve exemptions in exceptional circumstances including but not limited to:

- monitoring or managing a medical condition
- as an agreed adjustment for a student with disability or learning difficulties
- translation for students with English as an additional language or dialect
- where the student has personal circumstances requiring more ready access to their phone (such as where they are a primary carer for their own child or another family member).

Consultation and feedback on policy exemptions

The department is working with key stakeholder groups to refine the details of the policy update, including exemptions for agreed positive uses of mobile phones and other personal devices.

All staff will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the draft policy. The department will also publish further practical guidance for teachers and leaders in managing student use of personal

Implementing the new policy in 2023

Once the new policy is finalised there will be a transition period to allow schools sufficient time to locally implement the new policy. All government schools need to be using the new policy on or before the first day of term 3, 2023.