

## MOBILE PHONES - STUDENT USE POLICY



### Help for non-English speakers.

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary College (MFG) General Office: (03) 4243 0500

### PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department of Education and Trainings and Matthew Flinders Girls (MFG) policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours.

Note: That MFG's School Policy stems from a Ministerial policy formally issued in 2019 by the Minister for Education under section 5.2.1(2)(b) of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at MFG and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones brought onto school premises during school hours (8.45am – 3.11pm), including recess and lunchtime.

### DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy a 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.

### SUMMARY – CRITICAL INFORMATION

- From Term 1 2020, students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours.
- Exceptions to the policy may be applied if certain conditions are met. Exceptions can be granted by the principal, or by a teacher. Exceptions must be documented.
- Where students bring a mobile phone to school, the school must provide secure storage.
- Schools are required to develop a local Students Using Mobile Phones policy, which must include how this Ministerial policy will be implemented.
- Schools will manage non-compliance with their local mobile phone policy in accordance with their existing student engagement policies.

### POLICY

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

#### At MFG:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours from the first bell at 8:45 am until to the final school bell at the end of the day at 3:11 am.
- At the end of the school day students will not switch their phone on until they have left the school grounds after period 6.
- Students who need to leave the school grounds before period 6 (e.g. VCE / VCAL students, SBA students) will not switch their phones on until they have left the school grounds.
- When emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school's office on 4243 0500.

## PERSONAL MOBILE PHONE USE

In accordance with the Department's Mobile Phones Policy issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at MFG during school hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted by a Principal.

A student must not have a mobile phone in a class during normal school times even if the phone is switched off.

Where a student has been granted an exception by a principal, the student must use their mobile phone for the purpose for which the exception was granted, and in a safe, ethical, and responsible manner. This exception will be documented in line with Exceptions section of this policy.

## SECURE STORAGE

Mobile phones owned by students at MFG 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 MFG 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, MFG will provide secure storage. Secure storage at MFG is the student's locker and is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At MFG students are required to store their phones in their locker and locked securely using their own lock.

The other form of secure storage at MFG is a storage locker located in the Administration Office.

## ENFORCEMENT

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at MFG may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement policies such as the *MFG Student Engagement Policy* and *The Positive Climate for Learning Policy*.

At MFG inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours** on school grounds.

## EXCEPTIONS

There is minimal exception to this policy. All exceptions need to be negotiated and approved, in writing, by a Principal.

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

The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department's are:

### 1. Learning-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
For specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Unit of work, learning sequence
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Learning Plan, Individual Education Plan

### *2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions*

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	Student Health Support Plan
Students who are Young Carers	A localised student record

### *3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite*

Specific exception	Documentation
Travelling to and from excursions	As requested by the organising teacher and risk assessment
Students on excursions and camps	As requested by the organising teacher and risk assessment.
When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission	Parental permission for the student being off site and risk assessment.
Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel	Dual enrolment documentation and risk assessment.

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**

MFG 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.

### **EXCLUSIONS**

This policy does not apply to:

- Out-of-school-hours events (unless specified on the excursion/camp forms)
- Travelling to and from school
- Students travelling to workplace activities (SBAs) and VET

### **COMMUNICATION**

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

- Available publicly on our school's website (or insert other online parent/carer/student communication method)
- Included in school updates
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

### **RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy
- The Positive Climate for Learning policy
- [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](#)
- [Personal Goods – Department policy](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2022
Consultation	March 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	March 2025/26