MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and William Ruthven Secondary College's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices while onsite.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at William Ruthven Secondary College and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices brought onto school premises, including before school and after school, and during recess and lunchtime.

DEFINITIONS

A mobile phone is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network. "For the purpose of this policy, "mobile phone" refers to mobile phones and any device that may connect to or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone such as earphones, headphones, air pods, and smart watches with access to a cellular system."

POLICY

William Ruthven Secondary College understands that students may carry a personal mobile phone to and from school, particularly if they are travelling independently.

At William Ruthven Secondary College:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and out of sight once they enter the school grounds and then securely stored in their lockers throughout the day, including recess and lunchtime.
- Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met, for example, staff may apply to allow students to use mobile phones during class time as per WRSC form.
- 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, students' personal mobile phones must not be used at William Ruthven Secondary College while onsite, including before school and after school, and during recess and lunchtime, 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 William Ruthven Secondary College are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner's (student's or parent/carer's) risk. Please note that William Ruthven Secondary College 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, William Ruthven Secondary College will provide secure storage via a lockable locker. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At William Ruthven Secondary College students are required to store their phones either in their lockable lockers or handed into the school administration office to be placed in a lockable cupboard.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at William Ruthven Secondary College will be asked to hand the phone to a staff member who will then log the phone at the front office for the student to collect at the end of the day. If a student refuses a staff member's instruction the matter will be followed up by YLL as per our SWPBs processes.

At William Ruthven Secondary College inappropriate use of mobile phones is any use on the school site, unless an exception has been granted, and particularly use of a mobile phone:

- to bypass the schools filtered access to the internet by using the device as a Hotspot.
- 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
- during exams and assessments

Exceptions

Exceptions to the policy:

- may be applied if certain conditions are met, specifically,
    - Health and wellbeing-related exceptions; and
    - Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite.
    - Teacher has applied for an exemption for use in the classroom
- can be granted by the Principal, in accordance with the Department's Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy.

The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department's Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy are:

1. *Learning-related exceptions*

Specific exception	Documentation
For specific learning activities (teacher has applied for and gained class-based exemption)	Unit of work, learning sequence

2. *Health and wellbeing-related exceptions*

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition: a student with diabetes may use their mobile phone to monitor their blood sugar, for example	Student Health Support Plan

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

Specific exception	Documentation
Travelling to and from excursions independently	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students on excursions and camps *see Camps, excursions, and extracurricular activities below.	Risk assessment planning documentation
When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel	Risk assessment planning documentation

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

William Ruthven Secondary College 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 and other personal mobile devices.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-school-hours events while students are under the supervision of their parents/cares.
- Travelling to and from school
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g., Work Experience, City Experience
- Students who are undertaking VET, or Taster Courses, while they travel to and from these venues.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in school newsletter
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	Date: March 2023 In accordance with DET and Ministerial Orders
Consultation	School Council, FEAT, Leadership Team, and School Consultative Committee, Staff, and Student focus groups.
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	May 2026