EPPING SECONDARY COLLEGE
Learning for Life

MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Epping Secondary College policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Epping Secondary College and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones brought onto school premises during school hours, including 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.

POLICY

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

At Epping Secondary College

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored in their lockers 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 Epping Secondary College 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 Epping Secondary College 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 Epping

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. Refer to the Epping Secondary College's Personal Property Policy AND/OR the Department's Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy.]

At Epping Secondary College students are required to store their phones in their locked locker during school hours.

Implementation

1. Students **will** be permitted to use their mobile devices (phone, tablet, watch or other telecommunication system):

- Before 8.50
- After 3.00
- Special circumstances that are pre - approved for structured Teaching & Learning purposes
- If students bring mobile devices they must remain in locked lockers during school hours
- The school accepts no responsibility for loss or damage for devices collected under this policy.

2. Mobile devices and headphones (unless pre – approved for structured Teaching & Learning purposes) **must not** be visible during any other time in school:

- School hours (8.50 – 3.00), this includes recess and lunch.

3. If a student uses their device at any point when they are not permitted, the following steps will be followed:

- **1st Offence** – device handed to the member of staff and to be collected from The Front Office at the end of the day by the student (logged onto Compass).

- **2nd Offence** – device handed to the member of staff and taken to the Front Office to be **collected by a parent/guardian** of the student (logged onto Compass, Office staff call home to inform).

- Any repeat of device misuse will result in Step 3 process and sanctions at the school's discretion put into place.

4. Usage of devices before 8.50am and after 3.00pm must be appropriate, this includes **NOT** utilizing the photo/recording functions under any circumstances.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Epping Secondary College may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement polices

At Epping Secondary College 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
- during exams and assessments

Exceptions

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 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 (class-based exception)	
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	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students on excursions and camps	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

Epping 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.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school

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 staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in school newsletter
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- 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

- Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy
- Weapons — Banning, Searching and Seizing Harmful Items
- Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2025
Consultation	
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	March 2028