



WINMALEE HIGH SCHOOL

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Student Use of Digital Devices and Online Services Procedures

Purpose

These procedures promote the learning, safety and wellbeing of students and the management of any risk of harm and distraction from the use of digital technology

accessed via a mobile phone, or other personal electronic device. Thank you to those who completed the 2022 mobile phone survey, which helped us to form our classroom strategy. Now, with the recent [State Government ban](#) of mobile phones in secondary public schools, we have revised our procedures in line with this mandatory policy.

This means that from Term 4, 2023, the school will be mobile free for students all day, from the time students enter the gate until the time they leave school grounds.

Scope

This procedure covers student use of digital devices and online services in school-related settings, including on school grounds, at school-related activities and outside of school where there is a clear and close connection between the school and the conduct of students. For the purposes of these procedures, mobile phones and other devices includes smartwatches, iPods, iPads, other branded tablets, as well as all associated listening accessories, such as, headphones and AirPods.

Our School's Approach

The aim of this policy is to provide:

- A safe environment to learn without inappropriate mobile phone use or distractions.
- Greater opportunities for social interaction and physical activity during recess and lunchtimes.

For students at Winmalee High School the following expectations apply to the use of mobile phones and other digital devices at school:

- Mobile phones and other digital devices must be off and away from gate to gate – students do not have permission to access their mobile phones from the time they enter school grounds until they leave the grounds at the end of the school day.
- This ban includes all school-related activities, including excursions, carnivals and camps. If mobile phones and related devices are permitted for safety reasons, this will be communicated clearly and built into the risk assessment for the event, or students will be directed by the supervising teacher if they are able to use their mobile phones or devices.
- Students who have an Individual Learning Plan and use a device to support learning will be supported with school devices.
- Safekeeping and security of each item is the responsibility of the owner. Students in PE classes may be offered access to special arrangements to secure their digital device for the duration of the lesson. Other class teachers may offer arrangements to secure devices, especially where bags are required to be left outside of the classroom/learning space.
- Senior students bringing laptops to school need to ensure that the device meets the Department's specifications to enable operation through the school's Wi-Fi. Students will need to have signed the BYOD permission note (Appendix E). These devices can only be used for learning.
- The school will have confiscation and storage procedures in place for breaches of the mobile phone ban during class, and on school grounds.



- For related research on mobile phones, see Appendix C.
- For expectations outlined within our PBL framework of Safe Respectful Learners, see Appendix D.

Exemptions

Exemptions will be made for students **managing a health condition**.

Health related exemptions can be sought by parents/carers by contacting the principal and completing the Mobile Phone Ban Medical Exemption form (Appendix B). In the case of a health condition, a letter from a medical professional stating when and how the mobile phone is to be used will also be required. The deputy principal or principal will work alongside parents to complete the Phone Exemption Plan. The form can be accessed on the school website and the Parent Portal. A paper copy can also be collected from the front office.

Note: No phones to be used for canteen purchases, including those students who have an exemption.

Consequences for mobile phone or other electronic device use

See the flow chart (Appendix A)

Level 0: Mobile phone is switched off and stored in school bag from the time students enter school grounds and leave school grounds (gate to gate). No consequences.

Level 1 – Class: Mobile phone is seen and/or in use during class time - 1st Incident. Teacher sends student to the front office to hand in phone. Slip is given to student to show teacher. Teacher adds entry into Sentral with notification to parent/carer via email. Phone collected at end of school day after bell. Student will be interviewed by the deputy principal.

Level 1 – Grounds: Mobile phone is seen and/or in use on grounds - 1st Incident. Teacher on duty notifies head teacher on duty and sends student to front office to hand in phone. Teacher adds entry into Sentral with notification to parent/carer via email. Phone collected at end of school day after bell. Student will be interviewed by the deputy principal.

Level 2: Mobile phone is seen and/or in use during school hours - 2nd Incident. Same procedure as Level 1, followed by interview with the principal and formal caution of suspension. Parent/carer formally notified.

Level 3: Mobile phone is seen and/or in use during school hours - 3rd Incident. Same procedure as Level 1, followed by interview with the principal and suspension. Parent/carer formally notified, and meeting arranged. Phone collected from school by parent/carer.

* If a student refuses to follow procedure, uses their phone inappropriately, or has already been suspended for a phone ban breach, they will proceed straight to Level 2/3 and will be considered for daily process to hand their phone hand in or leave it at home.

* No permission will be granted to leave class early to collect a confiscated phone.

A Frequently Asked Questions document is available on our [school website](#).

In addition, students will have their device immediately confiscated and further disciplinary action will follow if:

- They are using their device in class (excluding laptops) or in the playground without permission.
- The device is used to bully, intimidate, or otherwise harass other people through any voice call, text message, photographic, video, or other data transfer system available on the device.



- Students use digital devices to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school.
- Students use devices to record images, video, or sound without permission.
- The device has been used to contravene the law.

Contact between students and parents/carers and employers during the school day

- Should a student need to make a call during the school day, they may approach the administration office or their supervising deputy principal during recess and lunch and ask for permission to use the school's phone.
- If it is urgent, and it is not timely for the student to check their message after they leave school grounds, parents/carers may contact the school and leave a message for their child via the front office.
- Employers should not be calling students during the school day to organise shifts. The employer may leave a message for students to receive when they leave school grounds at the end of the day.
- Students are to report to the front office sick bay if they are sick and the school will contact parents as appropriate. Students should not message their parents directly to be collected from school without the permission or knowledge of school staff.

Responsibilities and obligations

For students

- Students may not use mobile phones and other personal electronic devices while on school grounds at any time. 'School grounds' extends to excursions, sports carnivals, and other events at the school or off site where an approved school activity takes place, unless otherwise advised.
- Mobile phones are to be 'off and away from gate to gate'. This means all day from the time students enter school grounds in the morning until they have left the school grounds at the end of the day or are in the designated bus line area. This includes before school and at break times.
- Smartwatches may be worn as part of a trial period as negotiated with the school's P&C; however, they must be on Airplane mode during school hours.
- BYO or school issued laptops are NOT part of the ban, however, these devices are not to be accessed before school or during break time in the playground. Students who wish to use laptops at these times must do so in the library or a classroom under the supervision of a teacher. Teachers may also request or allow students to use listening accessories with their laptops as required for learning activities.
- Students will take their mobile phone or electronic device to the front office immediately if asked by a teacher or member of staff. The phone will be stored in the office, and the student will enter the phone in the Daily Phone Register, including their signature. The student will be provided with a numbered slip to collect their phone at the end of the school day, signing the register again on collection.
- Failure to follow the discipline code will incur greater consequences, including Formal Caution to Suspend, or a Suspension, for persistent failure to follow school procedures and the school's behaviour and discipline procedures.
- Students must take full responsibility for any mobile phone or similar device brought to school. The school or staff will not be responsible for their loss, theft, or damage. Students who bring their devices to school, do so at their own risk.



- Purchasing at the canteen - students will be required to use a card/cash to pay for purchases at the canteen, or they can use their smartwatch whilst on Airplane mode if their payment system is set up. The P&C have also suggested the card payment system [Spriggy](#).

For parents and carers

- Contact the school by phone to pass on messages rather than contacting a student directly on their device (for acceptable reasons only, students will be permitted to use a phone in the front office to contact their parents/carers under the supervision of a staff member).
- Understand that the school takes no responsibility for loss or damage to phones or personal electronic devices.
- Work collaboratively with the school and help reinforce Winmalee High School's Use of Mobile Phone (Personal Devices) Procedures with their child/ren.
- Collect their child's phone from the school if it has been confiscated for the third time.
- Take responsibility for their child's use of digital devices and online services at home such as use of online services with age and content restrictions.
- Communicate with school staff and the school community respectfully and collaboratively as outlined in the 2018 School Community Charter.
- Switch off or put devices on silent when at official school functions, or during meetings.

For the principal, teachers, and school staff

- Model appropriate use of digital devices and online services in line with departmental policy.
- Deliver learning experiences that encourage safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services. This includes following agreed school expectations for using digital devices and online services, in line with this procedure and departmental policy.
- Respond to and report any breaches and incidents of inappropriate use of digital devices and online services as required by school procedures, departmental policy and any statutory and regulatory requirements. This includes:
 - Reporting the creation, possession or distribution of indecent or offensive material to the Incident Support and Report hotline as required by the Incident Notification and Response Policy and Procedures and consider any mandatory reporting requirements.
 - Working with the department and the Office of the eSafety Commissioner (if necessary) to resolve cases of serious online bullying and image-based abuse.
 - Following the school's procedures when responding to any incident of inappropriate student behaviour relating to the use of digital devices or online services.
- As issues emerge, support parents and carers to understand strategies that promote their children's safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services.
- Participate in professional development related to appropriate use of digital devices and online services.

For volunteers and contractors

- Model appropriate, safe and respectful use of mobile phones and digital devices at school.
- Report any inappropriate use of digital devices and online services to the principal, school executive or school staff they are working with.



Communicating this procedure to the school community

Students will be informed about this procedure through school assemblies, year meetings and via the school website.

Parents and carers will be advised via the school newsletter. This procedure and other related documents can be accessed electronically via the [school's website](#). A hard copy can be requested from the school.

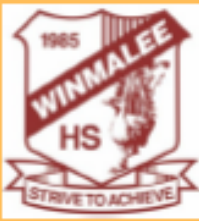
Complaints

If a student, parent or carer has a complaint under this procedure, they should first follow our school's complaint process. If the issue cannot be resolved, please refer to the department's [guide for students/parents/carers about making a complaint about our schools](#).

Review

The principal or delegated staff will review this procedure annually, or as required.

Last reviewed, Term 4, 2023.



Phones Off & Away | Gate to Gate

Winmalee High School Mobile Phone Ban Procedure

Level 0

Mobile phone is switched off and stored in school bag from the time students enter school grounds and leave school grounds (gate to gate). No consequences.

Level 1 Class

Mobile phone is seen and/or in use during class time - 1st Incident.

Teacher sends student to the front office to hand in phone. Slip is given to student to show teacher. Teacher adds entry into Sentral with notification to parent/carer via email. Phone collected at end of school day after bell.

Student will be interviewed by the deputy principal.

Level 1 Grounds

Mobile phone is seen and/or in use on grounds - 1st Incident.

Teacher on duty notifies head teacher on duty and sends student to front office to hand in phone. Teacher adds entry into Sentral with notification to parent/carer via email. Phone collected at end of school day after bell.

Student will be interviewed by the deputy principal.

Level 2

Mobile phone is seen and/or in use during school hours - 2nd Incident.

Same procedure as Level 1, followed by interview with the principal and formal caution of suspension. Parent/carer formally notified.

Level 3

Mobile phone is seen and/or in use during school hours - 3rd Incident.

Same procedure as Level 1, followed by interview with the principal and suspension. Parent/carer formally notified and meeting arranged. Phone collected from school by parent/carer.

- If a student refuses to follow procedure, uses their phone inappropriately, or has already been suspended for phone ban breach, they will proceed straight to Level 2/3 and will be considered for daily phone hand in.
- No permission will be granted to leave class early to collect a confiscated phone.

Appendix B: Medical Exemption Form



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Mobile Phone Ban Medical Exemption

Student Name:
Year:
Parent/Carer:
Outline health/wellbeing condition requiring an exemption:
Outline specific ways which the phone needs to be used by the student during school hours:
List medical information/evidence attached:
Parent/Carer signature and date:

OFFICE USE ONLY

- Exemption Request Approved Exemption Request Declined
- Plan created in Sentral and Flag on Student Profile
- Teachers notified
- DP has notified parent that exemption is in place. Recorded on Sentral.

Notes:

Review Date: (12 months):



Appendix C: Research – Mobile phone use in the classroom

There is extensive research emerging on the use of mobile phones by young people. Included below is an edited review of the available literature.

How smart is it to allow students to use mobile phones at school? Reports on a study of mobile phone bans in England. The bans led to:

- Improvements in student achievement, an increase in test scores for students aged 16 by an amount equal to adding five extra days to the school year. Lower-achieving students made the greatest improvements.

<https://theconversation.com/how-smart-is-it-to-allow-students-to-use-mobile-phones-atschool-40621>

'Schools need to react quickly': Education expert urges smartphone ban discusses smartphone use in schools. According to Finnish expert Dr Sahlberg, smartphone distraction is one of the main reasons why Australia is sliding down Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) rankings.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/schools-need-to-react-quickly-education-experturges-smartphone-ban-20180525-p4zhm4.html>

Research – Cognition and smartphone use - Smartphones and Cognition: A Review of Research Exploring the Links between Mobile Technology Habits and Cognitive Functioning is a review of academic research on mobile phones. The review looked for evidence of effects of smartphone use on cognition. It reported that habitual smartphone use may have a negative and lasting impact on users' ability to:

- think, remember, pay attention, regulate emotion.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5403814/>

Dopamine, Smartphones & You: A battle for your time, a Harvard University blog discusses our desire to connect and seek validation through technologies and how this can lead to anxiety, poor sleep, and unsuccessful social interactions. The blog explains how mobile phone content can influence our 'dopamine pathways and lead to a battle for increasingly of the users' time.

<http://sitn.hms.harvard.edu/flash/2018/dopamine-smartphones-battle-time/>

The Social Dilemma is a Netflix documentary-drama hybrid that examines the many ways social media and social networking companies have manipulated human psychology to rewire the human brain and what it means for society in general. One of the most striking sections of the documentary is the one that touches on the vulnerability of teenagers who use platforms like Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, and multiple others every single day and have been moulded by social media's influences. This section of the film is highlighted by statistics on depression, anxiety, and even suicide rates of teenagers that correlate with the rise of social media. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaaC57tcci0>

As always there is a contrary view so please also check out this short ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) RN evaluation https://youtu.be/9y_KiBxKePI

Other related articles on our website in the Parent Support Hub

<https://winmalee-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-community/readings-and-recommendations.html>

Other resources are accessible to Winmalee High School families through the [YSafe Online Safety Hub](#). This hub has App reviews and other useful information for parents and carers.



Appendix D: What is safe, responsible, and respectful student behaviour?

Be SAFE

- Protect your personal information, including your name, address, school, email address, telephone number, pictures of you and other personal details.
- Only use your own usernames and passwords, and never share them with others.
- Ask a teacher or other responsible adult for help if anyone online asks for your personal information, wants to meet you or offers you money or gifts.
- Let a teacher or other responsible adult know immediately if you find anything online that is suspicious, harmful, inappropriate or makes you uncomfortable.
- Never hack, disable or bypass any hardware or software security, including any virus protection, spam and filter settings.

Be RESPONSIBLE

- Follow all school rules and instructions from school staff, including when using digital devices and online services.
- Take care with the digital devices you use.
 - Make sure any BYOD devices you bring to school are fully charged each day and are stored appropriately when not in use.
 - Understand that you and your parents and carers are responsible for any repairs or IT support your personal devices might need.
 - Make sure the BYOD devices you bring to school have the latest software installed.
 - Take care with the school-owned devices you share with others, so that other people can use them after you.
- Use online services in responsible and age-appropriate ways.
 - Only use online services in the ways agreed to with your teacher.
 - Only access appropriate content and websites, including when using the school's filtered network and personal, unfiltered networks.
 - Do not use online services to buy or sell things online, to gamble or to do anything that breaks the law.
- Understand that everything done on the school's network is monitored and can be used in investigations, court proceedings or for other legal reasons.

Be RESPECTFUL

- Respect and protect the privacy, safety and wellbeing of others.
- Do not share anyone else's personal information.
- Get permission before you take a photo or video of someone.
- Do not harass or bully other students, school staff or anyone, this includes cyberbullying using a digital device or online service.
- Do not send or share messages or content that could cause harm, including things that might be:
 - inappropriate, offensive or abusive;
 - upsetting or embarrassing to another person or group;
 - considered bullying;
 - private or confidential; and/or
 - a virus or other harmful software.



Appendix E: Student Agreement for Bring Your Own Device

Students can opt into the Bring your Own Device (BYOD) program. We encourage senior students bring their own device to school. Junior students should discuss arrangements with the school before considering bringing a device to school.

Students who choose to bring their own device can connect to the Department Wi-Fi by completing this permission form and returning it to the school. Completed notes should be handed in at the library where they will be supported to connect to the school's Wi-Fi.

Device options are flexible, and we recommend students choose a device they are most comfortable using, as long as it can connect to the school's Wi-Fi (2.4ghz and 5ghz). As most students will use cloud-based storage and programs, a Chromebook may be suitable to meet student needs. Students will have access to their Google Drive and Office 365. If students wish to use programs or apps such as Adobe Photoshop or AutoCAD, then a Windows device may be more suitable.

- 1. The term "device" in these procedures refers to any personal mobile electronic device with the capability to connect to the department's Wi-Fi network.*
- 2. Students may bring their own devices to school and may access the department's Wi-Fi network.*
- 3. Use of devices at school is governed by school developed guidelines, processes and procedures.*
- 4. The department will provide internet access through its wireless networks at no cost to students enrolled in NSW Public Schools at DoE sites.*
- 5. Students are responsible for the care and maintenance of their devices including data protection and battery charging.*
- 6. The department and Winmalee High School will not accept any liability for the theft, damage or loss of any student's device. Students who bring their own devices onto school sites do so at their own risk.*
- 7. Winmalee High School will not provide hardware or technical support for devices.*
- 8. Students and their parents/carers must complete a signed BYOD Agreement prior to connecting to the department's Wi-Fi network.*
- 9. Where the school has reasonable grounds to suspect that a device contains data which breaches the BYOD Agreement, they may confiscate the device for the purpose of confirming the existence of the material. Depending on the nature of the material involved, further action may be taken including referral to the police. School disciplinary action may also be appropriate.*
- 10. Use of BYOD devices in lessons is determined by the classroom teacher. Students are required to follow all teacher instructions re the use of BYOD devices.*

Student Name

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Carer Name

Parent/Carer Signature

Date