



# Woollooware High School

## Mobile Phone / Electronic Device Policy

Term 2 2024

### 1. Rationale and Objectives

Woollooware High School supports the restrictions of mobile phones in accordance with the NSW Department of Education: *'Students' Use of Mobile Phones in Schools policy'*

Mobile phone use in schools can impact student learning and wellbeing. Restricting mobile phone use at school aims to increase focus in classrooms, remove distractions and promote positive social interaction, while reducing interactions that occur online during the school day. Woollooware High School has strong teaching and learning practices to support students in the classroom, using various forms of appropriate technology, which maximises the benefits and minimises the risks of digital environments and prepare students for life beyond school. We aim to foster a safe learning environment which supports and enhances each child's social and emotional health through our wellbeing and learning support teams. Building our students' capacity to self-regulate their mobile phone use, every day, underpins this policy.

Woollooware High School has elected to use the following approach.

All mobile phones will be **'off and away'** for the full school day, including before school, at recess and at lunch. This will mean that students will have a responsibility to turn off their phone and store it safely in their school bag, as they enter the school grounds, for the course of the school day. Simply put, the **phones will be off and away, from gate to gate.** This is an

approved NSW Department of Education option and will limit unnecessary distractions and complement our ongoing approach to ensure every student maximises their learning and social growth in a safe and supportive environment.

### 2. Student Expectations

2.1 Students may not use mobile phones and other personal electronic devices while on school grounds at any time. 'School grounds' extends to school excursions and other approved school activities and events occurring either at the school or off site, unless otherwise advised.

2.2 Mobile phones are to be **'off and away all day'**, from the time students enter the school grounds in the morning until they are in the designated bus line area or have left school grounds after 3:06pm. This includes in the playground (toilets) before school and at break times.



- 2.3 Students must switch their Smart Watches to 'aeroplane mode' for the duration of the school day if they are worn.
- 2.4 BYOD or school issued laptops are NOT included in the ban. However, students will be discouraged from accessing them 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 in a classroom under the supervision of a teacher.
- 2.5 Laptops and tablets should not be used for gaming at school unless the game is for educational purposes and the student has been instructed to do so by a teacher as part of a class learning activity.
- 2.6 Teachers may request or allow students to use listening accessories with their laptops as required for learning activities.
- 2.7 Students will hand their mobile phone or electronic device immediately to the front office when instructed by a member of staff to do so. Failure to do so may incur more severe consequences.
- 2.8 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 them to school, do so at their own risk.

### **3. Exemptions**

Woolooware High School understands there may be students who have a medical, wellbeing or learning need which will require them to access a mobile phone as defined in this plan. These exceptions will only be available for:

#### **3.1 Managing a health condition**

Health related exemptions can be sought by parents/carers by contacting the Principal.

In the case of exemption of health issues, current Health Care plans will be considered. For other exemptions, a letter from a medical professional will be required, to support this claim. This letter must state when, where and how the mobile phone could be used and should demonstrate that access to a mobile phone is the only viable treatment or support option. Please note that students who require the use of mood regulation apps etc. will be supported by the school to access these on school issued devices.

As previously stated, students with current Health Care plans, or for students newly diagnosed with insulin monitors or other health devices linked to their phone, a meeting to consider how to both care for the young person and manage this policy with individual students and their parents or carers will be required. In those instances, students will be granted an exemption and will be able to carry their phone in their pocket and may check their phone as required to respond to alerts or alarms. There will be an expectation that no other student accessing this phone, during the school day.

#### **3.2 A teacher directed / supervised learning activity**

Teachers can grant a classroom-based learning exception for specific purposes for a specific time. For example, when creating digital film or taking photographs for use in an assignment or class activity. Teachers giving such permission will provide notice as required and will supervise student use of the device for this purpose.

#### **3.3 Purchasing at the canteen**

Students can continue to use cash or can use a card to pay, as always.

In Term 4 2023, WHS students will be able to use their mobile phones to pay for food/drink at the canteen. Students may only remove and use their devices at the counter. Devices must be returned to Airplane mode and then placed into their bag immediately after use.

NOTE: WHS is trialling this option and will review data of use and impact, moving forward. Families may choose to opt for their child/ren to use a card to reduce phone use during the school day.

#### **4. Parent / Carer expectations**

Woolooware High School understands there will always be emergencies when parents need to get in contact with students or vice versa during the school day. We try to keep this to a minimum, with the exception of emergencies, to avoid disturbing the students' learning.

- 4.1 Any messages that need to be passed on to students from their parents and/or carers during the school day should be directed through the school's Front Office rather than via the student's device. For acceptable reasons only, students will be permitted to use a phone in the Front Office to contact their parents.
- 4.2 Work collaboratively with the school to help reinforce Woolooware High School's Mobile Phone / Electronic Devices Policy with their child/ren.
- 4.3 In emergencies, parents will need to contact their children through the school office.
- 4.4 Understand that the school takes no responsibility for loss or damage to phones or personal electronic devices.

#### **5. Improper use of mobile phones or other personal electronic devices**

Improper use of mobile phones or other personal electronic devices will result in students being directed by staff to hand their device to Front Office (including laptops). It is appropriate to confiscate devices from students when:

- 5.1 Students have failed to meet the school's expectations relating to appropriate use of mobile phones or other personal electronic devices
- 5.2 Students that are meeting with any member of the senior executive will hand over the phone during that meeting
- 5.3 The device has been used to interfere with the safety and wellbeing of staff and students or the operation of the school.

#### **Further disciplinary action will follow if students:**

- 5.4 Are caught using their device in class or in the playground contrary to our expectations (see section 2).
- 5.5 Use their phone to hotspot a laptop or computer.
- 5.6 Use their device inappropriately, both on or offsite, according to the Department of Education's Behaviour Policy.
- 5.7 Have, or are suspected of having, material on their phone that poses a risk to their own safety and/or wellbeing or to that of other students or staff.
- 5.8 Use digital devices to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school.
- 5.9 Use or are suspected of using devices to record images, video, or sound without permission/consent.

#### **6. Consequences may include:**

- 6.1 Confiscation of the device. There is to be no argument when requested to hand in the device to the Front Office. Such behaviour may incur further disciplinary action.
- 6.2 A reflection or other appropriate disciplinary measure as determined by the school's discipline policy.
- 6.3 Withdrawing the student's privilege of carrying a phone at school.
- 6.4 Suspension in cases of repeated breach of policy where other disciplinary action has not redirected or minimised the behaviour of concern.

## 7. Discipline – phones and accessories

- 7.1 In the instance that a student is found with their phone out of their bag, or inappropriately using devices connected to their phone, they will be required to take their phone to the Front Office. Staff in the Front Office will record the incident as a Mobile Phone Breach. **In these instances, the phone will be returned to the student at the end of the day.**
- 7.2 When a student refuses to hand their phone into the office – they will be sent to the HT, or reported to the HT as appropriate, for follow up:
- Students refusing to hand phones into the office will receive an after-school reflection.
  - Ongoing defiance will result in Deputy Principal or Principal intervention.

7.3 Any student/s in breach of mobile phone policy, will have the device(s) confiscated immediately. The device(s) will be confiscated without warning, stored in the Office, and released to students at the end of the school day unless otherwise informed by a Principal or Deputy Principal. A second breach will result in immediate confiscation, stored in the office, and released to students at the end of the day. An after-school reflection will also be issued. A third breach will result in immediate confiscation, stored in the office and parent collection will be required. The student will also be issued with a Formal Caution to Suspend. A fourth breach will lead to a Suspension from school for continued / persistent disobedience.

**8. Evaluation** This policy will be evaluated as part of a three year cycle or when necessary.

## 9. Further Reading / Supporting Documentation

Impact of Mobile Digital Devices in Schools  
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/about-us/education-data-and-research/cese/publications/literature-reviews/impact-of-mobile-digital-devices-in-schools>

Behaviour Code for Students  
<https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/going-to-a-public-school/media/documents/translated-documents/behaviour-code-for-students/behaviour-code-students-english.pdf>

WHS Anti-Bullying Plan 2023  
<https://wooloware-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/supporting-our-students/student-wellbeing/anti-bullying-plan.html>

## 10. Frequently Asked Questions



# Student Questions

## 1. What if I don't possess a mobile phone or have not brought it to school that day?

*There is no requirement to bring a mobile phone to school.*

## 2. Can I use my phone before and after the school day?

*As soon as you arrive at school, all mobile phones should be switched off or placed in airplane mode, and stowed away as specified in the school's mobile phone strategy. Mobile phones cannot be accessed until you leave the school grounds at the end of the day.*

## 3. What if I need to contact my parent/carer during the school day?

*As always, in an emergency, you will always be able to call home through the school office.*

## 4. What if my parent/carer needs to contact me in the event of an emergency?

*In the case of an emergency, your parent/carer can contact the school via the front office using the school's number published on the website. A message will then be passed on to you by your teacher, if required.*

## 5. What if I have a medical condition that requires me to use my phone to record or monitor medical information?

*If you require the use of a mobile phone for a medical or other reasons, you will be granted an exemption and the details of any exemption will be added to your learning support or individual education plan. You, your teachers and parents/carers will be made aware of this exemption.*

## 6. How do I know if I am allowed to use my phone for medical reasons?

*You will be officially informed by the school about the full details of any exemption granted and the terms of use for that exemption.*

## 7. What if the school goes into lockdown or lockout?

*In the case of a lockout or lockdown, the school will make your parents or carers aware of the situation, if required. If needed, your parents can also contact the school via the front office using the school's contact information available on the website.*

## 8. I use my phone to purchase food from the canteen or buy uniform items.

*Students are encouraged to bring their physical EFTPOS/debit cards to school with them to enable cashless transactions. Alternative payment methods may be available, and these will be communicated to you and your parents/carers.*

*WHS is trialling the use of phones for purchases only and will review data moving forward. Students must put their phones away after making a purchase.*

## 9. Can I bring my laptop or iPad to school?

*Yes, this policy only covers personal mobile phones. iPads and personal computers used for learning in the classroom are not included. However, students will be discouraged from accessing them 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 in a classroom under the supervision of a teacher.*

## **10. I have a job. How can my employer contact me about work shifts?**

*Students should alert their employers about the school's mobile phone strategy and advise that they may not see any messages the employer sends until after school. Alternative methods of contacts such as email could also be used.*

## **Parent Questions**

### **11. What if a student does not comply with the mobile phone plan and accesses it at during the school day?**

*Students will be made aware of all the new school rules ahead of Term 4 and will be required to comply with them. As with all school rules, student refusal will result in appropriate action being taken, in accordance with the school's behaviour code/policy.*

### **12. What if a student needs to make an urgent phone call home?**

*Students will be allowed to call home via the front office in arrangement with teaching staff and school administration support staff.*

### **13. What if a student with a medical condition requires their phone to record medical information?**

*If your child has special medical requirements, you may apply for an exemption and varied terms of use or arrange a meeting with the school executive to discuss the best options for your child.*

### **14. How do I arrange permission for my child to use their phone for medical reasons?**

*You will be able to make a request for an exemption during Term 3. If appropriate, an individualised plan for usage will be developed. It will take into account their medical needs and set the terms and conditions for phone use, that incorporate school guidelines.*

### **15. What if the school goes into lockdown or lockout?**

*In the case of a lockout or lockdown, you will be notified via phone call or text message. You can also contact the school via the front office using the school's contact information available on the website.*

### **16. What happens with mobile phones on excursions?**

*Mobile phones are not permitted to be used during school excursions taking place during school hours. If the excursion is overnight or over a number of days and nights, special information will be provided to you via the teacher organising the excursion around the parameters of phone usage from students.*

### **17. What happens with mobile phones during sport?**

*Exemptions may apply for sporting activities that are held off school grounds. If this is the case, information will be included in the sports activity information and permission form. Otherwise, sporting activities will be considered part of the normal school day.*

### **18. How will the school manage the administration of parent enquiries?**

*Schools will connect with parents in the usual ways and can be contacted anytime via the front office.*

**19. Can students access their phones during private study or minimally supervised periods?**

*Students will not be permitted to access their phones during these times.*

**20. What if my child needs to purchase food at the canteen?**

*Students are encouraged to bring their physical EFTPOS/debit cards to school with them to enable cashless transactions. Alternative payment methods may be available, and these will be communicated to you before Term 4. WHS is trialling the use of phones for purchases only and will review data moving forward. Students must put their phones away after making a purchase.*

**21. What if my child needs to use their phone for classwork?**

*Students will not be using their phone for classwork. The school has access to a range of other digital devices that are more suitable and conducive to student learning.*

**22. What happens if my child is in sick bay and the school has arranged a parent to pick them up?**

*Students in sick bay are constantly monitored and communicated with. Please contact the front office.*

**23. Will the school send a message to my child if I need to contact them?**

*Messages from parents to students will be passed on as usual.*

**24. Will my child be allowed to call me?**

*Students will be allowed to call you for urgent situations. If they need to urgently call home, they must advise their teacher, who will work with the front office, to contact a parent/carer if required.*

**25. Can students use laptops during breaks?**

*Yes, this plan only covers personal mobile phones. iPads and personal computers used for learning in the classroom are not included.*

**26. What if my child chooses to leave their phone at home?**

*There is no requirement to bring a mobile phone or related accessories to school.*



# MOBILE PHONES AND DIGITAL DEVICES

## Action for inappropriate use flowchart

**School Expectations:** Woollooware High School Mobile Phones and Digital Devices Policy informs every student that **Mobile Phones are to be switched off upon entry and exiting of school premises and is to remain in school bag during school hours.**

Inappropriate use of Digital Devices is not accepted at Woollooware High School.



### 1 **1<sup>st</sup> Incident of inappropriate use of a mobile phone**

- Teacher will send the student to the front office to hand in their mobile phone / electronic device.
- Student must return the Mobile Phone 'In-slip' to the teacher.
- Sentral entry to be completed by the teacher if failure to comply with policy.



### 2 **2<sup>nd</sup> Incident of inappropriate use of a mobile phone**

- Teacher will send the student to the front office to hand in their mobile phone / electronic device.
- Student must return the Mobile Phone 'In-slip' to the teacher.
- Sentral entry to be completed by the teacher if failure to comply. Warning letter sent home by office.
- An after-school reflection will be issued.



### 3 **3<sup>rd</sup> incident of inappropriate use of a mobile phone**

- Teacher will send the student to the front office to hand in their mobile phone / electronic device.
- Student must return the Mobile Phone 'In-slip' to the teacher. Sentral entry to be completed by the teacher if failure to comply.
- Parent to collect phone from the office.
- Formal Caution to Suspend issued by Deputy Principal.
- Student is to surrender their phone to the Deputy Principal for 10 days.



### 4 **4<sup>th</sup> incident of inappropriate use of a mobile phone**

- Teacher will send the student to the front office to hand in their mobile phone / electronic device.
- Student must return the Mobile Phone 'In-slip' to the teacher. Sentral entry to be completed by the teacher if failure to comply.
- Suspension issued for continued / persistent disobedience.





# MOBILE PHONES AND DIGITAL DEVICES

## Failure to Comply with Instructions

### Failure to Comply with teacher instructions

- The student will be referred to the faculty or duty Head Teacher.
- The Head Teacher will reiterate the Teachers' instructions.
- Sentral entry to be completed by the referring teacher and a reflection issued by the Head Teacher.



### Further non-compliance with HT instructions

- The student will be referred to the relevant Year Group Deputy Principal by the faculty or duty Head Teacher.
- The Deputy Principal will reiterate the Head Teachers' instructions.
- A Sentral entry will be completed by the referring Head Teacher,
- An after school reflection issued by the DP and a 'letter of caution' generated for parents and carers.



### Second incident of referral to the Deputy Principal

- Interventions, as specified above, were applied by the teacher and HT.
- Deputy Principal intervention, the student is issued with an in-school suspension in the 'self-reflection room' for continued disobedience at DP level.



### Third incident of referral to the Deputy Principal

Interventions, as specified above, were applied by the teacher and HT.

- The student behaviour is escalated to DP level and lead to suspension for continued / persistent disobedience.