Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the administration office.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Weeroona College Bendigo's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal mobile devices during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Weeroona College Bendigo and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices 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

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

At Weeroona College Bendigo:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored 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 Weeroona College Bendigo 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 Weeroona College Bendigo 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 Weeroona College Bendigo 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 Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Weeroona College Bendigo will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so.

At Weeroona College Bendigo students are required to store their phones in their locker for the duration of the school day on the main (Napier Street) campus and students on the BFLO campus will be required to store their phones in a locked container provided by the BFLO assistant principal.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Weeroona College Bendigo may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement polices including the *Student Wellbeing and Engagement and Bullying Prevention* Policies.

At Weeroona College Bendigo 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, sound 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)	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	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

Weeroona College Bendigo 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
- Wearable devices
- iPads and all other personal devices
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience
- Students who are undertaking VET off-site

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
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Mobile Phones – Department Policy
- Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items
- Personal Goods – Department policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	January 2026
Consultation	College Council – March 2026
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	January 2029