

Student use of mobile phones and personal devices

Purpose

This policy provides direction to students, staff and families about managing mobile phones and other digital devices that students choose to bring to school. Digital devices include, but are not limited to, smartwatches, tablets or laptops that are not part of a separate Bring Your Own Device arrangement. This policy applies while students are at school, or attending an authorised school activity such as an excursion, during school hours.

This policy therefore refers to all electronic devices other than those which have the school licence installed as part of our BYOD procedure including mobile phones, smart watches and tablets.

Mobile phone use for primary school students

The department's position is that primary aged students cannot use their mobile phones and personal devices at school during school hours. The department and the school recognise that there are legitimate reasons for students to bring a mobile phone or personal device to school. This may include:

- to ensure their safety while travelling
- so that parents can contact them outside of school hours.

During the school day students are not permitted to access or use their mobile phones or other personal devices. Students must switch off or mute their devices before storing them at the beginning of the school day. They will not be able to access their device until the end of the school day.

While our preference would be that children don't bring electronic devices to school, for those who do, smart watches, including (but not limited to) Fitbits, Apple Watches and Garmins, must be switched to 'Do Not Disturb'. They must not be used to communicate with anyone during school hours.

Storage of personal devices

Students can choose to either

- turn their phone off and leave it at the front office at the start of the day, and collect it at the end of the day. Each phone will be stored in a zip lock bag with the student's name on the bag.
- keep their smart watch on their wrist, switched to 'Do Not Disturb'. If needing to be removed for physical activity, it can be left in their bag or stored in the front office.
- turn their phone off and leave it in their school bag.

With either option, students are not permitted to access their mobile phone during any part of the day, for any reason, or to use any personal devices to communicate throughout the school day.

If the student does not comply

Black Forest Primary School will follow this process if a student does not meet our expectations outlined within this policy:

- In the first instance, the electronic device will be confiscated and the device will be securely stored at the front office, parents notified, and returned to the student at the end of the school day. Parents will be notified.
- The second time this occurs, the electronic device will be confiscated and held at the front office until the end of the day. At this point the school would also follow our behaviour policy and consider a consequence for non-compliance with our behaviour expectations. A parent meeting would be requested at this point to discuss managing this behaviour in the future
- Further breaches would follow the same process as per the second breach with us considering more serious consequences, as per our behaviour policy.

Roles and responsibilities

Principal

Make sure:

- this policy is clearly communicated and accessible to all students, staff, and families
- there is a process for regular review of the policy
- secure storage is provided for student personal devices that are handed in to school front office staff.
- processes are in place for monitoring internet and school network use by all members of the school community.

Enforce the policy and responses to instances of non-compliance.

Report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legislative requirements.

Consider requests for exemptions from the policy from parents on a case-by-case basis. Make sure that approved exemptions are documented and that relevant staff are informed about students' exemptions.

Model appropriate use of mobile phones and support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible and respectful use of mobile phones to their children.

The school, including all of the school's staff, will not be responsible for the safe keeping of any mobile device brought onto the school grounds, unless the device is provided to the front office at the start of the school day.

School staff

Deliver learning opportunities and maintain a safe and productive learning environment. Take steps to minimise distractions from the non-educational use of personal devices in the learning environment at times when a device is being used by a student in line with an approved exemption or in circumstances where students' devices are stored in the classroom.

Respond to instances of non-compliance in line with the school's policy.

Report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legislative requirements.

Make sure that any student personal devices handed in for their care are stored in a secure location and are returned to the student (or their parent).

Model appropriate use of mobile phones and support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible and respectful use of mobile phones to their children.

Students

Comply with the requirements of the school's policy and follow all reasonable directions from the Principal and school staff.

If permitted to use a mobile phone or personal device in line with an exemption under this policy, do so in a safe, responsible and respectful way and support peers to do the same.

Communicate respectfully with others and do not use a mobile phone or other personal device to bully, harass or threaten another person.

Respect others' rights to privacy and do not take photos, film or audio records of other people without their knowledge or permission.

Collect their device from the front office at the end of the day, after the bell has gone.

Parents

Support the implementation of the school's policy, including the consequences for non-compliance with the policy.

Use the school's formal communication channels in all instances to communicate with the school (including where a student requires early collection from school). Encourage their child to always report to a school staff member in the first instance if they become unwell or experience an issue at school.

Recognise the important role they play in supporting their child to use their mobile phone (or other personal device) in a safe, responsible and respectful way.

Refrain from communicating to their child directly via any electronic device, during school hours. All communication between home and students needs to be directed to the front office or via email in advance to the class teacher.

Communication and review

This policy has been implemented after consultation with school staff, Student Parliament Executive and the Governing Council as our parent representatives:

- the policy will be forwarded to all parents via email once approved by the Governing Council
- the policy will be reviewed every three years, unless an issue arises which causes an earlier review of the policy.

Supporting information

We believe this policy complements other school policies, such as:

- school behaviour support policy
- school anti-bullying policy
- BYOD policy
- ICT user agreements.