

Mobile Phones – Student Use

Newport Gardens Primary School ensures that students are supported in their learning through an inclusive and caring environment. The wellbeing of all students is of paramount importance in alignment with the Department of Education's 'Child Safe Standards' and our school based 'Bullying and Harassment' policy:

http://www.newportgardensps.vic.edu.au/uploads/117/BULLYING%20AND%20HARASSMENT_631.pdf

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Newport Garden's Primary School's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones [and other personal mobile devices] during school hours. This includes personal mobile devices (i.e.: iPhone watches/smart-watches)

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Newport Gardens Primary School 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. For the purpose of this policy, "mobile phone" refers to mobile phones and any device that may connect to or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone such as smart watches."

POLICY

In alignment with this policy, should a child arrive at school with a mobile phone this device will be securely stored within the classroom for the duration of the school day. At dismissal time, those devices in storage will be returned to the appropriate student/s.

In the event of an emergency or the need to contact the school, parents are asked to call our school phone to relay their message. An exception to this communication method will pertain to school camps during which a mobile phone, accessed by an organising staff member will be used for emergency contact only. This number will be made available to parents prior to the camp.

Newport Gardens Primary School understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

At Newport Gardens Primary School:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours (by the classroom teacher)
- 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 Policy issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Newport Gardens Primary School 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 Newport Gardens Primary School are considered valuable items and are brought to school at the owner's (student's or parent/carer's) risk. Please note that Newport Gardens Primary School 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.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Newport Gardens Primary School will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Newport Gardens Primary School students are required to hand their phones to their classroom teacher, who will then store the device for the school day. This storage will be a lockable area within the classroom.

Enforcement

In the event that a student brings a device to school without following the above procedure, the device will be securely stored, and parents will be contacted by the Principal or Assistant Principal. At Newport Gardens Primary School 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 Policy.

Some of the exceptions allowed under the Department's Mobile Phones Policy are:

Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

Newport Gardens Primary School 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 Care (OSHC)
- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school
- iPads and all other personal devices that are the property of Newport Gardens Primary School and are accessed as part of learning programs
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Mobile Phones – Department Policy
- Personal Goods – Department policy

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in January 2020 and is scheduled for review in January 2022.