**Personal Communication Devices & Mobile Phone Policy**

**Purpose**

This policy outlines the requirements relating to students using Personal Electronic Devices (PED) and mobile phones during school hours and is consistent with the [Personal Use of Communication Devices policy](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/School-and-Corporate-Policies/Computers_Devices-and-Internet/internet-and-online-communication-services/personal-use-of-communication-devices-in-act-public-schools-policy2).

The provision of Chromebooks to all students has eliminated any need for student mobile phones and PED’s to be used as learning device in the classroom. Unregulated non-educational use of mobile phones and related social media can adversely impact learning and wellbeing. At ADHS we support people’s right to learn and teach in an environment free of distractions, where face-to-face interactions and non-digital forms of learning are valued.

ADHS recognises the need for students to have time away from screens and electronic devices, including Chromebooks. Screen free time during recess and lunch breaks promotes physical activity, fosters face to face interactions and strengthens social connections. A wide variety of co-curricular activities, house events and clubs are provided to promote positive connection and social interactions during break times.

**Definition**

For the purpose of this policy, a mobile phone is a device with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network. PEDs or Personal Communication Devices refers to but is not limited to, workstations, laptops, tablet devices, and smartphones which are owned by individual users and brought to the school. This includes accessories such as headphones and smart watches.

**Use of Mobile Phones and PED’s**

* Our teachers remind students about the mobile phone and PED policy and use the prompt “We keep our phones at home or switched off and in our bag”.
* As outlined in the ACT Education Directorate Policy *“Students in Years 7-10 at ACT public schools may not use or access personal communications devices at school, including recess and lunch, or during school authorised events unless the school principal has approved a formal or specific exemption”*.
* At ADHS “at school” means on school grounds from the time of arrival until the final bell (3:15pm), Monday to Friday.
* Students are strongly encouraged to leave their phones and other personal devices at home.
* It is acknowledged that some students will need their phones or other personal devices immediately before and after school to help them get to and from school safely. In these circumstances, mobile phones must be in student bags and switched off until the end of the school day.
* Contact by/with parents and carers during the school day is to be made via the Front Office

staff. This ensures that students will be reached quickly and they follow appropriate procedures.

* Headphones are to be in bags and switched off unless specific permission is given by the classroom teacher. In this circumstance they are to be connected to the Department issued Chromebook.
* Teachers may be required to use their phones in class due to an emergency or work issue. The rights and responsibilities of staff are different from students. Despite this, staff are encouraged to model good practice and appropriate use of a phone when at school.
* The school does not accept liability in the event of loss, theft, or damage of a phone or accessories such as chargers or headphones.
* Other devices connected to mobile phones (eg. smart watches or gaming devices) must not be used for communication purposes (talking or messaging) at any time, while “at school”.

**Procedures if a phone is used inappropriately**

* If a student has the phone out at school between the time of arrival and end of day (3:15pm), the teacher will inform the student that they need to hand over their phone, and it will be given to the front office. The teacher should then place the phone in a bag with the student’s name on it and place it at the front office for the remainder of the day.
	+ If the student refuses to hand over the phone, the teacher can call for the faculty Executive teacher. The phone will be confiscated and placed in a bag with the student's name on it at the front office for the remainder of the day. In the case of non-compliance, the Executive with inform the student that student management procedures will be followed.
	+ In circumstances where a Faculty Executive or Student Wellbeing teacher is not immediately available, the student will be required to hand their phone to an Executive teacher at a later point.
* If a student refuses to follow the teacher’s instructions, the behaviour will be dealt with as non-compliance. Any additional consequences will be in line with the ADHS Student Wellbeing policies.
* Repeated infringements will require the student and parents/carers to meet with a member of the school leadership team to determine a suitable management plan.

**Exemptions**

* An exemption can be requested and must be approved by the school principal or delegate.
* An exemption can be requested if a student needs their device/assistive technology to:
	+ manage or monitor a medical condition.
	+ To help meet caring or family responsibilities.
* An exemption application form must be completed and is available at [this link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lD9-HTSkt-KGVbsuFAs-zML1T67vMKEc/view?usp=drive_link) or on the Education Directorate website. An exemption will only be approved if sufficient supporting evidence is provided, for example, from a treating general practitioner.
* When an exemption is approved, the personal communication device(s) may be used only for the specific purposes approved by the school principal, or their delegate. The device must be silenced and put away again when the approved specific use ends.

Policy Developed: 2024 Policy Review: 2029