



# Mobile Phones - Student Use 2020 and beyond Policy

## PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department of Education and Training's (Department's) and Northcote High School's policy requirements, expectations for students using mobile phones during school hours.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Northcote High School and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones and to other mobile devices that are seen to be used to access a cellular (telecommunication) system (eg. a student using their cellular network-enabled Apple watch as a mobile device) 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 is being used in a similar way to a mobile phone, such as smart watch.

While not included as part of this policy, smart watches (not connected to the cellular network), iPads and other BYOD devices should have notifications and or messaging applications turned off.

## POLICY

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

At Northcote High School:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and stored in their locked lockers during school hours
- Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see below for further information)
- When emergencies occur, parents and carers should reach their child by calling the school's office on +61 3 9488 2300.
- If students need to urgently contact their parents and carers, they should see their relevant sub-school or the front office for assistance to access a school phone



## **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 Northcote High 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.

## **Locked Lockers**

Mobile phones owned by students at Northcote High School 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 Northcote High School does not have insurance for accidental property damage or theft.** Students and their parents/carers are encouraged to obtain appropriate insurance for valuable items. Refer to the Department's [Personal Goods policy](#).

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Northcote High School will provide lockable lockers to store their mobile phones. When lockers are locked, they are not readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Northcote High School students are required to store their phones in an individual locked locker, that will be allocated to them on the first day of school. Students are to remain in the locker number allocated to them. Students are required to use a school approved combination lock.

## **Enforcement**

At Northcote High School inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted. Additionally, inappropriate use also includes:

- in any way that disrupts the learning of others
- sending inappropriate, harassing or threatening messages or phone calls
- engaging in inappropriate social media use including cyber bullying
- capturing video or images of people, including students, teachers and members of the school community without their permission
- capturing video or images in the school toilets, changing rooms, swimming pools and gyms
- during exams and assessments

Students **without** an approved exception, will be deemed to be using their mobile phones inappropriately if the mobile phone is accessed and visible during the school hours, typically the time just prior to P1 (which starts at 9.00 am) – and after P5 (which ends at 3.11 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 3.00 pm on Wednesday). In instances where

students arrive or leave outside of the normal school hours, their school hours, are from the time of arrival until the time of approved departure. In these cases, students are expected to secure their mobile phone immediately after signing in.

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Northcote High School will be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy and Code of Conduct. The implementation of this policy will be published for students and families on myNorthcoteHigh.

## 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.

There are two types of exception:

- Ongoing Exception
- Temporary Exception

The three categories for which an exceptions will be allowed under the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#) are:

### 1. Learning-related exceptions

Specific exception & type	Documentation
<p>For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty.</p> <p>Only to be used in the context for which it is documented in the ILP/IEP/BSP</p> <p><b>Ongoing exception pass</b></p>	<p>Individual Learning Plan Individual Education Plan Behaviour Support Plan</p> <p>Usually included on the basis of a recommendation from an educational/cognitive/behavioural assessment made by a professional.</p>

### 2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
<p>Students with a health condition</p> <p><b>Ongoing exception pass</b></p>	<p>Student Health Support Plan - made on recommendation from the relevant health-care professional</p>



Students who are Young Carers <b>Ongoing exception pass</b>	A localised student record – made after official notification/confirmation that the student acts as a Young Carer.
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### **3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite**

<b>Specific exception</b>	<b>Documentation</b>
Travelling to and from excursions, where independent transport is required and/or there is a risk students may become separated from the group <b>Temporary exception pass</b>	Risk assessment and Event planning documentation  Class set of exception passes issued by the teacher for the duration of the excursion
Students on excursions and camps where a mobile device is specifically recommended for students <b>Temporary exception pass</b>	Risk assessment and Event planning documentation  Class set of exception passes issued by the teacher for the duration of the excursion
When students are offsite (not on school grounds) for a curriculum-related activity eg. Year 9 City School, and may have some periods of time unsupervised, as per authorised by parental consent for the activity <b>Temporary exception pass</b>	Risk assessment and Event planning documentation  Class set of exception passes issued by the teacher for the duration of the excursion
Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel – eg. Off campus VET studies. <b>Ongoing exception pass</b>	Coordinator of the off/intercampus activity issues exception passes to students who are enrolled in these activities.

Where an exception is granted, the student **can only use the mobile phone for the purpose for which it was granted.**



### **Communicating Mobile Phone Exceptions:**

Students with an **ongoing exceptions** will be provided with a photo identification **Mobile Phone Exception Pass** that notes the exceptions for the individual. This must be kept on the student at all times while at school or on school-related business, and shown to any staff member who requests it, or questions the student about accessing their phone. Classroom teachers of these children will be aware of the exceptions noted for these cases, through familiarisation of the relevant plan and it will also be noted on their Compass Profile.

The teacher responsible for the activity that requires students to have a **temporary exception passes** will issue a pass at the commencement of the excursion/camp, and collect the pass at the conclusion of the activity. Each sub-school will have class-sets of temporary exception passes for staff to borrow.

### **Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities**

Northcote High 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 events
- Travelling to and from school
- Wearable devices that are not being used as mobile devices as per the 'definition' above
- iPads and all other personal devices such notebooks (nb. Students are expected to **turn off notifications** and or messaging applications that can used on mobile devices).
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience

### **RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

- *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Guidelines*
- *Code of Conduct*
- *Personal Property*
- *Bullying*
- [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](#)
- [Ban, Search and Seize Harmful Items](#)
- [Personal Goods – Department policy](#)

### **REVIEW PERIOD**

This policy was last ratified at School Council on 28 November 2019 and is scheduled for review in November 2022, or earlier, should the DET update its policy before then.