

Whites Hill State College

Away for the day – Use of Mobile Devices



Mobile devices must be switched off and 'Away for the day' in all Queensland state schools including during lunch breaks. At Whites Hill State College, we are creating a safe and supportive school culture, with deliberate support for students to manage their mobile phone use through the 'Away for the day' Queensland Government policy.

Mobile phones 'Away for the day' is a consistent, state-wide approach to putting mobile phones away during the school day to benefit students learning and wellbeing.

- This policy does not apply to personal or school-owned devices that are approved for educational use as part of the school's Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy.
- For the purpose of this policy, 'mobile devices' include mobile phones, smartwatches, and other electronic devices which have the ability to connect to telecommunication networks or the internet.

This policy also applies to student attendance at school camps, excursions, school sporting events, and all other school activities unless otherwise determined by the school principal. When students attend off campus activities communication protocols will support the health and wellbeing of students and uphold the principles of the 'Away for the day' policy.

Students participating in off-site Vocational Education and Training or work placements must follow the expectations of the organisation regarding the use of mobile phones and wearable devices.

The Queensland Government 'Away for the day' policy supports all government schools to:

- provide optimal learning and teaching environments, free from the distractions caused by personal use of mobile devices
- support schools to create safe and supportive learning environments that prioritise student engagement and wellbeing
- encourage increased face-to-face social interactions between students, away from screens
- promote the health and wellbeing of students by providing opportunities for social interaction and physical activity during break times
- reduce the potential for students to be exposed to the negative impacts of the digital world, resulting from unsafe or inappropriate use of technology, such as cyberbullying or accessing harmful content.

Whites Hill State College acknowledges and embraces the digital literacy skills needed to live, learn and work in a society where communication and access to information is dominated by digital technologies including devices such as mobile phones. We recognise that all young people benefit when they have opportunities to develop responsible mobile phone use skills that promote self-regulation and respect for self and others. Developing responsible mobile phone use skills benefits the learning and wellbeing of students, and supports them to avoid the deliberate misuse of phones which may harm self, others and/or disrupt learning.

At Whites Hill State College, we will continue to embed opportunities within our school curriculum so that students can develop the knowledge and confidence to navigate and use these technologies safely. Developing digital literacy is a responsibility shared between parents, school staff and students.

Away for the day – Expectations at Whites Hill State College

- Students will be able to bring mobile devices to school and ALL students will take responsibility to have phones away for the day and follow the expectations as outlined below. We trust that our students have the capacity to follow expectations responsibly in school time.

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- Students MUST turn their phones off from the moment they enter the college grounds until the moment they leave the college grounds at the conclusion of the school day. Mobile phones must be switched off and away while students are attending ALL school activities such as interschool and representative sport activities, and excursions.
- **Primary school students** MUST hand their phones into the main administration office or primary office upon arrival at school on every school day (this is inclusive of excursions and sport activities), and can collect their device at the conclusion of the school day. Phones will be labelled and securely stored for the day. The school takes no responsibility for student mobile phones; therefore, it is important to consider if students need to bring them to school.
- Wearable devices MUST be switched into airplane mode from the moment students enter the college grounds until the moment they leave the college grounds at the conclusion of the school day. Airplane mode is to be enacted while students are attending ALL school activities such as interschool and representative sport activities, excursions.
- All students MUST switch off notifications on wearable devices, including smartwatches, from the moment they enter the college grounds until the moment they leave the college grounds at the conclusion of the school day. This will ensure that phone calls, messages and other notifications cannot be received or sent during school hours and when students are engaged in school-based activities.
- Secondary school students who bring mobile phones to school are responsible for their devices, and must keep these devices out of sight. The school does not take responsibility for these items; therefore, it is important to consider where students will store these items for the day. It is recommended that students store their device in their pocket because the security of the device cannot be guaranteed if it is stored in school bags.
- If secondary students wish to store their device at the school office for the day this option is available to all students. Phones will be labelled and securely stored for the day. The school takes no responsibility for student mobile phones.
- Staff within the college may give permission for students to use their mobile phones during a lesson for a specific educational purpose for a designated lesson or period of time. This permission will only be enacted when a genuine educational purpose/benefit needs to be achieved and a school owned device is not available to achieve this purpose. In this instance written permission will be provided by staff member in the student's diary and the student will be under the direct supervision of a staff member.

Methods of Payment

- The preferred method of payments made by students on the secondary campus at the tuckshop, uniform shop and administration office is bank cards. Primary students are required to pay by cash or orders are paid in advance by families.
- Where it is not possible to pay by bank card or cash students on the secondary campus are permitted to use their mobile phone or wearable device to make payments at the college tuckshop, uniform shop and administration office. While waiting to be served (in line) mobile phones are not to be visible and notifications on wearable devices are not to be accessed.

Exemptions

- Students who require access to their mobile phone, wearable device or noise cancelling headphones during school hours or school activities for medical, disability and/or wellbeing reasons must have an approved exemption.
- The Head of School (Primary or Secondary) has the authority to determine and approve exemptions for use of a mobile device for medical reasons related to student health and well-being.
- Where a parent believes medical grounds might exist for an exemption, parents should apply for an exemption in writing through the relevant Head of School, and supporting documentation from a medical professional must be submitted to support an application for exemption. The Head of Department Inclusion and Guidance Officer will be consulted in the process of approving/not approving an exemption.
- Appeals to exemptions that are not approved are to be made in writing to the College Principal.

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- All approved exemptions will be recorded in a student's OneSchool record as part of a personalised learning plan (PLP). Students who have a mobile phone exemption will be provided with documentation as proof of this exemption. The names of students with an exemption will be stored securely in a format that provides clarity for school staff.
- Please note if an exemption application is made to wear headphones on the grounds of reducing environmental noise these headphones MUST be noise cancelling and the college may request proof of this capability.
- In cases where an exemption to listen to music is applied for and granted these applications will be closely monitored and students are to wear corded headphones that plug into a laptop or iPad. Exemptions to listen to music with wireless/Bluetooth headphones will not be approved.
- When teachers are engaged in active instruction students will be required to remove their headphones where this aligns to the specifics of their personalised learning plan (PLP).

Communicating with students throughout the day

- Families need to be aware that students cannot be contacted on their mobile phones or wearable devices for the duration of the school day. In instances where students and parents need to communicate with each other throughout the day phone and support facilities will be provided in the administration office.
- In instances where students need to make contact with employers throughout the day phone and support facilities will be provided in the administration office.
- If a student needs to clarify travel arrangements for the conclusion of the school day contact can be made with parents/caregivers through phone and support facilities in the administration office.

Information stored on mobile phones

- If for any reason a student needs to access information that is stored on their mobile phone throughout the day e.g., employer contact details, they MUST come to the administration office and do this. Phone and support facilities will be made available in the administration office.

Mobile Device misuse - support and intervention

Staff will support students with corrective strategies where students are struggling to self-regulate with their phone being away for the day.

Our school will ensure that responses are proportionate and equitable and take into consideration the individual circumstances of each student.

If a student is found to have a phone seen or heard at school during the school day:

1. They will be asked to hand the phone into administration. The student's phone will be labelled and stored for the day. Students can collect their phone from administration at the conclusion of the school day.
2. Parents will be notified that their student has not had their phone away for the day.
3. Students will be required to complete a lunch time reflection that focuses on developing an understanding of the benefits of the "Away for the day" policy.

If a student refuses to follow the directions of staff to hand their phone into administration they will be referred to the Head of Department Prep to Year 2 (HODC), Head of Department Years 3 to 6 (HODC), Secondary Culture and Engagement Coordinator's (CEC) or Secondary Head of Student Services (HOD), for further support/intervention. Parent contact will be made, and a meeting will be arranged so that the student, parent and HODC/CEC/HOD can develop an individualised support plan for the student.

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If a student is persistently non-compliant and repeatedly refuses to respect the school's mobile devices policy they will be referred to the Head of School and the Head of School will determine further support and intervention. This may include, however is not limited to:

- Negotiating with the parent/carer for the mobile device to be left at home.
- Requesting their parent/carer escort the student to hand in the mobile device daily and collect the device at the conclusion of the school day.
- Applying a reflection opportunity for a defined period of time (e.g., lunchtime or afterschool)
- Enrolling the student in an eSmart program to complete a Digital Licence or similar course
- Where a student is unable to regulate their use of a mobile device the student will be directed to hand the mobile device into administration at the start of each school day. An individualised support plan will be recorded on the student's OneSchool profile. This support plan will document strategies for assisting the student to regulate their mobile phone use whilst on college grounds.
- Further school disciplinary processes, as deemed appropriate, by the principal.

Mobile phones and wearable devices that have been temporarily removed from the student will be stored and retained in accordance with the department's [Temporary removal of student property by school staff procedure](#).

The school provides access to a number of iPads and laptops for use daily for students to access learning online, if they're unable to provide their own device.

At all times students, while using ICT facilities and devices supplied by the school, students will be required to act in line with the requirements of the Whites Hill State College Student Code of Conduct.

Further information can be found on this Queensland Government 'Away for the day' policy can be found [here](#)