



Mobile Phones and Personal Electronic Devices – Student Use Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Maryborough Education Centre-5461 7900.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Maryborough Education Centre's (MEC) policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal electronic devices (MP-PED) including but not limited to MP3 players, smartwatches, tablets, headphones and speakers during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- all students at MEC and,
- students' personal mobile phones and other personal electronic 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.

Personal Electronic Devices is any device such as MP3 player, smartwatch and tablet.

Accessories are any items that can be connected to an electronic device such as headphones and speakers, mobile broadband hotspot or dongle.

Securely Stored is a lockable storage space as provided by the school.

POLICY

MEC understands that students may bring a MP-PEDs to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

At MEC:

- students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours
- devices must not be carried on students between 9:00am and 3:15pm
- Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see below for further information) and when emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school's office.
- When emergencies occur, parents/carers should reach their child by calling the school's office

Personal mobile phone use

In accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy](#) issued by the Minister for Education, device MP-PEDs must not be used at MEC 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 MP-PED for the purpose for which the exception was granted, and in a safe, ethical and responsible manner.

Secure storage

MP-PED owned by students at MEC 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 MP-PEDs to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Please note that MEC 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 MP-PED to school, MEC will provide lockable secure storage and students are required to provide their own padlock. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At MEC students are required to store their MP-PED either in their lockers or handed into the school administration office to be placed in a lockable cupboard.

Enforcement

Students who use their MP-PED inappropriately at MEC may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement policies including *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*, *Bullying Prevention Policy*, *Building Respectful and Safe Schools Policy*, *Digital Technologies Policy*, and *Statement of Values and School Philosophy Policy*.

At MEC inappropriate use of MP-PED is **any use during school hours** unless an exception has been granted.

It includes use that:

- 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.

Consequences for use of ECDs at School

The following consequences will occur if students are found to be using an MP-PEDs at school. No warnings will be given.

Staff member:

- Informs student that he/she is in breach of the MP-PED Policy, collects the device, places the MP-PED in an envelope and gives receipt to students.
- Envelope is placed in designated secure storage before Period 6 (If the MP-PED is confiscated during Period 6, the staff member has the authority to keep the phone with them for the remainder of the school day).

Student

- Complies with all instructions.
- Collects MP-PED from general office after 3:15pm or from teacher if phone confiscated during Period 6.

Administration Assistant

- Collects MP-PED from designated secure storage at start of Period 6 each day and transfers them to general office.
- Records MP-PEDs violation on XUNO at the end of every day which informs parents or carers of the breach of policy via text message sent home.

Repeated Offences or Failure to Comply

Sub School Leader/Coordinator

- Makes a time to meet with parents and student to discuss the situation.
- Implement management strategies e.g., student to hand in MP-PED at the start of every Day and Check in Check out Card to monitor use.
- Implement alternate program at school.
- Implement internal or external suspension.

Note- Students who use a MP-PED to violate another individual's privacy or to incite or encourage any act in breach of school policy will be managed in accordance with the appropriate policies and may result in suspension.

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 — Student Use Policy](#).

The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department's [Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy](#) are:

1. Learning-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
For specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Using Personal Electronic Device Exemption forms. Assessment tasks e.g., NAPLAN, Essential Assessment, Edrolo.
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	As recognised in Individual Education Plan supported by specific medical reports.

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	As documented in XUNO supported by specific medical reports.
Students who are Young Carers	As documented in XUNO.

3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite

Specific exception	Documentation
Travelling to and from excursions	As per camp/excursion documentation.
Students on excursions and camps	As per camp/excursion documentation.
When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission	As per camp/excursion documentation.
Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel	As per camp/excursion documentation.

Where an exception is granted, the student can only use the MP-PED for the purpose for which it was granted.

Camps, and extracurricular activities

MEC 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 MP-PEDs.

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 connected to EduSTAR
- students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g., work experience.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct Policy
- Personal Property Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Building Respectful and Safe Schools Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy Policy
- Digital Technology Policy
- Mobile Phones and Personal Electronic Devices Exception Application.

The above policies are located here [Policies & Documents - MARYBOROUGH EDUCATION CENTRE \(mec.vic.edu.au\)](https://www.maryborough.vic.edu.au/policies-and-documents)

DET POLICIES

- [Weapons — Banning, Searching and Seizing Harmful Items](#)
- [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	30 th March 2022
Consultation	Education Policy March 2022
Approved by	Anita Ford School Council President
Next scheduled review date	This policy was last updated on 30 th March 2022 and is scheduled for review as part of the school's 3-year review cycle.

Signed:



Anita Ford
School Council President

Date: 4.4.2022