

2025

Mobile Phone and Chromebook Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines the requirements relating to students using Personal Electronic Devices (PED's) and mobile phones during school hours and is consistent with the [Personal Use of Communication Devices Policy](#).

Through the Technology Enabled Learning Program the ACT Education Directorate is committed to producing responsible, literate and knowledgeable digital citizens. As part of this program all students receive a Chromebook device. This has eliminated any need for student mobile phones to be used as a learning device.

Unregulated, non-educational use of PED's and mobile phones and related social media can harm learning and wellbeing. At Mount Stromlo High School (MSHS) 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.

At MSHS we value the importance of face-to-face social interaction, physical activity and students connecting to school through the participation in extracurricular activities. MSHS recognises the need for students to have time away from screens and electronic devices, including Chromebooks. Recess and lunch breaks are set aside for this explicit purpose. A wide variety of extracurricular activities are provided for students to promote positive connection and social interactions during break times.

Appropriate Use of PED's and Mobile Phones

- Our teachers remind students about the mobile phone policy and use the prompt "We keep our phones at home or switched off and in our bag".
- As outlined in ACT Education Directorate Policy, '*Students in Year 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 MSHS 'at school' means on school grounds between the hours of 8:45am and 3pm, Monday – 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 that appropriate procedures will be followed.
 - The school does not accept liability in the event of loss, theft or damage of a phone or accessories.
 - Teachers may be required to use their phone in class due to an emergency or a work issue. The rights and responsibilities of staff are different to students. Despite this, staff are encouraged to model good practice and appropriate use of phones when at school.
 - 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.

- 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 their phone out at school between 8.45am and 3.00pm, 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 child’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 will refer to an Executive or other 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 will inform the student that student management procedures will be followed.
 - In circumstances where an Executive 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 MSHS’ Student Support policies.
- If a student has their phone confiscated 3 times in a term, a parent or carer will be required to pick the phone up from the front office.

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 on the Education Directorate website. An exemption request will only be approved if sufficient supporting evidence is provided, for example, from a treating general practitioner.

Chromebooks at MSHS

The ACT Government has provided every public-school secondary student a Chromebook with the intent to support learning and to allow equitable access to the online learning environment. At enrolment, all students are required to sign the ACT Education Directorate – Acceptable Use of ICT Code of Practice. Students are required to bring their Chromebook to school every day fully charged.

Appropriate use of Chromebooks

- Chromebooks are used as a tool to help engage students, enhance their learning experiences, provide them with an opportunity to collaborate and discover, and in doing so produce responsible, literate, and knowledgeable digital citizens.
- During learning times Chromebooks remain in bags until students are directed to access these devices.
- During instructional phases of lessons, Chromebooks must remain closed

Inappropriate use of Chromebooks

- Chromebooks are not to be used for non-educational / non-learning purposes (eg gaming, video streaming, social media, inappropriate web browsing or similar) at any time while in class.
- Chromebooks remain the property of the Education Directorate. Any deliberate damage may result in a request for a family to pay for a repair or purchase a replacement and/or other consequences, including possible suspension.

Procedures if a Chromebook is used inappropriately.

- Where a teacher determines a Chromebook is being used inappropriately (for non-educational purposes in class) the teacher will inform the student that they need to hand over the Chromebook and it will be given to the front office and stored for the remainder of the day.
 - Where a child's Chromebook is confiscated, teachers must have alternate, non-digital learning materials available for the student.
- 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 MSHS' Student Support policies.
- Where a student has had their Chromebook confiscated three times in a term, parents will be required to attend school, pick up the device and meet with school leadership in order to develop a suitable management plan.

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Policy Review: 2029.