

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS – MOBILE PHONES AND WEARABLE DEVICES ‘AWAY FOR THE DAY’ - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

To assist schools in their communication with parents and carers around the implementation of ‘away for the day’ procedure, the following Frequently Asked Questions and their answers can be adapted to suit a school’s local implementation approach.

1. When does ‘away for the day’ begin?

The WA Government banned use of Personal Electric Devices in school since 2020. At Kelmscott SHS we comply with the directive, by following the “off and away all day” policy.

All students must keep their mobile phones switched off and ‘away for the day’ while on campus. Wearable devices, such as smartwatches, can be worn; however, notifications must be switched off so that phone calls, messages and other notifications cannot be sent or received during school hours.

2. What is a Personal Electric Device (PED)?

A personal Electric Device (PED) is a mobile phone, smart watch, earbuds, headphones, portable Bluetooth speakers as well as laptops. All these devices are required to be placed in the student’s bag from BELL to BELL. Student laptops can be used throughout the day in classes and under direct supervision of staff during lunch times.

This approach is being implemented in all Western Australian Public schools to help:

- Reduce distractions in the classroom.
- Increase face-to-face interactions between students.
- Promote student health and wellbeing.
- Reduce the potential for student exposure to negative impacts of the digital world, such as cyberbullying.

3. Can my child take their phone with them when travelling to and from school?

Yes, students are allowed to bring their mobile phone or wearable device to school. Students will be able to use their phone outside of school hours to support safe travel, and to contact parents, friends and part-time employers.

4. Can my child still bring wearable devices to school?

Wearable devices such as smart watches can be worn; however, notifications must be switched off so that phone calls, messages and other notifications cannot be sent or received during school hours.

5. My child’s phone does not connect to the Internet - will they be allowed to use their phone?

No. Any phone that can connect to telecommunication networks or the Internet must be switched off and away for the day.

6. My child uses their phone/wearable device to manage and monitor a health condition. Can they still use it?

Yes, exemptions will be made available for students who require access to their mobile phone or wearable device for health monitoring purposes. Please speak with the school’s student services team regarding processes for requesting an exemption.

7. My child uses their phone / wearable device as an adjustment to access and participate in the curriculum. Can they still use it?

Yes, exemptions will be made available for students who require access to their mobile phone or wearable device for learning, medical, disability and/or wellbeing reasons. This may include scenarios where:

- The mobile phone or wearable device is used as an agreed reasonable adjustment for a student with disability or learning difficulties.
- The mobile phone or wearable device is used by the student as an augmentative or alternative communication system or as an aide to access and participate in the environment e.g. navigation or object/people identification applications.
- The mobile phone or wearable device is used as an agreed adjustment for a student with English as an additional language or dialect.

Please speak with the school's student services team regarding processes for requesting an exemption.

8. Will my child still get to use their phone for learning purposes, or in subjects that require technology?

No, all required technology is BYOD or school provided.

9. My child forgot their lunch; how will I contact them?

You can continue to contact your child through existing school processes, such as phoning the school office on 9495 7400.

10. How will I contact my child at school in the event of an emergency?

In the event of an emergency, you will still be able to contact your child through existing school processes, such as phoning the school office on 9495 7400

11. How will my child contact me while they are at school?

If your child becomes unwell or experiences an issue during the school day, it is important that they report to a staff member in the first instance. Staff will follow appropriate school processes and contact parents and carers. In the event of an emergency at school, the school will follow the Emergency Response Plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff, which includes processes for communicating with parents and carers.

12. My child has a part-time job; how will their employer contact them?

Students are permitted to bring their mobile phones to school; however, they must be switched off and put 'away for the day' during school hours. It is important that your child notifies their employer that they will not be able to receive or respond to messages and calls during school hours. Students will be able to check for messages from their employers after school hours.

13. Will my child be able to use their phone / wearable device to make school payments?

Payments, including for canteen, uniform shop and office payments, will be permitted under the school's local implementation approach.

14. Can my child use their phone while they are on excursions?

Mobile phones and wearable devices are not to be used during school activities such as representative sport, camps and excursions, unless an exception is made by the teacher in charge.

15. Where will my child store their phone during the day?

Each school, in consultation with their community, will make decisions about how and where student mobile phones will be stored during the school day. Examples of school approaches to mobile phone storage include but are not limited to:

- On their person (e.g. in student's pocket or pencil case).
- In the student's school bag.
- In a secure location, such as a locked cupboard in the school office.

Contact your child's school on 9495 7400 if you are unsure how they will be required to store their phone.

