**BAXTER PRIMARY MOBILE PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY – STUDENT USE**

**Purpose**

To explain to our school community the Department’s and Baxter Primary School’s policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones – as well as other devices such as smartwatches – during school hours.

**Scope**

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Baxter Primary School and,
2. Students’ personal mobile phones and smartwatches brought onto school premises during school hours (8:45am – 3:15pm), including recess and lunchtime.

**Policy**

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

At Baxter:

* Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours at the school office.
* When emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school office.

**RATIONALE**

At Baxter PS, inappropriate use of mobile phones during the hours of 8:45am – 3:15pm, unless an exception has been granted, and particularly use of a mobile phone:

* 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

**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 or devices that have similar functionality to mobile phones – most notably smartwatches.

**Personal mobile phone use**

In accordance with the Department’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Baxter Primary School during school hours (8:45am – 3:30pm), including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted.

**Wearable Devices**

Smartwatches that function alongside a mobile phone (eg. Apple Watch, Samsung Galaxy Watch, SpaceTalk) will be considered a mobile phone. These watches either connect directly to a cellular network or to a companion mobile phone. Smartwatches that have limited functionality and have the ability to be restricted/ locked down in school hours will be permitted provided the wearer has provided written permission by the parent/carer stating the restrictions that have been placed on the smartwatch. If these conditions are not met, the device will be treated as a mobile phone in accordance with the mobile phones policy.

**Secure storage**

Mobile phones and smartwatches owned by students at Baxter PS 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 Baxter PS 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. Refer to the Department’s [Personal Goods](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/personalgoods.aspx) policy.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Baxter PS will provide secure storage at the school office. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Baxter, students are required to hand their phones to the school office at the beginning of the school day. Office staff will keep mobile phones in at the office until the end of the day.

**Exceptions**

Exceptions to the policy:

* can be granted by the principal, in accordance with the Department’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx).

**Enforcement**

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Baxter PS will be issued with the following consequences:

1st Offence: The mobile phone will be confiscated from the student, and stored at the school office. The student will be required to collect the mobile phone at 3:15pm.

2nd Offence: The mobile phone will be confiscated from the student, and stored at the school office. The parent/carer of the student will be required to collect the mobile phone at 3:15pm.

3rd Offence: The mobile phone will be confiscated from the student, and stored at the school office. The parent/carer of the student will be required to collect the mobile phone after attending a meeting with the School Principal to discuss the seriousness of the matter.

**Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities**

Baxter PS 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 Care (OSHC)
* Out-of-school-hours events
* Travelling to and from school

**Related policies and resources**

* [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx)
* [Personal Goods](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/personalgoods.aspx) – Department policy

**Review period**

This policy was last updated in February 2020 and is scheduled for review in February 2022.