

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: Implementation of *Personal Use of Communication Devices in ACT Public Schools Policy*

I hope this letter finds you well. As part of our commitment to ensuring a safe and conducive learning environment, we would like to bring to your attention the following policies and procedures regarding the use of electronic devices on school grounds. The policy will take effect from the first day of term 1, 2024.

The policy means that students may not use or access their personal electronic device at all during the school day unless they have an explicit exemption given in writing via an application to the school Principal.

A copy of the [Personal Use of Communication Devices in ACT Public Schools Policy](#) can be accessed on the Education Directorate's website.

Please note that the definition of personal communications device under this policy is: "any electronic device that can connect to a digital communications network external to the Education Directorate network. This includes mobile phones and any other handheld or wearable device."

Smart Watches and Bluetooth headphones fit this definition as we apply it to devices at Belconnen High School.

Device Responsibility

We prefer that student do not bring their devices to school. If students do bring their devices to school, the responsibility for these devices rests solely with the students. The school cannot be held accountable for any loss or damage that may occur while the devices are on school premises.

Device Storage

Students in years 7-10 are required to adhere to designated storage protocols for their devices during the school day. A locker will be provided free of charge to any student who needs to store their devices securely on site during the day.

Alternative Contact Means

In case of urgent matters that arise during the school day, students have the option to contact their primary caregivers through alternative means. The school office serves as the primary point of contact:

Student Services: 6142 1698

info_BLCH@ed.act.edu.au

Behavioural expectations

The school's student management policy emphasises Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support (PBIS) principles, focusing on teaching and reinforcing Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) expectations: “We leave personal communications devices at home or store them securely in lockers during school hours.”

Students are expected to comply with these behavioural expectations. Normal school behavioural procedures will apply for non-compliance and to students who do not comply with reasonable requests.

Devices that are seen by staff in contravention of this policy will be confiscated and returned to a parent/carer in person at their convenience.

Any subsequent breaches will be managed by the Deputy Principal, including the return of the device to a parent/carer.

All due care will be taken with confiscated devices and teachers will have the means to secure them, but no responsibility will be taken for loss or damage. (See Device Responsibility above).

Exemptions

Parents/carers can apply for an exemption by submitting an ACT Education Directorate Exemption Request form to the school or via email on: info_BLCH@ed.act.edu.au

Review and Improvement

To ensure the effectiveness of these policies and identify areas for enhancement, our school will review device storage, and communication protocols and implementation procedures. This ongoing evaluation aims to refine our practices and ensure their alignment with the evolving needs of our school community.

We encourage you to familiarise yourself with these policies and actively participate in promoting a secure environment conducive to learning.

Thank you for your cooperation and support in maintaining a positive educational experience for all our students.

Sincerely,



Paul Branson
Principal
Belconnen High School