Balaklava High School
Mobile Phone Policy

The mobile phone can provide an effective and quick means of communication and many students now have access to them. Balaklava High School acknowledges that mobile phones can serve to improve personal security and safety. Mobile phones, furthermore, must be handled in a mature and responsible fashion and **NOT interfere with or hinder personal wellbeing or the education process.**

Balaklava High School also believes that the responsible use of a mobile phone extends beyond the school environment and is applicable at all times within the general community. Mobile phones, however, can, and do, present a serious risk to student safety, wellbeing and learning. These risks are clearly defined under DECD Legislative Framework that includes Child Protection Curriculum Strategy, OHSW – Psychological Health and the Duty of Care responsibilities of education staff outlined in the Education Act. The use of a mobile phone can pose a threat to student safety, wellbeing and learning when it is used to:

- Text or phone a person that disrupts their learning or that of others
- Bully or harass another student
- Incite other people to take inappropriate action against another person or group
- Take unauthorised photographs or video footage that breaches Privacy Act laws
- Access confidential, private, offensive, inappropriate or illegal material and distribute it to others
- Gain an unfair advantage in learning (e.g. used to access information during a test or examination)

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person, that the sending of inappropriate material using mobile phones is an offence under the Telecommunications Act, and that the taking of unauthorised photographs or video footage may be in breach of Privacy Act Laws. As such the school reserves the right to involve the police where such mobile phone usage occurs.

**Policy Aims:**

1. Safeguard and promote the wellbeing and learning of all school members
2. Teach responsible and mature mobile phone use
3. Discourage and eliminate the use of mobile phones in the school environment

**General Implementation:**

1. No student is permitted to use or personally carry a mobile phone at **any time** during the normal school day (8.30am to 3.30pm).
2. Parents/Caregivers who need to contact their son/daughter during the school day are expected to do so by contacting the school on its landline number – 88620600. Conversely, students are able to seek staff permission to use school phones that are based in most offices to contact parents if an **urgent** need arises.
3. If a student requires the use of a mobile phone before or after school, it must be kept turned off and secure either in their bag, locker or at the front office during the school day.
4. If the possession and use of a mobile phone is required for a specific safety issue or matter of urgency by any student, then this request must be made by a parent or caregiver to the Principal, Deputy Principal or an approved delegate. The school reserves the right to reject such a request
5. Whilst participating in a day excursion, school camp or an official out of hours school event, mobile phones may only be used with the written prior permission of the teacher in charge of the activity.
6. The camera function on a mobile phone **must not** be used by any person or at any time as the inappropriate or unsanctioned use of a camera may breach the Privacy Act laws and may serve to inflame or incite inappropriate behaviours.
7. Students are strongly discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school and those who do, do so at their own risk. The security of all personal property is the responsibility of the owner. The school accepts no liability in the event of loss, theft or damage to personal property.
8. Staff have a responsibility to model responsible mobile phone use whilst carrying out their duties

**Consequences for Policy Breaches:**

1. **1st Offence:** The mobile phone is confiscated for the remainder of the day
2. **2nd Offence:** As above, and parent contact
3. **3rd and Subsequent Offence:** As above and enactment of the school Student Behaviour Management Procedures

**Other References:**

- BHS - Student Behaviour Management Policy
- DECD - Cyber bullying, e-crime and the protection of children (Advice Guidelines for parents and caregivers)
- UniSA – Switched on about cyber bullies (Article, Dr Barbara Spears, May 2007)