



## Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones & Mobile Devices

### 1 Purpose and Rationale

- 1.1 The widespread ownership of mobile phones and other similar devices (such as tablets and iPads, air pods, computer games, ipods, and similar devices) among students requires that school administrators, teachers, students, and parents take steps to ensure that such mobile devices are used responsibly at school. For the remainder of this policy they (mobile phones, tablets, iPads, air pods, computer games, ipods and similar devices) will be referred to as mobile devices.

This **Acceptable Use Policy** is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety and communication with home) can continue to be enjoyed by our students.

This policy aligns with the NSW Government's ban on mobile phones at school from Term 4 2023.

- 1.2 Communication between parents and children; during the school day (8.25am-3.15pm) including recess and lunch; preparation time 6.20-8.30pm and after designated lights out period; should be through the school number (02) 6951 1500.

Yanco Agricultural High School accepts that parents give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. Parents may also be concerned about children travelling alone on public transport or commuting long distances to school. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if they need to speak to them urgently. As Yanco Agricultural High School is a residential school, mobile phones also enable parents to remain in frequent contact with their children.

- 1.3 Students will not be disadvantaged if they do not own a mobile phone.

Mobile devices are not permitted to be used during school time, preparation (prep) time, in the dining room or during equine areas/activities for any purpose. Any information stored on the mobile device will need to be copied or transferred to students' laptops prior to the beginning of school day or prep. This is the student's responsibility.

- 1.4 Yanco Agricultural High School has established this Acceptable Use Policy for mobile devices to provide teachers, students and parents' guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile devices whilst on site at Yanco Agricultural High School or on school activities.
- 1.5 Students and their parents or guardians are invited to read and familiarise themselves with the Acceptable Use Policy if students intend to bring mobile devices to school.
- 1.6 The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile devices also applies to students during residential hours, school excursions, camps, and extra-curricular activities.
- 1.7 Cyber Bullying  
Refer to YAHS Anti-bullying Policy and Point 3.9 in this document.
- 1.8 Students and parents should be reminded that students who bring mobile devices or property to the school do so at their own risk – schools will not accept any responsibility for loss or damage to mobile devices or any other personal property.

## **2 Responsibilities – Students and Parents**

- 2.1 Students and their parents or guardians should read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy before students are permitted to bring their mobile devices to school.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile devices to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in Yanco Agricultural High School Acceptable Use Policy.
- 2.3 The decision to provide a mobile phone or devices to their child should be made by parents or guardians. Parents should be aware if their child takes a mobile device to school.

## **3 Acceptable Uses of Mobile Devices at School**

### **Using mobiles devices responsibly at school:**

- 3.1 Mobile phones or other mobile devices should not be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school. Students should not use mobile devices to make calls, send text messages, access the internet, take photos or use other applications during lesson time, recess, lunch, prep, meal times/dining room, after lights out or while engaged in other school activities such as assembly, excursions, sport or equine areas/activities. Students should restrict use of the mobile phone to before or after school. The dining room and equine areas/activities are designated mobile phone free areas.

**Stage 4** (Years 7 & 8) and **Stage 5** (Years 9 & 10) : Students should have their mobile devices *OFF and AWAY* during the school day, in the dining room, during prep and equine areas/activities and they will be locked up at lights out.

**Stage 6** (Years 11 & 12): Students should have their mobile devices *OFF and AWAY* during the school day, in the dining room, during prep and equine areas/activities and lights out.

- 3.2 Communication between parents and children during the school day (8.25am-3.15pm); preparation time (6.20-8.30pm) and during designated lights out period {9pm (Years 7 & 8) 9.15pm (Year 9) 9.30pm (Year 10) and 10pm (Years 11 & 12) until 7am} should be through the school number (02) 6951 1500. Mobile devices must be turned off and out of sight during these times. **OFF and AWAY.**

- 3.3 The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) bans the bringing of mobile phones, smart watches, or any other communication devices into Higher School Certificate examinations.

Mobile phones, smart watches or any other communication devices are prohibited in all Yanco Agricultural High School examination, tests, and assessment situations.

- 3.4 Mobile device are to be **OFF and AWAY** during during:

- a) the school day (8.25am-3.15pm).
- b) meal times.
- c) equine areas/activities.
- d) preparation/homework/downtime time (6.20-8.30pm) and
- e) during designated lights out period:

(i)	9pm	-	7am	Years 7 & 8
(ii)	9.15pm	-	7am	Year 9
(iii)	9.30pm	-	7am	Year 10
(iv)	10pm	-	7am	Years 11 & 12

- 3.5 Mobile devices are not to be used in dormitories, changing rooms, toilets or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to their fellow students, staff or visitors to the school.
- 3.6 Mobile phones or other mobile devices must not be used to take photos/video or to make a recording of voices of any other student or teacher without their consent. It is also prohibited to upload photos/video of other students/teachers to social media websites or email photos/videos to others if doing so would embarrass, humiliate, or cause discomfort to the subject of the photo/video. Students are reminded (see 3.5) that mobile phones are not to be used in dormitories, toilets or changing rooms.
- 3.7 Students are reminded to protect their phone numbers by only giving them to close friends and family. It may help students to keep a note of who they have given their

phone number to. This can help protect the student's number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against cyber-bullying and misuse.

- 3.8 Yanco Agricultural High School does encourage students to take their mobile phone with them when they are participating in extracurricular activities off the school grounds without direct school supervision.

3.9 Cyber bullying:

Using mobile devices to bully (also known as cyber bullying) and threaten other students is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. In some cases it can constitute criminal behaviour.

*Cyber bullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as mobile phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Examples of cyber bullying include mean text messages or emails, rumours sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.*

*Students who are being cyber bullied are often bullied in person as well. Additionally, students who are cyber bullied have a harder time getting away from the behaviour.*

- *Cyber bullying can happen 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and reach a student even when he or she is alone. It can happen any time of the day or night.*
- *Cyber bullying messages and images can be posted anonymously and distributed quickly to a very wide audience. It can be difficult and sometimes impossible to trace the source.*
- *Deleting inappropriate or harassing messages, texts, and pictures is extremely difficult after they have been posted or sent.*

From YAHS Anti-bullying Policy

All members of the Yanco Agricultural High School community should be familiar and follow the Yanco Agricultural High School Anti-Bullying Policy and Plan.

Students and parents are reminded that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person and almost all calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

***Theft or damage:***

- 3.10 To avoid disputes and assist in finding owners, students may want to mark their mobile device clearly with their names or an identifying sticker. All students are advised to have their name and another contact number stored on the phone so that if lost it can be more easily returned.

- 3.11 Students who bring a mobile device to school may choose to leave it locked away in their locker when it is not required to prevent loss or theft.
- 3.12 Mobile devices that are found in the school, and whose owner cannot be located should be handed to the front office or duty room.
- 3.13 Yanco Agricultural High School accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile devices.
- 3.14 Yanco Agricultural High School accepts no responsibility for students who lose or have their mobile devices stolen while travelling to and from school.
- 3.15 It is strongly advised that students use the devices security features to ensure that unauthorised phone calls or unauthorised transfer of credit cannot be made on their mobile phones or devices (eg by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/pin numbers confidential. Mobile devices and/or passwords should not be shared.
- 3.16 If a mobile device is lost or stolen, parents and students are advised to report the loss/theft to their mobile carrier so that they can de-activate the SIM card and block the device from use across all networks. Blocking a lost/stolen device will make it unusable to anyone else within Australia.

#### **4 Sanctions/Consequences of unacceptable/inappropriate use**

- 4.1 NESA prohibits students from bringing mobile phones, smart watches or any other communication device into examinations and assessment tasks. Any student/s caught with a mobile device in examinations, tests or assessments will face a 'zero' result for that task and an 'N' award warning. Students should refer to their relevant Assessment Policy.
- 4.2 Students using mobile devices to bully other students will face disciplinary action.
- 4.3 Failure to heed the rules set out in Yanco Agricultural High School Acceptable Use Policy that may be considered criminal behaviour may be referred to the police for investigation.

In such cases, the parent or guardian would be notified immediately.

- 4.4 Students who infringe the guidelines and rules set out in Yanco Agricultural High School's Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones and Mobile Devices could face having their mobile devices confiscated by staff and will follow the steps indicated below within a calendar year:

**Step 1:** Warning from Deputy Principal.

**Step 2:** Level 5.

**Step 3:** Level 6.

**Step 4:** Level 6 and Formal Caution for continued disobedience.

**Step 5:** Suspension for continued disobedience.

- 4.5 Repeated infringements will be considered as continued disobedience.

Marni Milne  
Principal

**Effective Date:** 9 October 2023