Aurora School

Use of WhatsApp

Purpose -

WhatsApp may be used at Aurora School only for staff-to-staff communication to support day-to-day coordination and operational messaging on School Owned devices.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure WhatsApp is used in a way that:

- supports efficient staff communication, and
- protects privacy, confidentiality, and compliance obligations by ensuring no school data is shared via WhatsApp

Acceptable behaviours

Staff may use WhatsApp for brief operational coordination between staff, such as:

- video communication between staff
- video communication between staff and families (where the family have requested using WhatsApp as their main form of communication – with Management Approval and noted on Echidna)
- emergencies
- urgent "where are you / are you available" messages
- coordination that does not identify children, parents/carers, or sensitive matters

Group conduct and controls (if WhatsApp groups are used):

- Use only school-approved staff groups for school-related WhatsApp communication.
- Group names must be generic (e.g., "Aurora Staff Ops") and must not include student names.
- Membership must be limited to current staff with a work-related need.
- Staff must exit groups when they cease employment/engagement; admins must remove departed staff promptly.
- Keep communication professional and work-related.

Security expectations (minimum):

- Use a device passcode/biometrics and enable auto-lock.
- Enable app lock (where available) and limit lock screen message previews if possible.
- Avoid WhatsApp Web on shared/public devices.
- School own devices only
- Follow all departmental guidelines and policies in relation to using devices

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Unacceptable behaviours

WhatsApp must not be used to send, store, request, or discuss school data, including but not limited to:

Student / parent information (strictly prohibited):

- student names when linked to any context (behaviour, learning, wellbeing, attendance, adjustments, incidents)
- parent/carer names and contact details, complaints, disputes or sensitive conversations
- health information, disability information, wellbeing notes, counselling information
- screenshots, reports, documents, emails, assessments, timetables, or extracts from school systems

Photos / media (strictly prohibited):

- photos/videos/audio of children, families, classrooms, excursions, incidents, injuries, property damage
- any image that could identify a student, staff member, parent/carer, or disclose school information

Inappropriate channels (not allowed):

- messaging families/children via WhatsApp (directly or via groups), joining family WhatsApp groups, or "chat-style" contact with families/children
- using WhatsApp to communicate with parents/carers about school matters
- using WhatsApp for child safety, wellbeing, mandatory reporting, or reportable incident discussions (use approved school/Department processes)

Other prohibited conduct:

- forwarding school-related WhatsApp content outside approved staff groups
- using WhatsApp to make or store decisions that should be recorded in approved school systems (if an operational instruction occurs, it must be transferred to an approved channel/record)

Accidental disclosure response (must do)

If prohibited information is shared accidentally:

- stop further sharing immediately
- notify the Principal (or delegate) as soon as possible
- retract the message where possible and follow school directions for incident management

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Aurora School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the principal [in person or via phone 88789878 or email melinda.slocombe@education.vic.gov.au

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the principal, contact the department's regional offices on 1800 338 663 or email enquiries@education.vic.gov.au.

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Approval and review

Created date	12/2/2026
Consultation	
Endorsed by	
Endorsed on	
Next review date	