



Thomastown West Mobile Phones-Student Use Policy 2024 - 2028

Thomastown West Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Thomastown West Primary School on 03 9465 4317 or thomastown.west.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community, the Department of Education's and Thomastown West Primary School's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Thomastown West Primary and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones and other personal mobile devices such as, smart watches (brought onto school premises during school hours, including recess and lunchtime).

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, "mobile phone" refers to mobile phones and any device that may connect to or have a similar functionality to a mobile phone and other personal mobile devices such as smart watches.

POLICY

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

At Thomastown West Primary School:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored in the school office during school hours
- Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see below for further information)
- When emergencies occur, the school will contact parents or carers via Compass, Class Dojo and Phone calls/text message.
- Should parents or carers need to reach their child in case of an emergency, they do so by calling the school's office.

Personal mobile phone use

In accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Thomastown West Primary School during school hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted.



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Where a student has been granted an exception, the student must only use their mobile phone for the purpose for which the exception was granted, and in a safe, ethical and responsible manner.

Secure storage

Mobile phones owned by students at Thomastown West Primary school 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 Thomastown West Primary School 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 Thomastown West Primary School's Personal Property Policy AND/OR the Department's [Personal Goods policy](#).

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Thomastown West Primary school will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Thomastown West Primary school students are required to store their phones at the front office of the school in the Administration building upon arrival at school. The phone will be placed in a lockable cupboard for the duration of the day. At 3:15pm, students will be able to access their phones from the office.

Enforcement

If found to have a mobile phone, Thomastown West Primary School staff will instruct the student to hand over the item(s) and if the student refuses to hand over the item(s), the school will implement the relevant disciplinary provision within the schools School Wide Positive Behaviour procedures and Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy.

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Thomastown West Primary school may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's Student Wellbeing, Engagement and Inclusion Policy.

At Thomastown West Primary School inappropriate use of mobile phones is, '**any use during school hours**' (including school evening events e.g. Kaboom Sports, concerts, camps, excursions and while on school grounds before and after school), 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

Exceptions

Exceptions to the policy:

- may be applied during school hours if certain conditions are met, specifically,
 - Health and wellbeing-related exceptions (such as a student with diabetes may use their mobile phone to monitor their blood sugar); and
 - Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite.
- can be granted by the principal, or by the teacher for that class, in accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy](#).



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The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#) are:

1. Learning-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
For specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Unit of work, learning sequence
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Learning Plan, Individual Education Plan

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	Student Health Support Plan
Students who are Young Carers*	A localised student record

3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite

Specific exception	Documentation
Travelling to and from excursions	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students on excursions and camps	Risk assessment planning documentation
When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission	Risk assessment planning documentation
Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel	Risk assessment planning documentation

Where an exception is granted, the student can only use the mobile phone for the purpose for which it was granted.

Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

Thomastown West Primary School 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. The enforcement of inappropriate access and use of mobile phones on camps, excursions and extracurricular activities is as described in the enforcement section of this policy. Please refer to our school's Camps and Excursions Policy:

<https://www.thomwestps.vic.edu.au/page/101>

*Young Carers: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/young-carers-identification-and-support/policy>



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Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-School-Hours Care (OSHC)
- Travelling to and from school

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Included in school newsletter
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- [Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy](#)
- [Weapons — Banning, Searching and Seizing Harmful Items](#)
- [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the Thomastown West Primary School four year policy review cycle.

Date Implemented	2016; 2020; 2024
Author	Principal Assistant Principal TWPS Leadership Team
Approved By	School Council
Date Reviewed	October 2016; February 2020; November 2024
Responsible for Review	Assistant Principal
Review Date	20/2/2028
References	Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide