

MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE



Help for non-English speakers: If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 98398800 / 97363650.

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PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Yarra Hills Secondary College policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours. This policy also notes the use of some other electronic devices.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Yarra Hills Secondary College and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones and other ancillary personal mobile devices, such as 'smart watches' and earbuds, brought onto school premises during school hours, including recess and lunchtime

DEFINITIONS

A mobile phone is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network. Also, 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 such as smart watches.

POLICY

Yarra Hills Secondary College understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

At Yarra Hills Secondary College:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours
- Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see below for further information)
- When emergencies occur, parents/carers should contact their child by calling the school's office.

Personal mobile phone use

In accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy](#) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Yarra Hills Secondary College during school hours, including lunchtime and recess, unless an exception has been granted.

Where a student has been granted an exception, the student must 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 Yarra Hills Secondary College 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 Yarra Hills Secondary College 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 YHSC [Personal Property Policy](#) or the Department's [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#).

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, Yarra Hills Secondary College will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Yarra Hills Secondary College students are required to store their phones in their lockers.

Enforcement

At Yarra Hills Secondary College inappropriate use of mobile phones is **any use during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted, and particularly use of a mobile phone (or smart watch):

- in any way that disrupts theirs or other's learning, or student engagement, in school activities
- 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

Earphones should not be seen throughout the school day unless with express permission of a teacher to use. Earphones can only be used at the discretion of the teacher in class, even if a student has a 'headphone pass' for wellbeing or student management reasons.

Students who use their personal mobile phones, smart watch or earbuds inappropriately (as per the above) will have their phones confiscated. Students are expected to respond to a confiscation immediately and without dispute. Refusal to hand over their device will escalate the consequences for this incident, and will see the the relevant disciplinary provision within the student code of conduct implemented. Confiscated devices are stored securely until the end of the school day, when their collection depends on the following:

1. First confiscation for the term – collected by student
2. Second confiscation for the term – collected from the Campus Principal by student
3. Third confiscation for the term – collected by parent/carer
4. Further confiscations will see a more significant intervention implemented

Students who use their personal mobile phones, smart watch or earbuds inappropriately (as per the above) at Yarra Hills Secondary College may be issued with consequences consistent with our school’s existing polices *e.g. Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and/or *Code of Conduct* or *Bullying* policies. Yarra Hills Secondary College has the right to request access to student’s electronic data where the school deems that data may be inappropriate or provide evidence of other school policy breaches.

Exceptions

Exceptions to the policy:

- may be applied during school hours if certain conditions are met, specifically,
 - Health and wellbeing-related exceptions; 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](#).

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

1. Learning-related exceptions

Specific exception	Noted in documentation:
For specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Unit of work, or lesson plan
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Education Plan

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Noted in documentation:
Students with a health condition	A localised student record, or Student Support Group notes, or 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	Noted in documentation:
Travelling to and from excursions	Risk assessment planning documentation, communications to families
Students on excursions and camps	Risk assessment planning documentation, communications to families
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

Yarra Hills Secondary College will provide students and their parents and carers with information about items that can or cannot be brought to camps, excursions, and specific special activities and events, including personal mobile phones.]

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Travelling to and from school
- On campus before 9am/start of school day, and after 3.10pm/dismissal time
- Wearable devices – smart watches – when used as a digital watch would be
- iPads
- in workplaces where students are undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g. work experience
- in off-campus learning facilities where students who undertaking VET courses

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- [YHSC Student Wellbeing and Engagement](#)
- [YHSC Code of Conduct](#)
- [YHSC Personal Property](#)
- [YHSC Bullying Prevention Policy](#)
- [Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy](#)
- [Weapons — Banning, Searching and Seizing Harmful Items](#)
- [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#)

REVIEW PERIOD

This policy was last updated in April 2023 and is scheduled for review in April 2026.