



Meadow Heights Primary School

Achieving the potential of all learners.



MHPS Mobile Phone (smart watch) Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the office on 03 9305 2033.

Rationale

- To explain to our school community the Department's and Meadow Heights Primary School policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones (or smart watches) during school hours.
- Schools that allow the use of mobile phones must clearly and regularly advise children and parents/carers of their expectations and policy requirements, including use during school excursions, camps and extra-curricular activities.
- Mobile phone/devices with cameras (still and video) must not be used in banned spaces for example changing rooms, toilets, gyms and swimming pools or to film people and their activities without their knowledge or permission.
- Mobiles phones must not be used to send harassing or threatening messages.
- The school recognises that access to a mobile phone by children is viewed as important by many of our families. The school also recognises that their use, for travel, re-confirming after school arrangements, etc. is again viewed as important by many families.
- While the school does not support the banning of new technologies which are commonly supported in the community, children and families are still urged to be cautious about bringing mobile phones to school and children do so at their own risk.
- As with all privileges there is responsibility and if children do bring mobile phones to school, they must be managed according to this policy and our school expectations or they will have the privilege removed.

Scope:

This policy applies to:

- All students at Meadow Heights Primary School and,
- Students' personal mobile phones and/or smart watches with calling capability.

Definition:

A **mobile phone** is a telephone with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with or without a physical connection to a network.

A **smart watch** is a watch with access to a cellular (telecommunication) system, with a physical connection to a network.

Purpose

- To utilise the benefits of mobile phones/smart watches whilst managing the problems they can potentially cause.
- To ensure Meadow Heights Primary School provides clear policy advice on the use of mobile phones/smart watches.
- To ensure the school complies with DET policy and guidelines.

Implementation

At Meadow Heights Primary School:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones or smart watches to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours (smart watches must have access to cellular system switched off)
- Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see below for further information)
- When emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school's office.
- Mobile phones and smart watches owned by children (and staff) are brought to school at their own risk. The school's insurance cover will not compensate damaged, lost or stolen personal mobile phones and the school does not accept responsibility for lost or damaged student mobile phones.
- Parents/carers may wish to insure student phones/watches as personal property.
- Students' mobile phones must be handed to the office each morning for safe keeping until the end of the school day.

- Students' smart watches with cellular communication systems must have this feature switched off while on school grounds.
- Students will not take photos or record vision of other students whilst on school property.
- In accordance with the Department's [Mobile Phones Policy](#) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones and smart watches must not be used at Meadow Heights Primary School 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.

Storage

Mobile phones or smart watches owned by students at MHPS 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 or smart watches to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Please note that MHPS 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.

Where students bring a mobile phone to school, MHPS will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so.

Misuse of Internet/Mobile Phones/Smart Watches

- Students who use their personal mobile phones/smart watches inappropriately at MHPS may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement policies.
- At MHPS inappropriate use of mobile phones/smart watches is any use during school hours, 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
- Parents will be contacted if students abuse the privilege of bringing their mobile phone or smart watch to school.
- Children misusing personal mobile phones/smart watches at school or causing a nuisance will be brought to the attention of the Principal who may revoke a child's privilege of bringing or using mobile phones whilst at school.
- Identification of child pornography/sexting is a critical incident requiring immediate reporting to Victoria Police SOCIT Unit and Security Services Unit.
- The school will respond with the four critical actions as described in the *Responding to Student Sexual Offending Policy*.
- Failure to report may be deemed a criminal offence.
- Please refer also to the school's *Bullying & Harassment Policy*, *Responding to Student Sexual Offending Policy*, the *Photographing & Filming Children Policy* and the *Student Engagement Policy*.

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 Policy](#).

Camps, excursions and extracurricular activities

Meadow Heights 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 and smart watches.

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

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.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-school-hours events
- 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 staff handbook/manual
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

Related policies and resources

- School relevant policies such as Student *Wellbeing and Engagement*, *Code of Conduct*, *Personal Property*, *Bullying Prevention*, all found on the school's website.
- [Mobile Phones — Student Use Policy](#)
- [Weapons — Banning, Searching and Seizing Harmful Items](#)
- [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	April 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	April 2025