



MOBILE PHONES – STUDENT USE



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Riddells Creek Primary at Riddells.creek.ps@education.vic.gov.au

PURPOSE

To explain to our school community the Department's and Riddells Creek Primary School's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones and other personal communication devices during school hours.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

1. All students at Riddells Creek Primary School and,
2. Students' personal mobile phones and other personal communication devices 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.

Personal communication devices include any device which allow a user to access, receive, view, record, store, communicate, copy or send any information such as text, images, audio, or video, including phone calls.

POLICY

Riddells Creek Primary School understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone or communication device to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

At Riddells Creek Primary School:

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones and personal communication devices to school must have them switched off and securely stored at 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, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school's office on 5428 7277.

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 Riddells Creek 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. An acceptable use contract will be created with the student, parent/carer and school nominee in line with the specific exemption.

Secure storage

Mobile phones and personal communication devices owned by students at Riddells Creek 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 or personal communication device to school unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Please note that Riddells Creek 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 Riddells Creek Primary School's Personal Property Policy AND/OR the Department's [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#).

Where students bring a mobile phone or personal communication device to school, Riddells Creek Primary School will provide secure storage. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Riddells Creek Primary School students are required to store their mobile phones and personal communication devices at the school administration office to be placed in a lockable cupboard.

Enforcement

Students who use their personal mobile phones and communication devices inappropriately at Riddells Creek Primary School may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing student engagement policies.

At Riddells Creek Primary School inappropriate use of mobile phones and personal communication devices is **any use during school hours**, unless an exception has been granted, and particularly use of a mobile phone or communication device:

- 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

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 Principal’s nominee, 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	Documentation
For specific learning activities (class-based exception)	Not applicable at RCPS – school iPads are used for this
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Not applicable at RCPS – school iPads are used for this

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	Student Health Support Plan (e.g. a diabetic needing to monitor their blood sugar using their mobile phone app.)
Students who are Young Carers	Not applicable at RCPS – our students are under the legal age to be Young Carers

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

Personal mobile phones and communication devices cannot be brought to camps or excursions. When parent supervised out-of-hours special activities and events occur on school grounds, students may bring personal mobile phones and communication devices, however, students must abide by the appropriate use of digital technologies and student engagement and wellbeing policies.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to

- Out-of-School-Hours Care (OSHC)
- Out-of-school-hours events on school grounds that are not organised by school staff
- Travelling to and from school
- iPads as part of the RCPS BYOD program

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
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- [RCPS engagement and wellbeing policy](#)
- [RCPS digital technologies policy](#)
- [Acceptable use agreements](#)
- [Claims for Property Damage and Medical Expenses policy](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	January 2021
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	April 2022