**MOBILE PHONES POLICY**

**STUDENT & STAFF USE**

**Purpose**

To explain to our school community the Department’s and Forrest Primary & EYC’s policy requirements and expectations relating to students & staff using mobile phones [and other personal mobile devices] during school hours.

**Scope**

This policy applies to:

1. All students and staff members at Forrest PS & EYC and,
2. Students’ personal mobile phones [and other personal mobile 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.

**Policy**

At Forrest PS & EYC:

* Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored in their personal school bag 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.
* Staff members who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off or to silent mode upon arrival.

**Personal & School mobile phone use**

In accordance with the Department’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/students-using-mobile-phones/policy) issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones must not be used at Forrest PS & EYC 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.

**Staff member** personal mobile phone usage is to be restricted to emergency and / or exceptional matters both inward and outward calls, whilst onsite.

**School** (mobile) phones are not to be used by staff members for private calls, with the exception that staff are permitted to contact families or loved ones during overnight excursions (camps) or if an excursion is returning late.

Staff usage of the school’s mobile is to be used only when the school’s landline phones cannot be used. Staff usage of the school/EYC mobile phones will be only used on a needs basis and will be subject to the principal and EYC Leader’s approval.

Mobile phone calls to/from parents are to be limited to a reasonable time in duration with texting to be considered as a more appropriate means of communication, and/or rescheduling of conversations/concerns on site at a mutually convenient time for both parties to be implemented.

School principal approval in writing for all off site usage of the school/EYC’s mobile phones is to take place before phone sets leave the school/EYC site.

Mobile Phone Photos are to be limited to work related matters only and are to be removed asap after taken by the staff member taking the photo/video clip. [DET “Confidentiality and Privacy Principles](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/privacy-information-sharing/policy)” are to be adhered to at all times.

**Secure storage**

**Mobile phones owned by students** at Forrest PS & EYC 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 Forrest PS & EYC 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, Forrest PS & EYC will provide secure storage at the school office. Secure storage is storage that cannot be readily accessed by those without permission to do so. At Forrest PS & EYC students are required to store their phones in their school bags at all times unless arrangements are made with the school office.

The **school & EYC’s mobile phones** are to be stored in the office safe when not being used ie weekends/holidays.

**Enforcement**

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Forrest PS & EYC may be issued with consequences consistent with the school’s existing student engagement polices.

At Forrest PS & EYC inappropriate use of mobile phones 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

**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.](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/students-using-mobile-phones/policy)

The three categories of exceptions allowed under the Department’s [Mobile Phones Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx) are:

***1. Learning-related exceptions***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Specific exception | Documentation |
| 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 |

***3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Specific exception | Documentation |
| Travelling to and from excursions | 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**

Forrest PS & EYC 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.

**Exclusions**

This policy does not apply to

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

**Related policies and resources**

* Forrest PS *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*
* [Mobile Phones – Department Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/mobilephones.aspx)

**Review period**

This policy was last updated in May 2020 and is scheduled for review in April 2023.