

Ringwood Secondary College

Mobile Phones – Student Use Policy



Help for non-English speakers.

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Ringwood Secondary College on (03) 9870 2002.

Ringwood Secondary College is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation. The Child Safe Standards are compulsory minimum standards for all Victorian schools to ensure they are well prepared to keep children and young people safe and protect them from abuse. [Ministerial Order 1359](#) provides the framework for child safety in schools.

Purpose

To explain to our school community the Department's and Ringwood Secondary College's policy requirements and expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours.

Scope

This policy applies to all students at Ringwood Secondary College and, students' personal mobile phones brought onto school premises during school hours (8:45am – 3:05pm), 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 such as a smart watch.

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

At Ringwood Secondary College:

- students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored in their lockers during school hours,
- exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see below for further information),
- if a message needs to be relayed, or when emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the College office on 9870 2002,
- there is also the option of direct email to a student.

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 Ringwood 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.

At Ringwood Secondary College inappropriate use of mobile phones is defined as:

- that disrupts the learning of others in any way,
- 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.

Secure Storage

Mobile phones owned by students at Ringwood 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 Ringwood 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.

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

At Ringwood Secondary College students are required to store their phones in their locker that is secured by a combination padlock. This combination must be kept confidential and not shared.

The mobile phone **MUST** be switched off whilst in storage to avoid excessive battery wear or overheating.

Enforcement

It is the College's intention to implement this policy in a collegial manner, with trust, mutual respect and to maintain the culture of harmony and respectful teacher/ student relationships.

ACTIONS:

1. The student knows that they have broken the rules and the phone will be confiscated for the day. The expectation is that students surrender their phone willingly, in line with the values of respect and collegiality. The phone will be placed in an envelope and handed in to the General Office as soon as possible. A yellow Compass post will then be entered, made visible to the student, parent/s and to the relevant year level coordinator. The student can collect their phone from the general office at the end of the day.
2. 2nd offence – as per 1st offence, the phone must be willingly surrendered and a red post will be posted on Compass. The relevant year level coordinator will issue a detention.
3. 3rd offence – the phone will be collected by the teacher as per initial action and the general office will notify the relevant year level coordinator to make contact with the parent/s to collect the phone at the end of the school day. If the parents cannot present to collect the phone, for safety reasons, the phone will be returned to the student.

Students who use their personal mobile phones inappropriately at Ringwood Secondary College may be issued with consequences consistent with our school's existing Student Wellbeing and Engagement and Bullying policies.

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](#). 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 or learning sequence clearly documented on the Compass Lesson Plan. Phones to be returned back to student lockers directly after that class has completed.
For students for whom a reasonable adjustment to a learning program is needed because of a disability or learning difficulty	Individual Education Plan, found on Compass, where mobile phone usage has been recommended by a paraprofessional.

2. Health and wellbeing-related exceptions

Specific exception	Documentation
Students with a health condition	Student Health Support Plan. Flagged on Compass and kept on file in First Aid
Students who are Young Carers	A localised student record on Cases21

3. Exceptions related to managing risk when students are offsite

Specific exception	Documentation
Travelling to and from excursions	Teacher discretion posted on Compass
Students on excursions and camps	Risk assessment documentation on Compass
When students are offsite (not on school grounds) and unsupervised with parental permission	Mobile phones allowed for safety reasons
Students with a dual enrolment or who need to undertake intercampus travel	Mobile phones allowed for safety reasons

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

Ringwood Secondary College 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 events
- Travelling to and from school
- iPads, MacBooks and all other personal devices
- Students undertaking workplace learning activities, e.g., work experience
- Students who are undertaking VET

Related Policies and Resources

The following Department of Education and Training policies and guidance are relevant to this policy:

- [Mobile Phones Policy](#) – Department Policy
- [Weapons and Other Harmful Items – Banning, Searching and Seizing](#)
- Personal Goods – Department policy

Policy status and review

Assistant principal is responsible for reviewing and updating the Mobile Phone – Student Use Policy at least every three years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

Approval

Policy last reviewed	22 March 2023
Consultation	Policy and Education Committee – 22 February 2023 College Council – 22 March 2023
Approved by	School Council and Rosina Fotia (Principal)
Next review date	March 2026