



Mobile phones and personal devices

Scope

This school policy is implemented in line with the Department for Education's [Student use of mobile phones and personal devices policy](#), which applies to all government schools. This document provides direction to students, staff, and parents/ carers about managing personal devices while on Campus grounds or while representing Thiele Primary School.

Rationale

With the widespread and increasing ownership of mobile phones and other devices among students it is critical that schools, in partnership with parents/ cares, provide clear guidance for students to become informed, safe, respectful, and responsible digital citizens.

As outlined in the Department for Education's [Mobile communication devices procedure](#) that access to personal devices during school hours must be managed so that students can be fully present in their learning and in their interactions with their teachers and peers.

The aim of this policy is to promote:

- safe environments with reduced negative impacts of inappropriate use of devices at school, such as cyberbullying, exposure to harmful content, and critical incidents that involve mobile phones
- classroom environments where teachers can teach, and students can learn, free from distractions caused by personal use of devices
- use of breaks as quality time away from screens, encouraging physical activity, play and meaningful face-to-face connections with peers.

Personal devices at school

Students are permitted to bring personal devices to school:

- as a measure to ensure their safety while travelling to and from school
- so that parents and caregivers can contact them outside of school hours.

While students are at school, or attending school activities, they must comply with any reasonable directions given by school staff in line with this policy regarding their personal devices.

The Department for Education's [Mobile communication devices procedure](#) requires students at all department schools to keep personal devices 'off and away' between the start and end of each school day, and while they are attending school activities off-site, such as camps and excursions. Students will not be able to access their personal devices at any time during school hours.

Storage of personal devices at school

Students will turn their devices off or place them in flight mode before giving them to classroom teacher to place in a lockable cupboard. This includes taking off and storing any wearable technology that fits the definition of this policy, such as smartwatches.

Students are required to hand in their personal devices to their teacher upon arrival at school each day, to be securely stored by their teacher. Students will be able to collect their device from their teacher at the end of the school day, or when being signed out early by a parent.

Responses to non-compliance

Where students use a personal device at school without an approved exemption a response will be provided in line with the school's Positive Behaviour Plan.

Students will be verbally reminded to put their devices 'off and away.' If the student continues to use their device without permission, the teacher will refer the student to leadership and their personal device(s) will be securely stored by front office staff. The student will be given a communication slip to inform parent/care of this situation.

Where a student repeatedly and intentionally breaches the requirements of this policy or refuses to follow a staff member's direction to hand over a personal device, a member of the school leadership team will contact home.

Where a student's misuse of personal devices is serious, it may be necessary for the school to consider responses in line with the Department for Education's [Suspension, exclusion and expulsion of student's procedure](#), and or contact South Australia Police if the behaviour is suspected to be illegal.

Device Confiscation

In the event of confiscation, the student's device will be securely stored in the Front Office. The student can collect the device from the Front Office at the end of the same school day.

Exemptions

Individual students may have extenuating reasons for needing access to their personal device during school hours, such as:

- the device is used to monitor or help manage a health condition
- the device is a negotiated adjustment to a learning program for a student with disability or learning difficulties
- the device is used for translation by a student with English as an additional language

Please contact the school if you need to request an exemption due to exceptional circumstances. These requests will be considered by leadership and class teacher on a case-by-case basis. If approved, the exemption will be recorded in the student's file or health care/learning plan as appropriate.

Roles and responsibilities

School Leadership

- The school's policy has been endorsed, ratified, and reviewed by Governing Council and is clearly communicated and accessible to all students, staff, and families.
- Secure storage is provided for student personal devices that are handed in to school staff.
- Processes are in place for monitoring internet and school network use by all members of the school community.
- Enforce the policy and responses to instances of non-compliance.
- Consider requests for exemptions from the policy from parents or independent students due to exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis. Make sure that approved exemptions in this category are documented and that relevant staff, including temporary relief teachers, are informed about students with an exemption.
- Model appropriate use of mobile phones and support school staff to do the same.
- Support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible, and respectful use of mobile phones to their children.
- Report and respond to incidents of inappropriate or illegal use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legal requirements.

School staff

- Deliver learning opportunities and maintain a safe and productive learning environment. Take steps to minimise distractions from the non-educational use of personal devices in the learning environment.
- Respond to instances of non-compliance in line with the school's policy.
- Report and respond to incidents of inappropriate use of personal devices in line with department policy and procedures and any legal requirements.
- Ensure students who are given permission to access their personal device use it appropriately and only for the specified purpose and store their personal devices away after the exempted activity has concluded.
- Make sure that any student personal devices handed in for their care are stored in a secure location and are returned to the student (or their parent) by the end of the same school day.
- Model appropriate use of mobile phones and support families to understand the importance of promoting safe, responsible, and respectful use of mobile phones to their children. Use mobile phones for work-related/emergency purposes only when students are under their care.

Parents/ Carer

- Support the school's implementation of this policy, including the consequences for non-compliance.
- Encourage their child not to bring a personal device to school unless necessary.
- Understand that the department does not provide insurance for accidental loss or damage to personal property that is brought onto school grounds (however, claims may be met under the department's public liability insurance where the loss or damage can be attributed to a negligent act or omission on the part of the school – the school will contact the department for advice if this may be the case).
- Use the school's formal communication channels in all instances to communicate with the school or to contact their child during school hours (including where a student requires early collection from school). Encourage their child to always report to a school staff member in the first instance if they become unwell or experience an issue at school.
- Recognise the significant role they play in supporting their child to use their mobile phone (or other personal device) in a safe, responsible, and respectful way.

Students

- Comply with the requirements of this policy and follow all reasonable directions from the principal and school staff.
- Switch all personal devices off, or into flight mode, on arrival at school each day and store it away as specified in this policy.
- If permitted to use a mobile phone or personal device in line with an exemption under this policy, do so in a safe, responsible, and respectful way and support peers to do the same.
- Communicate respectfully with others and do not use a mobile phone or other personal device to bully, harass, or threaten another person.
- Respect others' rights to privacy and do not take photos, film, or audio records of other people without their knowledge or permission.
- Notify a school staff member as soon as possible if feeling unwell or experiencing any other issues at school. Use the school's sign-out processes in all cases requiring early collection from school.

Supporting links and Information

[school positive behaviour plan](#)

[school anti-bullying policy](#)

[ICT user agreement](#)

Definitions

Personal device

Mobile phones, smart watches and other digital devices that can send or receive messages or calls and are able to connect to the internet, and personal laptops or iPads that are not owned by the school and have not been brought to school by the student under a separate Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) agreement.

Communication and review

This policy can be accessed on Thiele Primary School website. This policy has been compiled in consultation with leadership, staff, and Governing Council. It will be reviewed in consultation with relevant stakeholders to ensure members are aware of the policy requirements.

Questions, concerns and further information

This policy has been implemented by the school in line with the Department for Education's [Behaviour Support policy](#) and [Mobile communication devices procedure](#). You can find more information about this policy, and links to further resources for parents on the Department for Education's website.

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, please contact Thiele Primary School directly or alternatively you can contact the department at:

Email: education.customers@sa.gov.au or submit an [online feedback form](#)

Phone: Free call: 1800 088 158

Please contact the school directly to discuss the possibility of an exemption if your child has exceptional circumstances as outlined in this policy.

***Policy ratified by Thiele Primary School Governing Council 21/03/2023
to be reviewed in 2025***

Respect Achievement Integrity Sustainability