



## **Mobile Phone (Personal Devices) Policy and Procedures Term 4, 2023**

These procedures promote the learning, safety and wellbeing of students and the management of any risk of harm and distraction from the use of digital technology accessed via a mobile phone, smart watch, or other personal electronic device.

**Tweed River High School will go mobile device free for students  
at the commencement of Term 4, 2023.**

### **The aim of this policy is to provide:**

- a safe environment to learn, without the distraction of inappropriate mobile device use.
- greater opportunities for social interaction and physical activity during recess and lunch breaks.

### **Rationale**

While mobile phones and other such devices have significant advantages for use in the broader community their use in schools is highly problematic. In classrooms, mobile phones are significant distractors to learning and contribute to a student's cognitive load. They can also pose a significant risk to the safety and wellbeing of students through unfiltered/ unsupervised access to the internet and social networking platforms. The use of technology is important, but the risks and benefits need to be managed.

A summary of research used to inform this policy can be found at the end of this document.

### **The Procedures**

- In NSW Public Secondary Schools from Term 4 2023 the use of mobile phones has been banned by the NSW Dept of Education. Principals, in consultation with their communities, are required to implement this new policy. They have discretion to make decisions about restricting or permitting student use of digital devices and online services in all school-related settings, including before school, all breaks, during class as well as any off-site school approved activities.
- The procedures are outlined to manage student use of these devices at Tweed River High School. They do not relate to BYOD or school non-cellular laptops and tablets used for educational purposes.
- Mobile phones and other personal electronic devices include smart watches and all other electronic cellular devices (including iPods and other branded tablets), as well as their associated listening accessories – such as, but not limited to, headphones, ear pods and ear buds.
- Digital devices and online services are an important part of everyday life, shaping the way children and young people learn, communicate, work and play. Learning environments, at school and at home, should support students to develop technological, social, and emotional competencies. This support should maximise the benefits and minimise the risks of digital environments and prepare students for life beyond school.

## Use of mobile phones or other personal electronic devices

Students will have their device immediately confiscated and further disciplinary action will follow if:

- they are using their mobile device in class or in the playground without permission.
- the device is used to bully, intimidate, or otherwise harass other people through any voice call, text message, photographic, video, or other data transfer system available on the device.
- students use digital devices to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school.
- students use devices to record images, video, or sound without permission.
- the device has been used to contravene the law.

## Expectations of Students

- Students may not use mobile phones and other personal electronic devices while on school grounds at any time. 'School grounds' extends to school excursions, sports carnivals, and other events either at the school or off site where an approved school activity takes place, unless otherwise advised.
- Mobile phones are to be **'off and away all day'** from the time students enter school grounds in the morning until they have boarded transport or have left school grounds at the end of the day. This includes before school and at break times.
- Smart watches must be switched to 'aeroplane mode' before entering school grounds and for the duration of the school day.
- BYO or school issued non-cellular laptops are NOT part of these procedures. Teachers may also request or allow students to use listening accessories with their laptops as required for learning activities.
- Students will take their mobile device to the front office immediately if asked to by a teacher or a member of staff. They will place their mobile electronic device into the **Mobile Device Breach Envelope** (Appendix 3) as instructed by the office staff.
- Office staff will secure the envelope into the Mobile device locker or the student file. The office staff will record the phone breach in **SENTRAL** and where the phone has been secured e.g. Locker 14 or the student file.
- The student will then be sent to the Deputy Principal who will issue a Formal Caution and notify parents of the Caution and the reasons for it in accordance with the TRHS Behaviour and Discipline Procedures.
- Further breaches of the discipline code will incur more severe consequences, including Suspension, for persistent failure to follow school procedures and the School's Behaviour and Discipline Procedures.
- Students must take full responsibility for any mobile device brought to school. The school and its staff will not be responsible for their loss, theft, or damage. Students who bring their devices to school, do so at their own risk.
- **Purchasing items at school:** - Phones will not be used for purchases. Students will be required to use a card or cash to pay for any purchases at school including the Canteen or Uniform Shop. The school is investigating online pre-ordering. Where

available, students and parents are encouraged to use this service.

## Exceptions/Exemptions

A small number of exceptions/exemptions will be made. These exemptions will only be available for:

- **Managing a health and safety condition:**

- Health related exemptions can be sought by parents/carers by contacting the Deputy Principal and completing the Mobile Device Exemption Application (Appendix 4).
- In the case of a health condition, a letter from a medical professional stating when and how the mobile phone is to be used will be required.
- The Deputy Principal will work alongside parents and complete the Mobile Device Exemption Plan. For example, the Plan may outline a process by which students check their phones as required in consultation with the Deputy Principal.
- Families of students requiring an exemption will be referred to the Phone Exemption Flow Chart (Appendix 4).

**Note:**

- Where an Exemption is granted, it will be for a specific purpose.
- It will not include permission to use a mobile device at the canteen for example.

## Expectations of Parent or Caregiver

In accordance with the procedures parents/carers will:

- Contact the school Front Office to pass on messages rather than contacting a student directly on their device (for acceptable reasons only, students will be permitted to use a phone in the Front Office to contact their parents/carer under the supervision of the Deputy Principal).
- Understand that the school takes no responsibility for loss or damage to phones or personal electronic devices.
- Work collaboratively with the school and help reinforce Tweed River High School's Mobile Devices Policy and Procedures with their child/ren.

## Consequences

- If requested by a teacher or staff member, students will proceed directly to the office and place their mobile phone or electronic device into the **Mobile Device Breach Envelope** (Appendix 3).
- Staff will safely secure the envelope in the front office and a Mobile Device Breach entered on SENTRAL.
- The student will then go to the Deputy Principal where a Formal Caution to Suspend or Suspension may be given.

Consequences will be applied according to the school's Behaviour and Discipline policy. These include but are not limited to:

- Confiscation of the student device until such time as their parent or caregiver can attend the school to collect the device.
- The issuing of a Formal Caution to Suspend, or a Suspension, for persistent failure to follow the procedures of this policy and the School's Behaviour and Discipline Policy.

- Withdrawal of a student privilege to bring their phone to school.

### **It is appropriate to confiscate devices from students when:**

- students have failed to meet the school's expectations relating to appropriate use of mobile phones or other personal electronic devices.
- students have and use phones contrary to the conditions of this policy.
- it is necessary to examine the device where there are reasonable grounds to suspect inappropriate material may be on the device. Senior Executive staff will be involved in such incidents.
- in cases where students have bullied, threatened, or harassed other students or staff via a device or where the device has been used to film, take photographs, or display inappropriate material.

## **Discipline and Student Behaviour Management**

**In class:** Any student with a phone/device out of their bag will be required to take the device to the front office and place it in a TRHS Mobile Device Breach envelope, clearly marked with the student's details and phone condition. The front office staff will record the mobile device breach on SENTRAL. The envelope will be securely stored in the front office. The student will then proceed to the Deputy Principal where a Formal Caution to Suspend or a Suspension will be issued. In the case of a Formal Caution the student will then return to class. The phone will remain at school until a parent can collect it. The teacher will check SENTRAL to ensure the student went to the office as instructed and surrendered their phone. The teacher will refer the student to the Head Teacher if the instructions were not followed.

**In the playground:** Any student with a phone/device out of their bag will be instructed to take the device to the front office and place it in a TRHS Mobile Device Breach envelope, clearly marked with the student's details and a device condition report. Front office staff will record the details of the mobile device breach on SENTRAL. The envelope will be securely stored in the front office. The student will then proceed to the Deputy Principal where a Formal Caution to Suspend or a Suspension may be issued. In the case of the Formal Caution the student will return to class. The phone will remain at the office until such time as a parent can collect it. The teacher will check SENTRAL to ensure the student went to the office as instructed and surrendered their phone. The teacher will refer the student to the Head Teacher if the instructions were not followed.

**Students who fail to cooperate with the above process:** will be referred immediately to the Faculty Head Teacher or the Head Teacher on duty. The Head Teacher will escort the student to the Front Office where they will be instructed to place their phone in a TRHS Mobile Device Breach Envelope, clearly marked with the student's details and phone condition. Front office staff will record the mobile device breach on SENTRAL. The envelope will be securely stored in the front office. The student will then proceed to the Deputy Principal where a Formal Caution to Suspend or a Suspension may be issued. In the case of the Formal Caution the student will return to class. The phone will remain at the office until such time as a parent can collect it. **Note:** The Head Teacher may impose further consequences as a result of the student refusing the initial request and their continued behaviour.

**Students who fail to follow Head Teacher instructions:** will be referred immediately to the Deputy Principal. The Deputy Principal will confiscate the phone and contact the parent/carer to advise of the Formal Caution or Suspension and that the device will be

stored securely in the office in a TRHS Device Breach Envelope until it is collected by parents.

## **Implementation plan**

### **Term 3 2023 Week 10**

- Letters to all parents outlining the policy and procedures.
- All students are informed of the policy.
- Student Handbook updated, along with all communication strategies including online platforms.

### **End of Term 3 2023 - Holiday Break**

- Messaging continues on all school communication platforms with further information and reminders going to students and parents as well as staff.

### **Term 4 2023 Week 1 and 2**

- Executive staff welcome students at the gate reminding them of the new policy, this will continue as needed.

### **Term 4 Week 1-10**

- The school continues to schedule activities during breaks throughout the term.

## **Policy Evaluation timeframe**

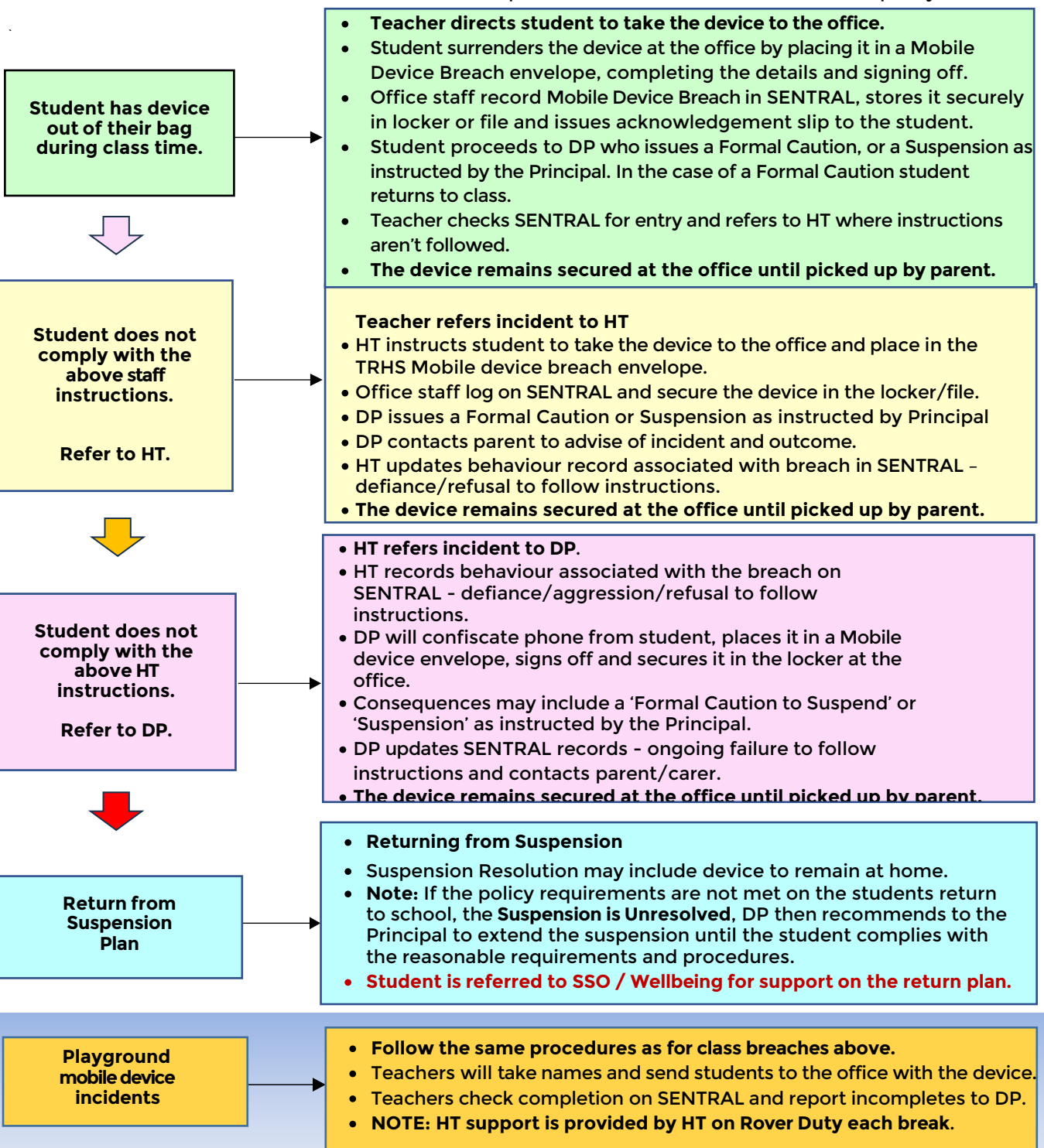
This policy and its procedures will be reviewed as follows, considering the NSW DoE Mobile Phone Policy:

- Week 8 Term 4, 2023
- The first year of implementation
- Subsequently on a 3-year cycle.

## Tweed River High School – Mobile Device Policy Breach Procedures

### Key points:

- Students may not use mobile devices at any time while on school grounds.
- Mobile devices are to be **'off and away all day'**, from the time students enter school grounds in the morning until they are boarding a bus or have left school grounds at the end of the day. This includes before school and at break times.
- 'School grounds' extends to all approved school activities wherever they take place unless otherwise advised. They may include excursions, sports carnivals, and other events at the school or off site.
- 'Mobile phones and other personal electronic devices' include: smart watches (permitted on airplane mode) and all other electronic devices (including iPods and other branded tablets), as well as their associated listening accessories – such as, but not limited to, headphones, ear pods and ear buds. For further detailed information please refer to the TRHS Mobile Device policy.



## Research - Mobile phone use in the classroom

There is extensive research emerging on the use of mobile phones by young people. Included below is an edited review of the available literature.

**How smart is it to allow students to use mobile phones at school?** Reports on a study of mobile phone bans in England. The bans led to:

- Improvements in student achievement
- An increase in test scores for students aged 16 by an amount equal to adding five extra days to the school year.

Lower-achieving students made the greatest improvements.

<https://theconversation.com/how-smart-is-it-to-allow-students-to-use-mobile-phones-at-school-40621>

### Research - Cognition and smart phone use

Smartphones and Cognition: A Review of Research Exploring the Links between Mobile Technology Habits and Cognitive Functioning is a review of academic research on mobile phones. The review looked for evidence of effects of smartphone use on cognition. It reported that habitual smartphone use may have a negative and lasting impact on users' ability to:

- think
- remember
- pay attention
- regulate emotion.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5403814/>

**Research - Smartphones use by children and young people and wellbeing.** Increases in Depressive Symptoms, Suicide-Related Outcomes, and Suicide Rates Among U.S. Adolescents After 2010 and Links to Increased New Media Screen Time shows that, on average, teenagers are spending six hours per day:

- using the internet
- texting friends
- using social media.

The surveys explore the links between the use of smartphones, particularly social media, and increases in depression, anxiety, and reduced happiness.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2167702617723376>

**Dopamine, Smartphones & You:** A battle for your time, a Harvard University blog discusses our desire to connect and seek validation through technologies and how this can lead to anxiety, poor sleep, and unsuccessful social interactions. The blog explains how mobile phone content can influence our 'dopamine pathways and lead to a battle for increasingly of the users' time.

<http://sitn.hms.harvard.edu/flash/2018/dopamine-smartphones-battle-time/>

**The Social Dilemma** is a Netflix documentary-drama hybrid that examines the many ways social media and social networking companies have manipulated human psychology to rewire the human brain and what it means for society in general. One of the most striking sections of the documentary is the one that touches on the vulnerability of teenagers who use platforms like Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, and multiple others every single day and have been moulded by social media's influences. This section of the film is highlighted by statistics on depression, anxiety, and even suicide rates of teenagers that correlate with the rise of social media.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9y\\_KiBxKePI&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9y_KiBxKePI&feature=youtu.be)



Note: Scale label to suit either:  
DLX pocket envelope - 120 x 235mm OR C5 envelope - 229 x 162mm

# MOBILE DEVICE BREACH

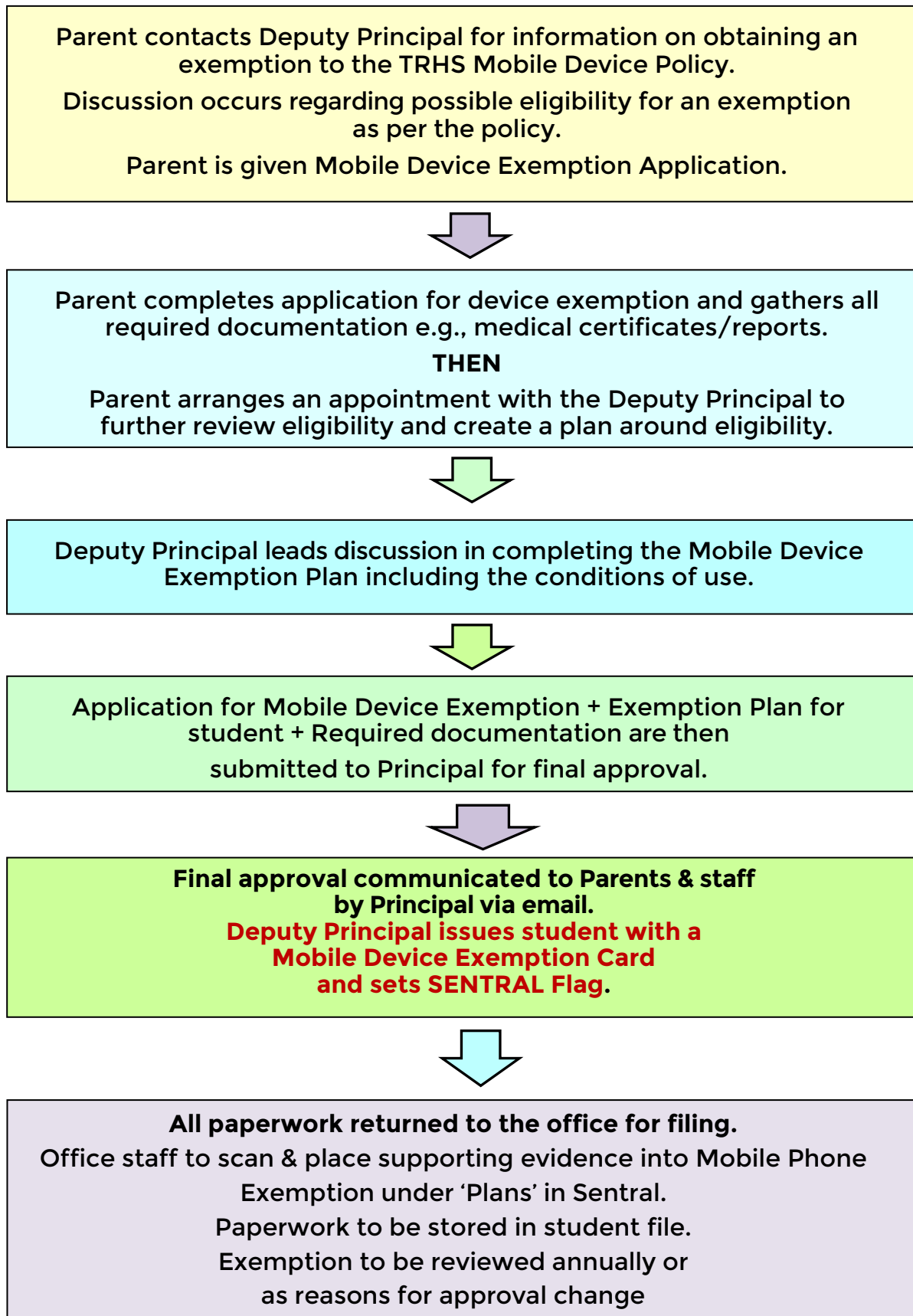
In accordance with the NSW Dept Ed. / TRHS mobile device policy - 10/2023



<b>Student:</b>		<b>Year / Class:</b>
<b>Teacher:</b>	<b>Head Teacher:</b>	
<b>Deputy Principal:</b>	<b>Date / Time Surrendered:</b>  / / . T :	
<p><b>Device condition report:</b> Indicate any damage to the phone such as screen cracks or button /case damage</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="text-align: center;">      </div> </div>		
<p><b>Final checks:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Phone</u> turned off</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <u>All</u> personal items removed (money cards etc.)</p>		
<b>Student signature:</b>	<b>Staff Signature:</b>	

# Phone Exemption Flow Chart, Application and Plan

## 4.1 MOBILE DEVICE EXEMPTION - FLOW CHART





## 4.2 Application for Mobile Device Exemption

Name:			
Year:			
Deputy Principal:			
Parent/ Carer:			
Parent/Carer Contact:			
Outline the health/wellbeing Mobile Device procedure needed for this exemption?			
Is medical exemption/information/evidence attached?	YES/NO		
Have you met with the DP to develop an appropriate phone plan?	Device Plan attached: YES / NO		
Principal Exemption Approval	YES / NO	Signature	Date

\*\*Please bring all relevant documentation to the meeting with your child's DP where a plan will be designed in consultation with all parties.

### OFFICE USE ONLY

- Plan created in SENTRAL
- DP arranges with office to create the Personalised Device Exemption Card, delivers to the student, places a flag on SENTRAL.
- Principal notifies parent and staff that a Device Exemption is in place.



### 4.3. Plan for Student with a Mobile Device (Personal Devices) Exemption

<b>Student Name:</b>		<b>Date</b>
<b>Reason for Exemption</b>		
<b>Plan made in consultation with:</b>		
<b>Device Plan:</b> Outline how the device will be used as recommended by the medical practitioner or similar. How the device will be accessed in the classroom/playground to ensure appropriate use of the device include: <b>When/Where/Who</b>		
<b>Student Signature</b>		
<b>Parent Signature</b>		
<b>Principal/delegate signature</b>		

**\*\* Mobile Device plan to be reviewed by Principal before final exemption approval is granted.**

To be printed on the plastic ID card printer at the office

**Mobile Device Exemption Card  
2023**



Name:

Year:

The student identified above has an approved exemption allowing the use of a mobile device for medical purposes only while at school.