



## **THOMAS MORE COLLEGE**

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **HIGH SCHOOL CELL PHONE POLICY (2024)**

#### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of technology at TMC is to enhance learning by using the appropriate technology responsibly. Cellphones, while having many positive and productive uses, can also impede focus in classrooms, increase distractions and reduce positive social interaction, while also increasing the potential for online bullying. This policy aims to remove the disturbance, and nuisance that smart mobile phones cause. Our aim is to minimise interruptions within the learning environment. This policy stems from the teachers at TMC who can attest to the negative impacts smartphones have in the classroom and from the report by UNESCO warning of the dangers of such technology in unsupervised spaces. This policy should be read with the Information and Communication Technology policy.

#### **1. STAKEHOLDERS**

1.1 This policy applies to all pupils in grades 8 to 11, teachers and parents.

#### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- To prevent distraction in class;
- To limit cyberbullying at TMC;
- To encourage positive social interaction;
- To facilitate face-to-face problem-solving;
- To prepare TMC for the implementation of the Apple iPad conversion to be rolled out in 2025.

#### **2. CELLPHONES IN LOCKERS:**

Cellphones are not permissible for pupils between the time of 07h30 till 14h30 (end of the academic day). If a pupil chooses to bring a cellphone onto the TMC campus it must be locked away in the locker provided with a combination lock. (The combination must be given to the parents who may be phoned by the school secretary if the pupil forgets the code.) This new cellphone device management plan at TMC applies to cellphone devices and will occur during all school hours, including break times and while pupils are on school-based excursions. Pupils may carry their phones while travelling to and from school. Air pods are not permitted because if the phone is in a locker, there is no access to the phone device. Smart watches must not be used in place of a phone to take or make calls and text messages. Payments at the tuck shop must be made using a physical card or with the ALLX band.

### 3. CONTACT WITH PARENTS:

- 3.1 If a pupil has an emergency they will be able to call home via the school secretary. If a pupil is unwell at any time, he or she is required to go to the School Nurse for support and assistance. Cellphones must not be used to by-pass school procedures in relation to school-parent contact such as the official notification of student illness. TMC has a duty to provide first aid and pupils must ensure the office is aware that they need assistance. Parents who wish to contact their child during the school day should have compelling and or urgent reasons to do so. Parents should contact the School Secretary who will ensure the message is passed on by the subject teacher.
- 3.2 Parents are encouraged to support the School in the management of cellphone use and restrictions.

### 4. CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE:

- 4.1 Should a cellphone be seen at any time by a teacher during the stipulated hours, it will be confiscated and stored in the school office for 24 hours.
- 4.2 A letter of warning will be sent to the parents and only the parent (family member) may collect the phone from the HS secretary.
- 4.3 Should the phone be seen a second time (there is no time frame between the first and second occurrence) then the phone will be confiscated for 7 days.
- 4.4 On the third occasion of the phone being seen on the pupil a disciplinary meeting will take place with the possibility of suspension from school.
- 4.5 The teacher reserves the right to determine whether the smartphone is brought into and used for teaching and learning purposes in his/her particular classroom. Should the teacher allow smartphones, the onus is on the pupil to lock it up in the locker provided before and after the lesson. Any transgression by a pupil will be dealt with as described above.
- 4.6 All Forms of social media are banned from being used on the TMC High School internet service (as well as connection via cellular link). In bringing a smartphone to school, you are acknowledging that you are responsible for it. TMC will not be held liable if the phone goes missing or is stolen.
- 4.7 At no time may any photograph be taken of any pupil or TMC staff member without the written permission of the staff member. Videos of activities with pupils in school uniform on the TMC campus are not permissible unless the recording forms part of an approved classroom activity or with the knowledge and approval of the Head. This applies to the uploading of images, videos and other content that include pupils and the TMC campus.

#### **Responsibilities:**

It is the responsibility of all High School pupils, their parents and teachers at TMC to understand and adhere to this policy or face disciplinary action.

#### **Commitment:**

TMC is committed to ensuring the safe use of all its information and communications technology in the best interests of all its users and as required by law.

**Name of Policy:**      **Cellphone Policy 2024**

<b>Review Dates:</b>	<b>Reviewed By:</b>	<b>Approved By:</b>
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Created Nov 2024	High School Management Team	

TO Be reviewed annually.