

SINGLE USE PLASTICS BAN POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Glendal Primary School on 03 9803 1330.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Victorian government's single-use plastic ban, which came into effect on February 1, 2023, and applies to all organisations and businesses, including schools.

SUMMARY

- Single-use plastic items have been banned from sale or supply in Victoria. These items include single-use plastic drinking straws, cutlery and plates, polystyrene food service and drink containers, paper or cardboard plates lined with plastic and any single-use plastic item that is integrated into food or drink packaging (for example, a single-use plastic spoon included in a yoghurt tub).
- Glendal Primary School must not provide any banned single-use plastic items as part of their school operations (for example, lunch orders, Outside School Hours Care, classroom resources, fundraising and other events) and will not be able to purchase any new banned single-use plastic items.
- There are some exceptions to the ban, which include people who need single-use plastic drinking straws due to a disability or for a medical need.
- Offences relating to the ban do not apply to private or domestic activities at home, for example, individual families' decisions about lunch packaging brought to school. The intention of the ban is to remove the specified items from the supply chain before they reach the consumer.

POLICY

Background

Single-use plastics make up a third of the litter in our environment and are difficult and costly to clean up. They pollute the environment, harming wildlife and contaminating our food and water. They are also a poor use of resources – they are often used for only a few minutes and generate significant waste that is not recyclable. They can often easily be replaced with reusable products.

Under regulations, Victorian businesses and organisations, including Glendal Primary School, will not be able to sell, supply or provide several single-use plastic items. The ban applies to the following single-use plastic items made from conventional, degradable or compostable plastics:

- drinking straws
- cutlery including knives, forks, spoons, chopsticks, sporks, splayds and food picks
- plates
- drink stirrers and sticks
- cotton bud sticks.

The ban also applies to:

- food service items and drink containers made from expanded polystyrene. This includes expanded polystyrene plates, cups, bowls, clam shells and any cover or lid that is also made from expanded polystyrene.

Glendal Primary School must not provide any of the banned items for consuming food or drinks (for example, in staffrooms, in lunch orders, at Outside School Hours Care programs or during fundraising or school community events) or for use in classroom or other school activities (for example, art, science, food technology).

A single-use plastic item is not reusable. Refer to the Definitions section below.

Where reusable options are not available, and Glendal Primary School still requires disposable items, suppliers should be contacted regarding the most sustainable options, such as responsibly sourced paper, bamboo, or wood alternatives. Glendal will still check that any new disposable alternatives do not contain plastic polymers and are safe to use.

Definitions

Single-use plastic item – an item made wholly or in part of plastic, and not reusable.

Reusable items – items manufactured to be used for the same purpose on multiple occasions. They come with a warranty, or other written representation from the manufacturer, that they are designed to last for at least one year.

Exceptions to the ban

Single-use plastic straws for people with disability or for medical needs

Glendal Primary School will purchase and provide single-use plastic drinking straws for individuals who need these due to a disability or for a medical need. There is no requirement for individuals to verify their disability or medical need when requesting straws.

Single-use plastic cotton bud sticks for testing carried out for scientific purposes can also be used.

Note that the ban does not apply to:

- serving utensils (for example, tongs, cake servers).
- platters.
- expanded polystyrene containers used for food packaging and transport where the food is not typically consumed from the receptacle (for example, trays for raw meat, food storage boxes or gelato tubs).

Glendal Primary School is aware that:

- single-use plastic straws must not be accessible to students – for example, they could be stored behind the canteen counter or in a staffroom cupboard.
- when purchasing single-use plastic straws from a supplier, the school must ensure that they are being used under an exemption and in line with the regulations.
- reusable straws, alongside single-use straws made from other types of materials such as paper or wheat, must be used, where a single-use plastic straw is not required. There are no restrictions on how straws made from other materials can be stored, displayed and provided.

Catering and events

Glendal Primary School will ask any catering suppliers whether they have reusable alternatives that can be returned following an event, rather than providing the school with disposable single-use products. Glendal may also decide to use their own reusable crockery, cutlery and other items for school events and activities.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Sustainability Victoria has resources available to assist in making the switch to reusables:

- [Victorian Government single-use plastics website:](#)
- [Factsheet: Single-use plastics ban \(PDF\)](#)

COMMUNICATION

This policy is communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- School website (publicly accessible).
- Hard copy available from the school administration upon request.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June, 2026
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June, 2029