

Mobile Phones & Digital Devices
at
Northlakes High School



FAQ & Information Booklet for Staff, Students and Families

*Our Core Values are; Respect, Responsibility and Personal Best.
With this in mind, the foundation of this Mobile Phone and Digital Devices procedure relies on our students and community demonstrating responsible use of Mobile Phone and Digital Devices. In consultation with the Northlakes High School P&C, staff and Northlakes High School SRC a decision was made to implement "Off and Away, All Day" and avoid punitive measures such as pouches and lockable cabinets.*

A review of these procedures will occur annually.

1. Why are we receiving this booklet?

- The school acknowledges our role in supporting students to use phones and digital devices in safe, responsible and respectful ways.
- All NSW Government schools must adhere to [the NSW DOE Mobile Phone Policy](#)
- This document will further guide student use of mobile phones and digital devices at Northlakes High School and provide key details.

2. What Changes?

- Purpose
 - What other local school communities have said about mobile phones
 - 98% agreed that policies and procedures need to be implemented to ensure students are safe when using digital devices and online services
 - 87% agreed that young people spend too much time on their digital devices which can have a negative effect on concentration and behaviour
 - 87% agreed that overuse of social media platforms can increase the incidence of cyberbullying and harassment
 - 73% agreed that mobile phones are necessary to ensure student safety while traveling to and from school
 - 83% agreed that too much time using digital devices can reduce levels of physical activity, levels of communication and interpersonal skills in young people.
 - What did teachers say about mobile phone use at school?
 - 51% of teacher respondents stated that students often used their mobile phones in class without permission.
 - 71% of teacher respondents had students using mobile phones 'sometimes' for academic purposes.
 - 78% of teacher respondents were asking students to put away mobile phones on a regular basis.
 - 98% of teacher respondents were addressing inappropriate use of digital devices in the classroom for time periods between 1-2 minutes (22%) 2-15 minutes (76%).
 - 91% of teacher respondents expressed genuine concern regarding inappropriate mobile phone use by students.
 - 66% teacher respondents felt that it should not be an automatic right for students to use their digital devices during class time.
 - In total, 95% of teacher respondents felt some form of restriction/permissions should be placed on mobile phone use in the classroom.
 - 68% of teacher respondents felt that it should not be an automatic right for students to use their digital devices during recess and lunch.

- Over 85% of teacher respondents felt that student learning outcomes and behaviours were negatively impacted by mobile phone use.
 - What did students say about mobile phone use at school?
 - 44% of student respondents stated that they checked notifications on their mobile phones during lessons at school.
 - 56% of student respondents identified that teachers were managing student behaviours related to inappropriate mobile phone use.
 - 80% of student respondents used their mobile phone for more than 3 hours a day.
 - 66% of student respondents used their mobile phone somewhat routinely to communicate with teachers and other students for learning purposes.
 - 75% of student respondents used their mobile phone somewhat routinely to seek out information to complete learning activities.
 - 96% of student respondents felt they were familiar with the school's rules, procedures and consequences related to inappropriate mobile phone use.
 - 59% of student respondents felt that the school needed to impose some form of restriction on mobile phone use during school hours.
 - 72% of student respondents believed that mobile phone use in schools had negative consequences and 98% felt that mobile phone use in schools offered positive benefits.
 - 100% of teacher respondents supported a more comprehensive mobile phone policy being implemented in the school.

3. What is the process at school?

- a. **Students are only to bring their phone or device to school if it is absolutely essential.** Parents are to ensure they are actively monitoring this.
- b. If it is necessary for a student to bring their phone to school, they can hand their phone to the administration office upon arrival where the phone will be securely stored for the duration of the school day.
- c. **During the school day** all mobile phones and non educational electronic devices must be switched off and out of sight. This includes all wired and unwired headphones and speakers, smart watches and all devices that connect to the internet.
 - i. **Can I use my phone during breaks?** Mobile phones and electronic devices are not to be used during recess and lunch
 - ii. **How do I order and pay for recess or lunch at the canteen with no phone?** For payments, EFTPOS/ debit cards will be accepted. Families are encouraged to register an account with Flexischools to complete online orders and note any special dietary requirements
 - iii. **Can I use my phone during sport or sporting events?** Mobile phones and digital devices are not to be used during sport or sporting events.

- iv. **Can I use my phone during school excursions and camps?** Mobile phones and digital devices are not to be used during excursions or camps unless guided by staff. Information will be included in the excursion information.
- v. **Can I use my phone during lessons?** You will not be allowed to use mobile phones or electronic devices in class or at school.

d. Are there exemptions?

i. What is an exemption?

1. Use of mobile phones will be permitted at recess, lunch and during class-time if a student requires a digital device or online service for medical reasons or for reasonable adjustments made as part of a student Personalised Learning and Support Plan.
2. Short term exemptions can be considered in other exceptional circumstances and are managed on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Senior Executive and Learning & Support Team.

ii. How do I get an exemption?

1. Parents and carers can request an exemption on behalf of students through the Senior Executive. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis and granted when required by law or at the Senior Executive's discretion. Families will be required to provide medical evidence that a mobile phone is necessary to support a student's wellbeing and/or education from a medical specialist or psychologist. The decision to grant an exemption has to be tabled and supported by the Learning and Support Team.
2. Mobile phone or device exemptions will not be granted if there is an alternative device that has little-to-no computing or internet capacity that achieves the same outcome. For example; music players in preference to mobile phones. Wellbeing apps can be accessed on school chromebooks, laptops or desktop computers.

iii. How do I let teachers know I have an exemption?

1. If you have an exemption, you will have the following:
 - a. A flag on your Sentral student profile
 - b. A phone pass card that must be shown to staff on request
 - c. An understanding that phones must remain off and packed away unless required for reasons outlined as part of the exemption
 - d. An awareness that if improper use of a mobile phone occurs, Senior Executive will have the right to cancel the exemption and/or impose further consequences associated with misuse of mobile phones.

4. What would be considered a violation of mobile phone procedures?

- a. If the mobile phone is seen or heard by staff while on school grounds or during school organised events.
- b. Can I use other digital devices at school?**
 - i. Laptops and tablets (iPads etc) are suitable for classroom use when explicit teacher permission has been given provided the devices do not have internet connectivity or SIM. Devices, such as headphones, air pods and smartwatches, pose similar challenges and opportunities to mobile phones. These devices can be linked to mobile phones or have SIMs and therefore the same protocols apply to these devices - they are not to be used during school time and will be required to be stored out of sight for the duration of the school day.

5. What if I need to make a phone call during the school day?

- a. You must approach a Deputy Principal, Year Advisor or Wellbeing staff and ask for permission to use the school's phone. This can only occur during break times.

6. What if I need to call my child/ward during the school day?

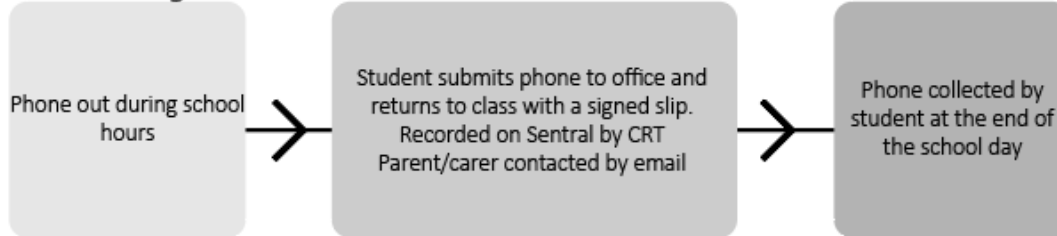
- a. During school hours, parents/carers can contact the Administration Office on 43900555 and a message will then be sent to the student.
- b. Employers have always been directed to make contact with the student's outside of school hours.

7. What if I have my phone out without permission?

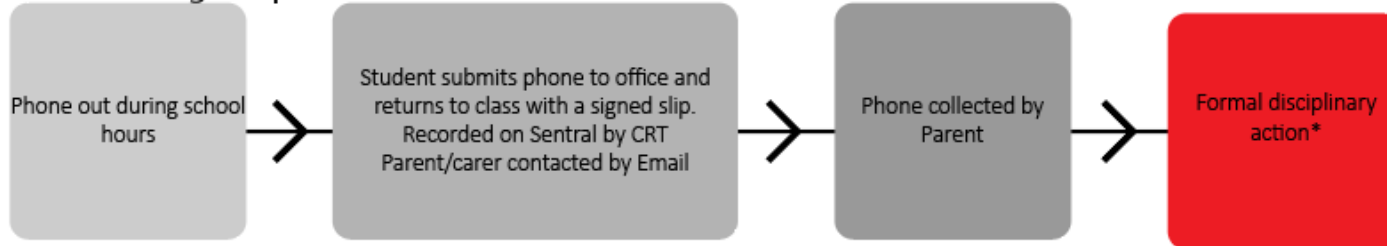
Phone Procedure NORTHLAKES HIGH SCHOOL



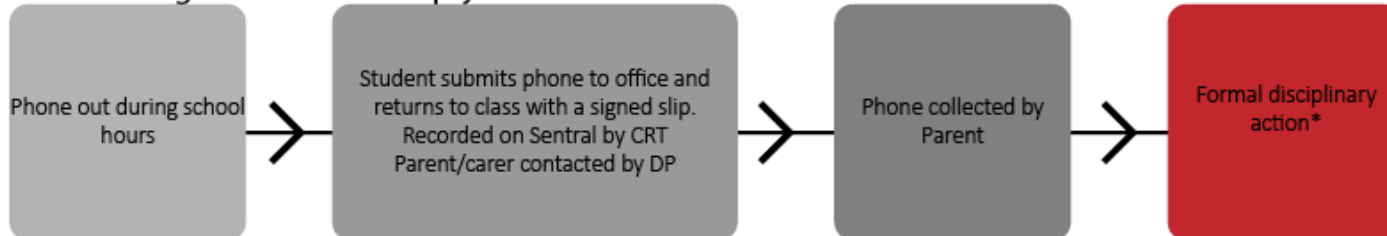
1st Warning - Device seen or heard



2nd Warning - Repeated offence



3rd Warning - Failure to comply



* Formal disciplinary action may include a student receiving a Red Card, Formal Caution of Suspension or Suspension. This aligns with NSW Behaviour Code for Students, Student Behaviour Policy and Northlakes High School's behaviour procedures.

8. Quick reference guide, FAQ.

Question	Answer
Will my student's phone be safe?	Students are discouraged to bring their phones to school. If it is essential that a student brings their phone to school, it is their responsibility. Phones that have been confiscated will be kept securely in a lockable storage device in the Administration office.
What if classroom teachers want to complete research tasks using phones as a tool?	Mobile phones are not required at school and students have access to more suitable technology such as laptop banks and computer rooms for most tasks.
How will I access my timetable for each day?	Students will be required to have a printed version of their timetable for their reference. Northlakes High School will provide timetable hubs for students to access.
Can I use my smart watch, and/or air pods at school?	The school's rules as related to mobile phones and procedures also apply in full to smart watches, air pods, wired and wireless speakers.
What happens if there is an emergency at the school such as an evacuation?	The Principal will provide further instructions in the event of an emergency. As part of Northlakes High School emergency procedures communication is provided to parents/carers via emails, SMS and in some circumstances by social media.
What if I refuse to have my phone confiscated?	Refusing the instructions from staff regarding mobile phones will be considered "failure to comply". This aligns with NSW Behaviour Code for Students, Student Behaviour Policy and Northlakes High School's behaviour procedures.
Are staff allowed mobile phones?	Staff are permitted to use mobile phones on school grounds and at school activities.

