



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Northlakes High School acknowledges the educational value of digital devices and online services in supporting and enhancing educational outcomes and student wellbeing. We also recognise they may cause harm if used inappropriately and that we need to support our students to use them in safe, responsible and respectful ways in order to enhance student learning and engagement.

We wanted to inform you about an important change in school policy that will affect our high school students. The New South Wales (NSW) government has recently implemented a ban on the use of mobile phones during school hours in all public high schools across the state. We believe it is important to communicate the details of this new policy and its implications for our school community.

Effective from 9 October 2023, (Beginning of Term 4), all students attending our school were required to adhere to this ban. The primary goal behind this policy is to create a more focused and productive learning environment within our classrooms and playground. We are committed to providing our students with the best possible educational experience, and we believe that minimising distractions such as mobile phones can significantly contribute to achieving this goal.

Schools that have already prohibited phones in school have seen

- 69% improvement in academic performance
- 84% increase in student engagement
- 80% decrease in behaviour referrals

Here are some key points regarding the mobile phone ban:

1. No Mobile Phones During School Hours: Students will not be allowed to use their smart devices and mobile phones, including texting, calling, or using apps, during school hours. This ban applies to class time, break time, sporting events and excursions.

2. Storage of Mobile Phones: If it is essential that students bring their phone to school, storage of this device is their responsibility. If a mobile phone is seen or heard by staff the phone will be confiscated and stored securely in the administration office until it is collected by the student or parent at the end of a school day. Phones must be turned off while stored and must be kept in a student's bag.

3. Exceptional Circumstances: Students with a genuine need for phone access during school hours must provide a letter from a medical specialist or clinical psychologist explaining the reason for exemption. Exemptions may be granted in cases where a student's health, wellbeing, or specific educational needs require immediate phone access. In these instances students will require a healthcare plan or Individual Education Plan for exemptions to be provided. These plans will need to be reviewed on a yearly basis and endorsed by Northlakes High School's Learning & Support Team.



4. Consequences for Non-Compliance: There will be consequences for students who do not adhere to the mobile phone ban, which may include warnings, temporary confiscation of the phone, or other disciplinary actions in line Department of Education policy.

We recognise that this policy may raise questions and concerns among parents and students. We want to assure you that we are committed to implementing it in a way that is fair and supportive of our students' educational needs. Guidance and support is available from staff to help students demonstrate responsible behaviour and management related to their phone and connected devices.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Warren Welham
Principal