

Mobile Phones are 'Away for the Day' Updated Policy

Dear Parents/Carers

As part of our ongoing commitment to providing the best outcomes for our students, we regularly review our policies and procedures with staff, parents and listen to students' voice. Our most recent review was our 'Away for the Day' phone/headphone/airpod policy and we have made some changes. Please note that we are still required to comply with the 'Away for the Day' policy as outlined by Education Queensland (see below in the 'What's the Same' section).

Why Make Changes?

- The safety of our students is of utmost concern.
- Many students arrive at school early and have been unable to use their devices.
- We noted that some students have been lingering outside gates before school in order to use their devices.

What's New for Students?

- Students will **now** be allowed to use their phones, headphones and airpods on school grounds until the start of Form Class – 9.00am.
- All students will have their phones in their bags by the end of the first song (bell) of the day.
- When the song ends at 9.00 am all devices will be put away, turned off and in the student's bag.
- Phones are to remain 'away for the day' until the end of day bell at 3.00 pm.

Procedures for Student Non-Compliance

If a mobile phone (or associated electronic device) is sighted or heard:

- The student will be required to hand it in to the Administration Office, where it will be stored securely until 3:00pm.
- For a second offence (in a Term), the student will be required to hand it in to the Administration Office, where it will be stored securely until 3:00pm. A text will be sent to the Parent/Carer stating that *"next offence Parent/Carer will need to collect"*. The previous policy requiring students to hand in their phone for five days no longer applies.
- For further repeated offences, on each occasion the device will be lodged at the Office and a Parent/Carer will be contacted to collect the device from the school at a mutually convenient time.

If a student initially refuses to hand in the phone when asked, they will be issued with an after-school detention. Complete failure to submit a phone to the Administration Office as directed can result in an external school suspension. This serious consequence will be the result of the student's failure to comply with school rules and behaviour which impacts on the good order and management of the school.

What's The Same:

Queensland Department of Education policy

- From Term 1 2024, mobile phones and certain wearable devices (e.g. smartwatches) will need to be 'away for the day'.
- Exemptions will be available for specific circumstances, including reasons related to disability, health and wellbeing.
- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours.
- Students who choose to bring a wearable device to school must switch off all notifications for the day (place in flight mode). Schools will need to also control access to connected headphones /airpods.
- Each school will make a local decision about how mobile phones are stored during school hours.

Will there still be Exemptions?

- Yes, individual medical circumstances are considered and an exemption for restricted use will be given where it is supported by a current Health Plan or a treating doctors' medical certificate. A typical example is one where a mobile phone is used to manage and monitor a health condition like diabetes.
- An exemption for restricted use can be applied for by a written request plus the details requested in the 'Application for Exemption' form along with providing a treating doctors' medical assessment. This will be available on the school website or from the Administration office. Students with existing Department of Education approved Health Plans need not apply.

How does my child pay at the Tuckshop?

- Our Tuckshop accepts payment via cash or EFTPOS card only (mobile phone payments are not permitted).
- Parents may pre order lunch easily via the Flexischool App.

Can the student use their phone while on an excursion?

Mobile phones and wearable devices are not to be used during school activities, such as representative sport, camps and excursions. In limited cases there may be an exception made by the principal. If this is the case, this information will be included in the excursion permission form.

'Away for the Day' will not apply to:

- Student travel to and from school (outside school hours)
- Students who attend offsite TAFE, Vocational Education or work experience (must abide by workplace policies).

How do I contact my child?

If a parent needs to urgently contact a student during the school day, they can contact the office and a message will be given to the student. It is understood that students may need a mobile phone before or after school for safety reasons, and for this purpose, they will be able to use their phone prior to entry and once they are dismissed from class at 3.00pm. Parents/Carers who need to urgently contact their children, or vice versa, are required to do so through the school office on 5503 7830.

Students who choose to bring mobile phones or associated electronic devices to school, do so at their own risk and are responsible for ensuring that these items are kept secure and stored in their bag. The school and its staff will not be held responsible for any loss, theft, or damage to personal devices.

Thank you for your cooperation in supporting this policy and ensuring a focused, distraction-free learning environment for all students.



Suzy Riley
A/Principal
Nerang State High School