

Mobile Phones at Northcote College - March 2024
Phones away for the day – Implementation at Northcote College

The Government has introduced regulations that require all state schools to put in place a 'phones away for the day' policy by the start of Term 2 2024.

22 Duty to prohibit the use or access of mobile phones

- (1) The board of a State school (other than Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu) must prohibit students from using or accessing mobile phones at all times while they are attending school.
- (2) The board may do anything within its powers that it thinks is necessary or desirable to implement the prohibition.
- (3) However, the board must ensure that the prohibition does not apply to a student to the extent that—
 - (a) the board is satisfied that the student needs to use or access a mobile phone—
 - (i) for a purpose connected with the student's health; or
 - (ii) for the purpose of assisting the student in connection with any disability or learning support need; or
 - (b) a registered teacher determines that the student needs to use or access a mobile phone for a specific educational task or purpose; or
 - (c) the principal determines that there are special circumstances that make it necessary for the student to use or access a mobile phone (for example, the student is a teenage parent).
- (4) The board must ensure that the prohibition takes effect no later than 29 April 2024.

From the Northcote College Code of Expected Behaviour, our existing student phone rule is: *A mobile phone is a device designed for communication and quick reference and it is expected that in the classroom, mobile phones will be turned off/on silent and be kept out of sight - unless specific permission has been given by the teacher.*

Northcote College response to the new regulation:

Our update to the phone policy is: *It is a requirement that at school, mobile phones will be turned off and in bags between 8.55am and 3.30pm.*

We will enforce this new 'Away for the Day' phone policy from Day 1 Term 2 (Monday 29 April). As is the case now, if a student breaches these cell phone rules, the phone will be confiscated for the rest of the school day. Confiscated phones will be taken to the main office for parents to collect. The breach will be recorded in KAMAR, our student management system.

Exceptions:

The only exceptions to this requirement are when:

- The teacher requires students to use phones for a specific learning activity.
- A student needs a phone to monitor an ongoing medical condition (such as glucose levels). *This will require written approval in advance from the Principal.*

- The phone is required to assist a student with a disability. *This will require written approval in advance from the Principal.*

Special circumstances:

The Principal may decide that a phone is needed for special circumstances.

- Students at Northcote College can pay at the cafe and student reception with their phones. We currently propose that this will be a special circumstance (approved by the Principal).
- Students at Northcote College scan a QR code with their phone if they need to go to the bathroom during class. We currently propose that this will be a special circumstance (approved by the Principal). *Note: The phone is left with the teacher in class.*
- The Principal (or delegated staff member eg. SLT, Guidance Counsellors and Deans) may allow a student to use their cellphone in special circumstances to facilitate contact with a parent/caregiver or another person for a particular purpose. We currently propose that this will be a special circumstance (approved by the Principal).

Camps and School Trips Events and Sport:

In general the 'Away for the Day' rule will apply to students on school trips and at school camps and will not apply to afterschool, evening and weekend sport and events. However, decisions about any exceptions to this will be made and communicated on a case by case basis.