



PHONES AND WEARABLE DEVICES POLICY

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Rationale

Townsville State High School is committed to reducing the distraction of mobile phones and other devices to provide optimal learning environments for all students. Therefore, student mobile phones and certain wearable devices, such as smartwatches and earbuds, need to be **'away for the day'**, including during break times.

Exemptions will be available for digital learning opportunities or as part of a reasonable adjustment for student learning and wellbeing – including reasons related to disability and health such as monitoring blood sugar levels for students with diabetes.

Purpose

This policy is designed to:

- limit the times students may be exposed to negative impacts from inappropriate or unsafe use of devices, such as cyberbullying or harmful content
- promote classroom environments where teachers can teach, and students can learn, free from distractions caused by personal use of devices
- encourage use of breaks as quality time away from screens for more physical activity, play and face-to-face connections.

Implementation

Student mobile phones must be **'away for the day'**, and kept in the student's school bag. Phones are not to be used for the duration of the school day, including break times. Wearable devices, such as smartwatches or earbuds, must be switched off so that phone calls, messages and other notifications cannot be sent or received during school hours.

- Students will be allowed the use of mobile phones and wearable devices to make school payments, including for tuckshop and office payments.
- Teachers, may give permission for students to use their mobile phone or wearable device in the classroom, for a specific and agreed educational purpose.
- Students will be allowed access and use of mobile phones and wearable devices during school representative sports and camps.

As outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, students who use phones during school time will be subject to disciplinary action by the school.

Communicating with your student at school

- Students will only be able to use their mobile phones immediately before or after school hours for contact with their families, friends, and out-of-hours commitments such as part-time employment.
- Parents and carers will be able to contact their child during school hours using the school's existing communication channels.
- Likewise, school staff will contact you directly wherever needed.
- Students are to report to a school staff member if they become unwell or experience an issue at school. Staff can then provide appropriate support, including contact with parents and following formal processes for early collection from school where necessary.



Consequences

Students seen using their phone or wearable device during the school day will be issued with the following consequences -

- Students will be provided with a verbal reminder about expected behaviour.
- The phone or wearable device will be confiscated and held securely in the office to be collected at the end of the school day.
- A warning will be issued to the student for a first non-compliance with policy, and a letter sent home. If the phone or wearable device is confiscated again, it will be temporarily retained at the office for collection by parents.
- Ongoing, persistent and/or deliberate non-compliant behaviour may result in a detention, completing an after-school Digital Licence course, or a Student Disciplinary Absence (SDA).

Exemptions

Exemptions are considered and may be approved by the principal on a case-by-case basis where:

- the student uses their device to monitor or manage a medical condition (to be documented in the student's health care plan)
- the device is an agreed adjustment for a student with disability or learning difficulties (to be documented in the student's Oneschool or other support plan)
- the device is used for translation by a student with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD)
- the student has extenuating personal circumstances requiring more immediate access to their device, such as being the primary carer for a child or family member.

Please speak with the school if you need to discuss an exemption request due to these exceptional circumstances.