

# CESSNOCK HIGH SCHOOL

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## Mobile Phone Policy and Procedures

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## Rationale

The NSW Government has announced restrictions on the use of mobile phones, smart phones, and associated devices in NSW high schools beginning in Term 4, 2023. Cessnock High School will be making changes to the way mobile phones are accessed by students during the school day. After presenting to our key stakeholders including the SRC, P&C, students, and executive teams, we have decided to proceed by using the option of **locked pouches** to reduce the distractions of students in the classroom and foster a culture of high expectations. The new system is being implemented to increase focus, remove distractions and to also promote positive social interaction, while reducing the potential for cyberbullying. The table below provides clarification on the electronic devices permitted under this policy at Cessnock High School.

Electronic Devices	Definition	Permitted
Laptop	A small portable computer.	Yes
Handheld Gaming Console	A portable gaming console designed for the sole purpose of playing games such as a Nintendo Switch / PlayStation Vita	Yes
Smart Watch	A wearable digital watch with cellular and digital app capabilities	No (Cellular Smartwatches)
Bluetooth Speaker	A speaker designed to pair with a phone or electronic device	No
Headphones / Air pods	Individual speakers worn in or over the ears allowing the wearer to listen to music or audio from a device such as a phone	No
Tablet (BYOD)	A portable touchscreen device with computing capabilities which can connect to Wi-Fi	No
Mobile Phone	Capable of making and receiving calls and texts	No
Smart phone	Capable of making and receiving calls and text as well as computing capabilities	No



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## Procedure Overview

In accordance with the statewide ban; mobile phones will not be used during school hours at Cessnock High School. Every student will be assigned a personal Phone Pouch. While the Phone Pouch is considered school property, it is each student's responsibility to bring their pouch with them to school every day. These pouches will be issued to students on the first day of Term 4.

As students enter the school grounds, they will be required to turn their phone off and place their phone inside the pouch, securely close it, and store in their school bag. Mentor teachers will check that students have complied with this expectation during Morning Muster.

Each student will maintain possession of their mobile phone inside their Phone Pouch for the duration of the school day where the phones remain locked. Students arriving late will go through this process at the front office. At the end of the day, students leave the school and unlock their pouch using an unlocking station and place their pouch in their school bag for the next day.

No unlocked phone is permitted on school grounds during school hours. If a student needs to make a phone call for any purpose, they are to see one of the Deputy Principals to organise this ahead of time.

### **Damaged or lost pouches**

Students who have lost or damaged their pouch are not to bring their phone to school until they have organised a replacement pouch. Students will be required to pay a fee of \$20.00 for the replacement pouch.

### **Excursions**

Whilst off-site on school-based activities, the pouch system still applies and students must keep their phone in their pouch, unless explicitly stated for a specific purpose. This includes school carnivals. Where students may not return to school at the conclusion of an event, the supervising teacher will bring a mobile unlocking station for students to release their phones prior to departure.

### **Adjustments**

Adjustments to any part of this procedure may apply for some students under medical or exceptional circumstances, however full exemptions will not be provided. Parents and caregivers can request adjustments, and these will be considered on a case-by-case basis and granted when required by law, a medical professional, or at the discretion of the principal.

### **Phone Locker Pouch Inspections**

Periodically throughout the school year all students' Phone Pouches will be inspected to ensure they are still functional and being kept in good order. Students' pouches that are damaged or vandalized will be either surrendered with parents billed for the replacement OR replaced if the damage is not the fault of the student (as determined by the Principal).



# Policy

## The Department of Education Student use of mobile phones in schools Policy

*Direction and guidance on the safe and responsible use of mobile phones for students in NSW public schools.*

**Note: This policy is for implementation in Term 4 2023.**

### Audience and applicability

This policy applies to all students in NSW public schools.

## 1. Policy statement

1.1 Students are not allowed to use mobile phones at school, including during recess and lunch.

1.2 Principals will manage individual requests from parents and/or carers, and students, for any exemptions to the policy.

1.3 Principals may allow students to use mobile phones in specific circumstances, such as for an educational purpose, to achieve student health and wellbeing outcomes, or as part of reasonable adjustment to enable students with specific needs to participate in education on the same basis as other students.

## 2. Context

2.1 Learning environments should support students to develop technological, social and emotional competencies. This support should maximise the benefits and minimise the risks of digital environments and prepare students for life beyond school.

### Related documents supporting this policy include:

- CHS Behaviour Support and Management Plan
- DoE Student Behaviour policy
- CHS Antibullying Plan
- DoE Bullying of Students - Prevention and Response
- CHS 'The Cessnock Way / CODE'
- DoE Behaviour Code for Students
- CHS 5 Ways to Wellbeing
- DoE Wellbeing Framework

### Legal Issues Bulletins:

- Misuse of Technology in Schools, legal issues bulletin 35
- Confiscation of student property, legal issues bulletin 56
- Cyber bullying and related behaviour, legal issues bulletin 42



# Responsibilities

## **For students**

- ✓ Collect a Phone Pouch in Term 4 and sign the register that you have taken possession of the pouch and will abide by the DoE Policy and CHS Procedures.
- ✓ Bring the Phone Pouch to school every day.
- ✓ Every morning turn your mobile phone off as you enter the school, secure it in the Phone Pouch and place it in your school bag for the entire school day.
- ✓ If you do not have a Phone Pouch, put your phone in an envelope during morning Muster and leave it in the office for the day.
- ✓ If you have not put your phone in a pouch, follow the Non-Compliance process respectfully.
- ✓ If your Phone Pouch is damaged or lost, tell the Deputy Principal and do not bring your phone to school until you have organised a replacement pouch.
- ✓ Should you need to make a call during the school day, you must approach a Deputy Principal or ask for permission to use the school's phone.

## **For parents and carers**

- ✓ Support implementation of this policy and procedure by ensuring your child/ren have their pouch/es everyday and remind them of their responsibilities to avoid consequences.
- ✓ Contact the school directly to get messages to your child/ren.
- ✓ Contact the school should the pouch be damaged and organise a replacement. Not allow your child/ren to bring their phone to school until a replacement pouch has been issued. There is a \$20 fee for replacement pouches.
- ✓ Check the pouch periodically to ensure it is still functional and report any issues to the school.



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## How the Pouches Work



### INSERT

Insert your phone into the pouch



### LOCK

Simply press the pin into the hole to lock closed



### UNLOCK

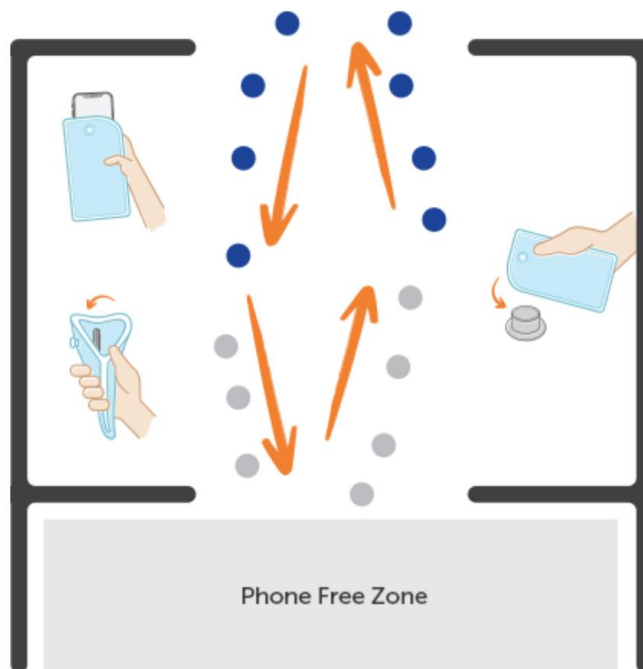
Unlock by simply placing the locking mechanism near the magnetic base

### 1 INSERT

Insert your phone into the pouch

### 2 LOCK

Simply press the pin into the hole to lock closed



### 3 UNLOCK

Unlock by simply placing the locking mechanism near the magnetic base

- Phones unlocked
- Phones secured in pouch





## Responsibilities

### **For Cessnock High School Teachers and Executive**

Deliver learning experiences that encourage safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services. This includes:

- ✓ Adhering to classroom expectations for using digital devices and online services, in accordance with this procedure and departmental policy.
- ✓ Identifying strategies to ensure that all students can engage in classroom activities without the use of mobile phones.
- ✓ Educating students about *digital citizenship* - online privacy, intellectual property, copyright, digital literacy and other online safety related issues.
- ✓ Model appropriate use of digital devices and online services in line with departmental policy.

Respond to and report any breaches and incidents of inappropriate use of digital devices and online services as required by school procedures, departmental policy and any statutory and regulatory requirements. This includes:

- ✓ Reporting the creation, possession or distribution of indecent or offensive material to the Incident Support and Report hotline as required by the Incident Notification and Response Policy and Procedures and consider any mandatory reporting requirements.
- ✓ Working with the department and the Office of the eSafety Commissioner (if necessary) to resolve cases of serious online bullying and image-based abuse.
- ✓ Following the school's behaviour management plan when responding to any incident of inappropriate student behaviour relating to the use of digital devices or online services.
- ✓ If feasible, and particularly as issues emerge, support parents and carers to understand strategies that promote their children's safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services.
- ✓ Participate in professional development related to appropriate use of digital devices and online services.

### **For School Administration Staff**

- Implement the administrative processes associated with the Mobile Phone Ban
- Assist students to lock/unlock their pouches throughout the day when entering/exiting the school grounds where necessary



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## Process for Non-Compliance

In line with the Cessnock High School CODE and the Cessnock Way. The CHS Mobile Phone Policy non-compliance process follows a simple three step process:

### 1<sup>st</sup> Incident Onwards

Student  
observed  
with a  
phone

Sentral  
entry

Parent  
notified

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Incident

Student  
observed  
with a  
phone

Interview:  
Formal  
Caution

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Incident

Student observed  
with a phone

Interviewed for  
consideration of  
suspension

The accumulation of incidents are counted across all school areas and are independent of faculty monitoring or other school processes.





## Process for Non-Compliance

### TEACHER

- Rule reminder re: Phone Pouch
- Envelope given for student to place phone in and put in bag (if the student has no pouch)
- Teacher logs incident in Sentral
- Restorative conversation

### ADMIN SYSTEM

- Parent / Carer automatically informed via Sentral text
- Sentral notifies Deputy Principal

## 1<sup>st</sup> Incident



### TEACHER

- Rule reminder re: Phone Pouch
- Envelope given for student to place phone in and put in bag (if the student has no pouch)
- Teacher logs incident in Sentral
- Restorative conversation

### DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

- Parent / Carer automatically informed via Sentral text
- DP Automatically notified at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Incident
- Formal Caution Interview

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Incident



### TEACHER

- Rule reminder re: Phone Pouch
- Envelope given for student to place phone in and put in bag (if the student has no pouch)
- Teacher logs incident in Sentral
- Restorative conversation

### DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

- Parent / Carer automatically informed via Sentral text
- DP Automatically notified at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Incident
- Suspension Interview

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Incident



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### *Staff Questions*

***What if a student refuses to put their mobile phone in their bag, away, in a pouch or hand it in?***

*Students will be made aware of all the new school rules ahead of Term 4 and will be required to comply with them. As with all school rules, student refusal will result in appropriate action being taken, in accordance with the school's behaviour code/policy.*

***What if a student uses their phone at recess, lunch or between classes?***

*Mobile phones are not allowed to be used throughout the whole school day, including recess, lunchtime, and in between classes. Mobile phones must be switched off upon entering school and can only be used again after school hours. Non-compliance with the Mobile phone policy will result in school disciplinary action.*

***What if a student needs to make an urgent phone call home?***

*In an emergency, students will always be able to call home through the Deputy Principal.*

***How will staff know if a student has an exemption to use their phone for medical or other reasons?***

*Students who require the use of a device, for a medical or other reason, will be granted an exemption, and all teachers will be informed of the details of this exemption, via the student's learning support or individual education plan.*

***What happens if a student with an exemption needs to use their phone for a medical or other reason?***

*Details of the terms of use of a mobile phone by students with an exemption will be detailed in the student's learning support or individual education plan.*

***What will be the expectation of a staff member to enforce the school's and DoE policy?***

*The Students' use of Mobile Phones in schools' policy, is a DoE policy that is supported by our school's discipline plan. It is expected that all staff members will work collaboratively to ensure the smooth and consistent implementation of this policy.*



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What if a parent complains about the new plan and procedures of the school?**

*If a parent complains about the new plan, you can refer their complaint to the Principal who can arrange to discuss the plan and the implications for their child.*

### **What if the school goes into lockdown or lockout?**

*In the case of a lockout or lockdown, the school will make parents or carers aware of the situation if required. If needed, parents can also contact the school via the administrative office using the school's contact information available on the website.*

### **What happens with mobile phones on excursions?**

*Mobile Phones are not to be used on excursions. Exemptions may be made for certain school excursions. Information will be included in the excursion information and permission form.*

### **What happens to mobile phones during sport?**

*Exemptions may be made for sporting activities that are held outside of school grounds. Information will be included in the sports activity information and permission form. Otherwise, sporting activities will be considered part of the normal school day.*

### **Can other school students visiting my school use their phone?**

*Exemptions may be made for students visiting the school. If this is the case, information will be provided to staff members on or before the day of the visit. Otherwise, it is expected all students visiting the school comply with the school's mobile devices management plan and this should be coordinated in advance with the visiting school's organising teacher.*

### **How will students make payments at the office or canteen if they can't use their phones?**

*Alternative payment methods will need to be made available as students are unable to access their phone during school hours. Students are encouraged to bring their physical EFTPOS/debit cards to school with them, to enable cashless transactions.*



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Student Questions

**What if I don't possess a mobile phone or have not brought it to school that day?**

*There is no requirement to bring a mobile phone to school.*

**Can I use my phone before and after the school day?**

*As soon as you arrive at school, all mobile phones should be switched off or placed in airplane mode and secured in the Phone Pouch as specified in the school's mobile phone procedure. Mobile phones cannot be accessed until the end of the school day.*

**What if I need to contact my parent/carer during the school day?**

*As always, in an emergency, you will always be able to call home through the Deputy Principal or School Office.*

**What if my parent/carer needs to contact me in the event of an emergency?**

*In the case of an emergency, your parent/carer can contact the school via the front office using the school's number published on the website. A message will then be passed on to you by your teacher, if required.*

**What if I have a medical condition that requires me to use my phone to record or monitor medical information?**

*If you require the use of a mobile phone for a medical or other reasons, you may be granted an exemption, and the details of any exemption will be added to your learning support or individual education plan. You, your teachers and parents/carers will be made aware of this exemption.*

**What if the school goes into lockdown or lockout?**

*In the case of a lockout or lockdown, the school will make your parents or carers aware of the situation, if required. If needed, your parents can also contact the school via the front office using the school's contact information available on the website.*

**I use my phone to purchase food from the canteen.**

*Students are encouraged to bring their physical EFTPOS/debit cards to school with them to enable cashless transactions.*

**I have a job. How can my employer contact me about work shifts?**

*Students should alert their employers about the school's mobile phone strategy and advise them to email any information.*



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Parent Questions

**What if a student does not comply with the mobile phone plan and accesses it at during the school day?**

*Students will be made aware of all the new school rules ahead of Term 4 and will be required to comply with them. As with all school rules, student refusal will result in appropriate action being taken, in accordance with the school's behaviour code/policy.*

**What if a student needs to make an urgent phone call home?**

*Students will be allowed to call home if urgent via the Deputy Principals or the front office.*

**How do I arrange permission for my child to use their phone for medical reasons?**

*You will be able to make a request for an exemption during Term 4. If appropriate, an individualised plan for usage will be developed.*

**What happens with mobile phones on excursions?**

*Mobile phones are not permitted to be used during school excursions taking place during school hours. If the excursion is overnight or over several days and nights, special information will be provided to you.*

**What if my child needs to purchase food at the canteen?**

*Students are encouraged to bring their physical EFTPOS/debit cards to school with them to enable cashless transactions.*

**What happens if my child is in sick bay and the school has arranged a parent to pick them up?**

*Students in sick bay are constantly monitored and communicated with. Please contact the Front Office.*

**Will the school send a message to my child if I need to contact them?**

*Messages from parents to students will be passed on as usual.*

**What if my child chooses to leave their phone at home?**

*There is no requirement to bring a mobile phone or related accessories to school.*