

Morrinsville College



“Phones Away for the Day” Procedures

With the Government's announcement of a cell phone ban in schools, the Board of Trustees of all State and State-Integrated schools must prohibit students from using or accessing mobile phones at all times while they are attending school.

Under this mandate, we have reviewed our policy and procedures around cellphones at Morrinsville College.

As of the beginning of Term 2 students at Morrinsville College are required to have their phones **turned off and in their bags from 8.45 am to 3.05 pm, This will include during morning tea, lunch time and when Year 13 students have study periods. The use of headphones and earphones** connected to phones will also be banned during school hours.

Occasionally, a teacher may determine that a student needs to use a cellphone for a specified educational task to support learning and/or assessment of learning. Such periods of phone use will be managed by the teacher in the lesson.

International research indicates many challenges and issues with cell phones in schools including:

- Student distractions from learning and achievement
- Online anti-social behaviour including bullying
- Addictive behaviour
- Inability to 'switch' off with the 24/7 nature of cellphone use with teenagers
- Sleep deprivation
- A factor in the increased anxiety and mental health issues among teenagers
- The impact on social skills and communication.



Exemptions:

The Government's policy states that schools must consider exemptions for students to use or access a phone when:

- A phone is needed for health reasons (for example, to monitor insulin levels)
- A phone is needed to help a student with a disability or learning support need (for example, to assist with impaired communication)
- A teacher requires students to use phones for a specific educational task or purpose (for example, for a class assignment)
- The Principal decides that they are needed for special circumstances (for example, the student is a teenage parent)

All applications for exemptions must be approved by the Principal. This will be recorded on our student management system and students will be given a laminated exemption pass to be kept with the phone.

Exemptions must be in writing and include any relevant medical information to support this.

	Consequence	Communication Home
Step 1	Students are <u>reminded every lesson</u> about the phone ban with posters displayed in classrooms and the wider school	
Step 2	<p>The student will be required to put their phone in a named envelope and this will be taken to the office with a student pass form. Students return to their classroom with a slip from the office. The office will record this in a log book for security purposes and phones will be stored in the school safe. Teachers will record this on the student management system.</p> <p>During break times as above the student will be asked to put their phone in an envelope and name the envelope. This is to be taken to the office by the student and recorded for security and will be recorded on the student management system.</p> <p><u>The student will be able to collect the phone at the end of the day from the DP on duty.</u></p>	<p>A school bridge alert from the classroom teacher will be sent home advising parents/caregivers that this has occurred.</p> <p>Following use in the playground, an electronic message will be sent advising parents/caregivers.</p>
Step 3	<p>The student will be required to put their phone in a named envelope and this will be taken to the office with a student pass form. Students return to their classroom with a slip from the office. The office will record this in a log book for security purposes and phones will be stored in the school safe. Teachers will record this on the student management system.</p> <p>During break times as above the student will be asked to put their phone in an envelope and name the envelope. This is to be taken to the office by the student and recorded for security including on our student management system. The office and DP will monitor for repeat occurrences.</p> <p><u>The phone can be collected by a parent or caregiver at the end of the day.</u></p>	<p>A school bridge alert from the classroom teacher will be sent home advising parents/caregivers that this has occurred and to collect the phone from the office at the end of the day.</p> <p>Following use in the playground, an electronic message will be sent advising parents/caregivers to collect the phone at the end of the day.</p>
Step 4	<p>The student will be required to put their phone in a named envelope and this will be taken to the office with a student pass form. Students return to their classroom with a slip from the office. The office will record this in a log book for security purposes and phones will be stored in the school safe. Teachers will record this on the student management system.</p> <p>During break times as above the student will be asked to put their phone in an envelope and name the envelope. This is to be taken to the office by the student and recorded for security including on our student management system. The office and DP will monitor for repeat occurrences.</p> <p><u>The phone can only be collected by a parent or caregiver at the end of the day. A hui is arranged with the student, parents, whanau and their Manukura</u></p>	<p>A school bridge alert from the classroom teacher will be sent home advising parents/caregivers that this has occurred and to collect the phone from the office at the end of the day.</p> <p>Following use in the playground, an electronic message will be sent advising parents/caregivers to collect the phone at the end of the day and to arrange a meeting with the appropriate Manukura /DP.</p> <p>The student, parents and their Manukura will arrange a meeting at the earliest possible time which will include the return of the phone.</p>

At this step, this is considered to be continual disobedience which could lead to further consequences.

Failure to comply may result in more serious consequences being put in place which may include being stood down from school for continual disobedience under the Education and Training Act (2020).

If students refuse to hand in their phones, then the matter will be referred to a Deputy Principal and treated as an issue of defiance.

Frequently Asked Questions: (Parents / Whanau and Students)

We acknowledge this policy and procedure is going to be a significant change for our students and families and will require some adjustment.

The Why:

Q: Why ban phones during the breaks?

A: The mandate from the Government dictates that phones are away and turned off during the whole school day (aside from the specific exemptions).

Q What happens if my child's phone is taken and will it be safe?

A: Students will put their phones in a sealable envelope and write their name on the envelope. This will be taken to the office by the students and the office staff will record that the phone has been handed in a logbook. The student returns to class as normal. All phones handed into the office will be stored securely in the school safe and the DP on Duty will be available at 3.05 pm to return the phone to the student and/or caregiver.

Q: Why include earphones/headphones as part of the ban?

A: Students with ear pods are connected to their phones, whether in their bag or pocket and are also a factor in the distractions for our students. We also know students find it challenging to ignore the constant notifications through their earphones/headphones.

Q: Is it legal for a school to ban phones or confiscate them?

A: Yes, the Education and Training Act already allowed schools to confiscate or ban any item. This has now been mandated in law by the Government's requirement through their 100-day plan. The school is required to comply with this mandate by the Secretary of Education and each school's policy and compliance will be checked by ERO.

Communication:

Q: I need to get an important message to or from my child, including for emergencies.

A: Contact the school office; a message can be relayed to or from the student/parent. Another alternative would be to email the student.

Q: My child needs to contact me urgently.

A: Students can go to the office or DP on duty during breaks or in an emergency, and they will make contact with their parents as currently happens.

Q: There has been a change in the organisation either with travelling home or practices etc.

A: Again contact the school office; a message can be relayed to or from the student/parent. Another alternative would be to email the student. Changes to sports are often out of the

teacher's control, for example, weather or coach/parent unavailability and students can notify parents at 3.05 pm and still be able to catch the bus etc.

Q: My child's place of work needs to contact them about hours of work, shifts, etc.

A: The business may text or leave a message on the student's cell phone; the student can check their message at the end of the school day from 3.05 pm. Employers can email students also.

We know this is a challenging one; however the Government are clear that phones are to be off and away all day. It may be a discussion to have with employers so they are aware of this requirement for schools and most employers have guidelines around the use of phones in the workplace.

Exemptions

Q: My child needs their cell phone to monitor a medical device or for specific learning needs.

A: No problem, this is allowed. Exceptions need to be directed and approved by the Principal.

Q: Are there any times my child will be allowed to have a cell phone?

A: Yes, when certain activities such as an Outdoor Education trip away, sporting and overnight trips etc take place phones may be taken with the students. There may be times when the phones are collected and there will be a designated time for students to access their phones under the direction of teachers.

Occasionally, a teacher may determine that a student needs to use a mobile for a specific education task and purpose such as taking photos of learning evidence or using specific learning applications. This would be the only time phones would be accessed during the school day.

Q. In what ways would phones be used in classrooms?

A: Phones will only be used in classrooms **under teacher instructions** for tasks that cannot be done on their laptop, such as gathering evidence of learning and assessments and the use of specific applications and tools that benefit learning.

Other:

Q: My child is addicted to their phone. What will this mean for them?

A: Students have access to the school counsellors who in turn may be able to assist or refer to

additional agencies for addiction support etc. Contact the school counsellor to discuss if this is needed. Students can self-refer to our school counsellors.