

“Away for the day”

The QLD government require all Queensland state school students to keep mobile phones powered off and ‘away for the day’ during school hours, and while attending school activities, such as representative school sport, excursions and camps. For the purpose of this policy, mobile phones and wearable devices include mobile phones, smartwatches, handheld devices and other emerging technologies which have the ability to connect to telecommunication networks or the internet.

Purpose

Queensland state schools are committed to reducing the distraction of mobile phones and wearable devices to provide optimal learning environments for all students.

‘Away for the day’ aims to:

- provide optimal learning and teaching environments, free from the distractions caused by personal use of mobile phones and wearable devices
- support schools to create safe and supportive learning environments that prioritise student engagement and wellbeing
- encourage increased face-to-face social interactions between students
- promote the health and wellbeing of students by providing opportunities for social interaction and physical activity during break times, and
- reduce the potential for students to be exposed to the negative impacts of the digital world, resulting from unsafe or inappropriate use of technology, such as cyberbullying, accessing harmful content or breaches of personal privacy.

Student use of mobile phones and wearable devices at Forest Lake State High School

From Term 1 2024, all state school students must keep their mobile phones powered off and ‘away for the day’ during school hours. Notifications on wearable devices, such as smartwatches, must be switched to “aeroplane mode” so that phone calls, messages and other notifications cannot be sent or received during school hours.

Students may only use their mobile phone or have wearable device notifications enabled during these times if they have an approved exemption for medical, disability and/or wellbeing reasons.

Students participating in activities, such as off-site Vocational Education and Training or work placements, must follow the expectations of the organisation in charge regarding the use of mobile devices.

Bringing mobile phones and wearable devices to school

Students are permitted to **bring** mobile phones and wearable devices to school to:

- support safe travel to and from school
- make contact with parents, friends and part-time employers outside of the school day.

They must be powered off and “away for the day”.

Storage of mobile phones

Our school approach to mobile phone storage management includes:

- on their person **and must remain unseen and unheard**
- in the student’s school bag **and must remain unseen and unheard**
- if confiscated, stored in a secure location (locked cupboard in the school office).

Exemptions

An individual student exemption may be considered by the principal in extraordinary circumstances.

Students with an approved exemption from the principal must only use their mobile phone or wearable device for the intended, approved purpose.

Consideration of individual circumstances will be given to students who require temporary or ongoing exemptions when;

- the mobile phone or wearable device is needed by the student to monitor or manage a medical condition (in accordance with the Managing students' health support needs at school procedure)
- the mobile phone or wearable device is an agreed reasonable adjustment for a student with disability or learning difficulties. For e.g. the mobile phone or wearable device is used by the student as an augmentative or alternative communication system or as an aide to access and participate in the environment, e.g. navigation or object/people identification applications and the BYOD is not suitable.
- the mobile phone or wearable device is used as an agreed adjustment for a student with English as an additional language or dialect
- the student has extenuating circumstances that necessitates the need for access to their mobile phone or wearable device during the school day, including (but not limited to) independent students, and students who are primary carers for a child or family member, or
- students in Years 11 and 12 are applying for Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AARA) for assistive technology (augmentative communication device)

The principal will consider requests for exemption received from students or parents on a case-by-case basis.

Approved exemptions, including details of how and when a student may access their mobile phone or wearable device, will be documented in the student's OneSchool Support Provisions tab and communicated to school staff.

All exemptions are considered temporary and are reviewed by the principal on a term-by-term basis.

Where an exemption is not approved and the student or their parent expresses dissatisfaction with the decision, information about how to make a customer complaint and how a complaint will be managed will be made available to parents/guardians.

Exemptions are approved with the agreement that students only use their mobile phone or wearable device for the intended, agreed purpose outlined in the exemption paperwork.

Supporting responsible behaviours around mobile phones and wearable devices

Forest Lake SHS has a Student Code of Conduct that details staff responsibilities to support students to understand and meet behavioural expectations of the school, and guidance on the application, where required, of disciplinary consequences.

The Student Code of Conduct includes explanations of the expected use of mobile phones and wearable devices by students. This section details clear expectations for parents and students about what devices are allowed at school, how they are to be used, and the possible consequences for failing to meet the stated expectations.

In determining possible consequences, our approach will ensure that responses are proportionate and equitable and take into consideration the individual circumstances of each student. Our approach may include but not be limited to;

Whole class instructions/reminders of expectations;

- remind roll classes at the beginning of each day about expected behaviour re. mobile phones, watches, earphones. This forms part of FLAKE class routines and expectations
- remind students/class at the beginning of each lesson about expected behaviour re. mobile phones, watches, earphones. This forms part of FLAKE class routines and expectations.

When dealing with an individual student incident;

- check if student has exemption card
- restate expectation and redirect the student to power off and place the mobile phone “away, out of sight” (e.g. bag)
- if student does not comply with the instruction; direct student to the office to hand in the device temporarily and it will be returned to the student at the end of the day. Office slip returns with students to confirm
- Record in One school as an incident
- Deputy Principal discussion with student to restate and reset expectations.

When repeated behaviour incidents are seen;

- Parent/guardian is asked to collect device if repeated instructions are not followed
- Enrolment in a student in eSmart program to complete Digital Licence or similar course
- Referral to GO/psychologist – support for student behaviour change/addictive behaviours
- Ongoing defiance and misbehaviour may warrant a disciplinary action such as suspension.

Mobile phones and wearable devices that have been temporarily removed from the student will be stored and retained in accordance with the department’s Temporary removal of student property by school staff procedure.

Phone friendly areas

The following areas are spaces where temporary mobile phone approval ***may*** be given at times, under supervisor instruction and in unique circumstances, in that area.

- The Pathways centre
- Student services building
- The Sauvage building

Ongoing needs in these areas, require a formal exemption from the principal.

Legislation

- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)
- Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017 (Qld)
- Human Rights Act Qld (2019)

Other resources

- Customer complaints management procedure
- Cybersafety and reputation management
- Inclusive education policy
- Managing students' health support needs at school procedure.
- Managing risks in school curriculum activities procedure
- Student discipline procedure
- Temporary removal of student property by school staff procedure
- Use of ICT systems procedure
- Use of mobile devices procedure

Mobile Phone Usage Exemption Request Form

All exemptions are considered temporary and are reviewed by the principal on a term-by-term basis.

Date Requested : _____

Student's Full Name: _____

Grade/Class: _____

Parent/Guardian's Full Name: _____

Contact Number: _____

Contact email: _____

Reason for Request:

Please provide a brief explanation of the reason for requesting a mobile phone usage exemption for your child. Attach any supporting documentation, such as medical certificates or other relevant documents.

Explanation:

Terms of Agreement:

If the exemption is granted, the student and parent/guardian agree to the following terms:

- The mobile phone will be kept on silent mode during class hours.
- The phone will be used discreetly during times approved and for the intended use ONLY.
- The student will adhere to all school policies related to technology.

Parent/Guardian's Agreement:

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have read and understand the school's mobile phone usage policy. I request an exemption for my child, and if granted, I agree to ensure their compliance with the terms outlined above.

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Agreement: _____ Date: _____

School Administration Response:

The school administration will review the request and **provide a written response** indicating whether the exemption has been approved or not approved.

School Administration Response: _____

Signature of Principal: _____ Date: _____