

Forest Lake State High School

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Dear Parents and Caregivers

I am writing to you to inform you of changes to the school's phone and electronic devices policy. This change has been made in consultation with the school's Parents and Citizen's Association to improve the student's educational, behavioural and social and emotional well-being and is based upon experience and research and is comparable to the policies of other schools.

At Forest Lake State High School teachers have found that phones, even on silent, have a distracting influence as students anticipate, or are distracted by, the reception of texts and calls. In addition texts and calls have been deliberately used to bully and harass students during school hours. With mobile phones and the social media accessed by them at saturation point, students (and many adults) are preoccupied to the detriment of engagement with tasks and other people.

Accordingly Forest Lake State High School will provide students with a respite from engagement with phones and players and the use of social media. From the beginning of the school year, students will switch off their phones, players and electronic devices on entering the school grounds and can turn them on again on leaving at the end of the school day. Phones, players and electronic devices can only be used for learning purposes at the direction of a teacher and in the Library during breaks.

If they are used contrary to this policy students will be given an initial reminder of school policy but subsequent or repeated use in class or the grounds will result in PRIDE processes being used, including temporary confiscation. All urgent communication between parents and students will continue to be made through the school office. If parents have a message about after-school matters a text can be sent which students can access when they turn on their phone after school.

This policy is similar to that of many comparable schools. Some highly successful schools have a policy banning phones and players from school with a detected device resulting in a suspension.

We value your help in supporting and reinforcing this policy change with your student. We believe this new policy will improve educational and behavioural outcomes and help students develop their social and communication skills with a wider range of their peers.

If you have any further questions or comments about this policy, please contact me on 3714 2333.

Best wishes

Tom Beck

Acting Principal