



IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THE STATE-WIDE MOBILE PHONE RESTRICTION FROM TERM 4

Dear families and students,

The NSW Government has confirmed restrictions on the use of student mobile phones in NSW high schools from Term 4. The policy includes the following:

- Students are not allowed to use mobile phones at school, including during recess and lunch. This includes school camps, carnivals and excursions.
- This extends to personal technology such as earbuds, headphones and smartwatches. *Laptops and tablets are permitted for educational purposes.*
- The principal will manage and determine any exemptions to the policy in specific circumstances for medical, wellbeing or explicit educational reasons.
- Students will still be able to carry and use their phones while travelling to and from school.

As a result of this new policy, West Wallsend High School will be making changes to the way mobile phones and personal technology are accessed by students during the school day. The new system is being implemented to increase focus in classrooms, remove distractions and to also promote positive social interaction, while reducing the potential for negative incidents involving social media and online issues.

I would like to thank our parents and community members who attended the recent P&C meeting in which the school's approach to the new policy was discussed. It was an honest, respectful and intelligent discussion which placed the best interests of student learning and wellbeing at its focus. Several ideas were raised by parents which have now been incorporated into the school's planning and preparation phase.

WWHS MOBILE PHONE + PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY EXPECTATIONS FROM TERM 4

We will be adopting an "off and away all day" in lockable pouches expectation.

The pouch system will be in place as a tool to support students with the change and to create clear and consistent expectations across the site. In speaking with many of our students they overwhelmingly indicated their preference would be to have their phone stay with them once the policy came into effect. A pouch system enables them to do this.

PHONE POUCH SYSTEM

Students will receive a WWHS branded lockable phone pouch in Term 4. *The pouches will be purchased by the school and will remain the property of the school.* Their name will be on the pouch for easy identification.

When students walk into school (or are on a school-based excursion or activity) they will be expected to turn off all personal tech and place it into the pouch. The pouch is locked by simply pressing it together until the pin clicks into the closure.

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Students can keep their phone pouch in their bag for the school day. Students must not use their phone or personal tech during this time.

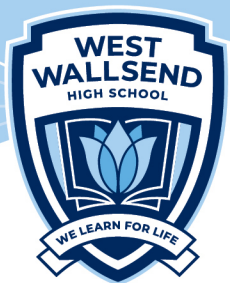
At the end of the day, as students leave school, there will be a number of unlocking devices installed near all exit gates including the bus stop area. Students unlock their pouch by placing the pouch on the unlocking device as they leave.

Students are required to bring their pouch to and from school each day and are responsible for their pouch at all times. Phone lockers will be in key locations in the school if students breach the pouch system or forget to bring their pouch.



WHAT IS THE SCHOOL DOING TO PREPARE?

- Our Head Teacher Wellbeing will contact families whose young person may require an exemption. They will be provided with a pouch that will allow them to access their phone for medical reasons.
- Our Wellbeing Team is currently reviewing all individual learning and wellbeing plans so we can ensure appropriate resources are in place to replace any current strategies in which a phone/personal tech has been a documented adjustment.
- We will be installing digital kiosks for students to check their timetables and emails. Printed timetables will be provided on day one of Term 4.
- Additional resources are being purchased to support break time clubs and activities.
- Additional classroom resources are being purchased such as: clocks, digital cameras and additional laptops to support technology access for classwork.
- Teachers are reviewing teaching and learning programs to ensure appropriate resources are in place. They will use Moodle to ensure students can access lesson notes and other resources from their laptop or from home.
- Online canteen ordering is available.
- Wellbeing time out spaces will be well-resourced to support young people who have used phones for self-regulation needs.
- School excursion mobile phones will be available so parents can contact staff, if needed, during a camp, carnival or excursion.



HOW CAN YOU HELP TO PREPARE YOUR YOUNG PERSON?

POSITIVE PREPARATION + CLEAR COMMUNICATION

Start having positive conversations to prepare your young person for the change.

We know at times family members or employers contact students directly on their mobile phones. If a parent/carer needs to get a message to a young person during a school day you may do so by contacting the school admin team on 4953 2111.

Students with jobs may wish to flag with their employer that they will no longer be contactable during the school day. They may wish to provide a parent/carer number as an alternate contact or use their email for any required communication.

LEARNING AND WELLBEING SUPPORTS

If you feel your young person may require additional support with this change please contact Head Teacher Wellbeing, Sharon Jenness, or the relevant Year Advisor so we can work with you to put relevant strategies in place.

CANTEEN / PAYMENTS AT SCHOOL

From the first day of Term 4 students will no longer be able to use their mobile phone to make payments at the canteen or the admin office student window. Students will need access to an alternative form of payment such as a physical EFTPOS card, cash, our online payment system or via the online canteen ordering system, QuickCliq. You'll find instructions on how to use QuickCliq [here](#).

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

A copy of the mobile phone policy and procedures as well as frequently asked questions for families and students will be published on our school website by the end of the term. Students will be fully briefed on the new expectations at year group meetings in the coming weeks, so they are prepared and well supported before Term 4.

We are looking forward to making our school a phone-free space to improve learning and engagement. Thank you for working with us to achieve this.

Krystal Bevin
Principal
28 August 2023