

Frequently asked questions about the phone rules

In line with the regulations ([Education \(School Boards\) Regulations 2020](#)), [Regulation 22 \(inserted 18 January 2024\)](#), students at NPGHS are not allowed to use or access mobile phones at any time when they are attending school. The government regulations include no use of phones at morning interval and lunchtime, and when on school trips.

During the consultation process with staff, students, parents and whānau, we were often asked questions similar to those below. We will add updates to these over time, as the need arises.

Why didn't you put the phone rule in place at the start of Term 1 like other schools did?

Schools are required to consult with their community (students, parents/whānau and staff) before making any significant changes to rules. We viewed that the government regulation to limit phone use at break and lunch was a significant change and wanted to consult on the process that would be followed if the rule was broken.

How is it different to the rule you had before?

In terms of phone use in the classroom, the new rule is very much the same as the previous rule. Phones should be away, off or on silent, during lessons unless the teacher gives permission for them to be used for a specific learning activity. Under the new rule, students cannot use their phones at morning interval and lunchtime.

Why can't phones be used at break and lunch?

This is not a school decision, but is a government regulation. The regulations require that schools must ensure students do not use or access a phone while they are attending school, including during lunch time and breaks. This includes students who are on a school course or visit outside the school grounds.

Why don't you confiscate phones for one week like other schools?

Each school can arrange consequences as they believe is best for their community. Our community consultation showed us that students, parents and whānau did not want student phones confiscated beyond the school day due to concerns around safety, access to part time work, and connection with family and whānau.

How does a student get a phone back?

If this is the first time in the school year that the student has broken the rule about phone use, the device can be collected by the student from Student Services after 3.40pm on the day that the phone rule is broken. The easy way to avoid any consequence is to keep phones away for the day. Please note this is 20 minutes after the end of the school day, due to logistical reasons, and students, parents and whānau will need to factor this into their plans if the rule is broken.

Why not use lockable pouches?

We did investigate this option, and realise that it works in some environments. There is still a need for student compliance, and managing lost or damaged pouches, forgotten pouches and students who bring two phones to school would still be part of the process. For a school of our size, the initial cost would be a minimum of \$25 000 to begin with and then a minimum of \$6000 annually for pouches for new students.

How do I contact my child?

The regulation only applies to phones so parents can still contact their taiohi/young person via email or any application that can be accessed via a laptop. We ask that you do not contact your child during lesson times so they can maintain their focus on learning. In urgent situations, parents or whānau can also call the office and ask for a message to be delivered to their child.