



Students' use of Mobile Phones in Schools Procedures 2023

20 September 2023

Figtree High School supports the restrictions of mobile phones in accordance with the NSW Department of Education: Students' Use of Mobile Phones in Schools policy: [Student use of mobile phones in schools \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au)

After careful consideration and consultation with our key stakeholders – The Student Representative Council (SRC), The Parents and Citizens Association (P&C), staff and executive teams, Figtree High School has elected to use the option of mobile phones *being turned off and kept out of sight (OFF and AWAY)*.

This means that if a student chooses to bring a mobile phone to school, it must be **OFF and AWAY**, for the full school day, including before school, and lunch 1 and lunch 2. Students will have the responsibility to turn off their phone and store it safely in their school bag for the course of the school day.

This is an approved NSW Department of Education option and will limit unnecessary distractions and complement our ongoing approach to ensure every student maximises their learning and social growth in a safe and supportive environment.

The Procedures

For the purpose of these procedures, 'mobile phones and other personal electronic devices' includes, but is not limited to:

- Mobile phones
- Smart watches
- Phablets
- Wearable smart bands
- Gaming devices (including, but not limited to, Nintendo Switch)
- Portable music devices with internet connectivity
- Wireless earphones/headphones

Please note that:

- Students must not use mobile phones and other personal electronic devices **while on school grounds at any time**. 'School grounds' extends to school excursions, travelling while on school excursions, sports carnivals and other events at the school or off site where an approved school activity takes place, unless otherwise advised.
- Devices that are NOT part of the restriction includes: Bring Your Own Device (BYOD), school issued laptops or school-approved digital equipment for learning in the classroom. Teachers may allow students to use plug-in listening accessories with their laptops, as required, for curriculum based learning activities.
- Outside of timetabled lessons, BYOD **can only** be used by students in the senior quad or school library for curriculum based learning activities.

Student Expectations

- Mobile phones and other personal electronic devices are to be **'OFF and AWAY'** from the time students enter school grounds in the morning until they have left school grounds at the end of the day. This includes before school and at break times.
- Students will place their mobile phone or electronic device into the **Mobile Phone Breach Envelope immediately** if instructed by a teacher or member of staff. The envelope will be delivered by the student to the office, where administration staff will store the device securely in the mobile phone locker.
- Students using wireless headphones or earphones, including their device, will place these items into the **Mobile Phone Breach Envelope immediately** if instructed by a teacher or member of staff. The envelope will be delivered by the student to the office, where administration staff will store the device/s securely in the mobile phone locker.

- Failure to follow instructions will incur more severe consequences, including Formal Caution to Suspend, or a Suspension.
- Students must take full responsibility for any mobile phone or personal electronic device brought to school. The school or staff will not be responsible for their loss, theft, or damage. Students who bring their devices to school, do so at their own risk.
- In negotiation with a Deputy Principal and for acceptable reasons only, students will be permitted to use a school phone in the Front Office to contact their parents/carers under the supervision of staff.
- **Purchasing at the canteen or paying at the Front Office** - Students will be required to use a card or cash to pay for purchases or make payments. Mobile phones are not to be used for purchases or making payments.

Contacting students

Figtree High School understands there may be emergencies when parents or carers need to have contact with students or vice versa during the school day.

In accordance with the procedures, parents and carers can contact the school Front Office to pass on messages. However, this should be limited to emergencies only to support students' focus and learning during the day.

Students will need to inform workplaces and health service providers not to contact them during school hours.

Figtree High School will send important messages via Sentral messaging and the Parent Portal App in the event of school related emergencies.

Staff

Staff will, at times, need to have a device with them for work related purposes to:

- Access administrative tools and functions, such as roll marking
- Acquire learning delivery and management tools to provide learning experiences or assessments
- Contact support in cases of emergency.

Staff are expected to model professional and ethical device use while in the workplace.

Parents, carers, and the Figtree community

Parents, carers and Figtree community members will be able to assist the learning and wellbeing of all students by:

- Encouraging students, wherever possible, to leave their mobile phones and other personal electronic devices at home
- Reminding their child/ren that mobile phones and personal electronic devices are to be turned off and placed in their school bag if they take them to school
- Ensuring they have spoken with their child/ren about the school's mobile phone and personal electronic device expectations.

School disciplinary procedures

If instructed by a teacher or staff member, students will **immediately** place their mobile phone and/or personal electronic device into the **Mobile Phone Breach Envelope**.

- The envelope will be delivered by the student to the office where it will be securely stored in the mobile phone locker.
- The staff member will record the incident on Sentral Wellbeing.
- Office staff will give the student a receipt for the mobile phone or personal electronic device being securely stored.
- The student will show the receipt to the teacher or staff member who issued them with the envelope.

If a student breaches the mobile phone expectations and **complies** with placing their mobile phone or personal electronic device into the **Mobile Phone Breach Envelope**, the following will occur:

- First time:
 - The parent or carer will be contacted via SMS
 - The student will be required to pick up their device from the Front Office at the end of the school day

- A conversation between a school executive staff member and the student will take place
- An executive detention will be issued, at which time the student will be required to complete a reflection sheet.
- Second time:
 - The parent or carer will be contacted by the Deputy Principal
 - The parent or carer will be required to collect the device from the school
 - The student will be issued with a Formal Caution to Suspend plus an after-school detention.
- Third time:
 - The student will be issued with a Suspension
 - The student will participate in a mandatory session on device-dependence, with a member of the Wellbeing Team, as part of the return to school process.

Continued breaches will result in escalation in the school disciplinary procedures.

If a student breaches the expectations and **does not comply** with placing their mobile phone or electronic device into the **Mobile Phone Breach Envelope**, the following will occur:

- First time:
 - The parent or carer will be contacted by the Deputy Principal
 - The parent or carer will be required to collect the device from the school
 - The student will be issued with a formal caution to suspend plus an after-school detention.
- Second time:
 - The student will be issued with a Suspension
 - The student will participate in a mandatory session on device-dependence, with a member of the Wellbeing Team, as part of the return to school process.

Continued breaches will result in escalation in the school disciplinary procedures.

Exemptions

Figtree High School understands there may be exceptional circumstances for students have a medical, wellbeing or learning need which may require them to access a mobile phone, at certain intervals, as defined through consultation and confirmed within a *Mobile Phone Exemption Plan*.

Exemptions can be sought by parents or carers by contacting the relevant Deputy Principal and completing the *Mobile Phone Exemption Application*. In the case of a health condition (such as diabetes), a letter from a medical professional stating when and how the mobile phone is to be used will be required.

The Deputy Principal will work alongside parents and carers to assess, support and complete a personalised *Mobile Phone Exemption Plan* for the student. For example, the Plan will outline a process by which the student can access their phone as required, in consultation with the Deputy Principal.

Note: No mobile phones are to be used for any purchases at school, including canteen purchases as well as payments at the Front Office. This applies even to those students who have a *Mobile Phone Exemption Plan*.

Complaints

If a student, parent or carer has a complaint under this procedure, they should first follow our school's complaints process. If the issue cannot be resolved, please refer to the Department's guide for making a complaint about our schools [Your Feedback \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback)

Evaluation

These procedures have been created in Term 3, 2023. They will be implemented on Day 1 of Term 4, 9 October 2023 and will be reviewed during Term 4 2023.

Mobile Phones are Off and Away for the Day

Ready for Learning

It's as simple as 1, 2 and 3!

1

Every morning students are required to switch mobile phones off and put them away when entering the school.



2

The mobile phone must stay off and out of sight in school bags throughout the whole the day.



3

After leaving school at the end of the day students are able to switch on their mobile phone again.

