

Mobile Phone Policy



Rationale and Objectives

Homebush Boys High School supports the restriction of mobile phones in accordance with the NSW Department of Education: Students' Use of Mobile Phones in Schools Policy. Mobile phone use in schools can impact a student's learning and wellbeing. Restricting mobile phone use at school aims to increase focus in classrooms, remove distractions and promote positive social interaction, whilst reducing the potential for online bullying. Homebush Boys High School has strong teaching and learning practices to support students in the classroom using various forms of appropriate technology, which maximises the benefits and minimises the risks of digital environments. These practices, also, prepare students for life beyond school. We foster a safe learning environment which supports and enhances each child's social and emotional health through our wellbeing and learning support teams.

Homebush Boys High School has elected to use the following approach. All mobile phones will be 'off and away' for the full school day, including recess and lunch. This will mean that students will have a 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.

Exemptions

Homebush Boys High School understands there may be students who have a medical, wellbeing or learning need which will require them to access a mobile phone as defined in this plan. The Learning and Support Teacher will contact parents and carers in order to determine where an exemption will be applied for, on behalf of a student, as well as the adjustments to any school-based practices and procedures.

Contacting Students

Homebush Boys High School understands there will always be emergencies when parents need to get in contact with students or vice versa during the school day. We try to keep this to a minimum, with the exception of emergencies, to avoid disturbing the students' learning. Parents and carers can make contact with the school through the school office on (02) 9764 3611 and students will also be able to contact parents or carers through the school office if urgent.



"We see it or hear it, we take it"

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Mobile Phones & Non-Education Electronic Devices

Mobiles phones and other non-educational electronic devices are **banned** within the school premises, this includes classrooms, playgrounds and corridors. Prior to entering the school grounds all Mobile Phones and Non-Educational Electronic devices must be switched off and out of sight. This includes all wired and wireless headphones and speakers. Medical exceptions may apply through school approved application.

Purpose

Mobiles are detrimental for the following reasons:

- Disrupting the learning environment;
- Invasion of privacy through misuse of pictures/videos/voice recording;
- Issues revolving around cyber bullying (harass, threaten, abuse, vilify or embarrass other students or staff);
- Prolonged use proven to have negative impact on physical and mental health.

Emergency Contact

If a parent or caregiver needs to contact a student at school because of an emergency, they are required to call the school's main office and a message will be sent immediately to the student. If a student needs to make an emergency contact with anyone, they can do so through the school's main office.

DoE Policy

Students must have their mobile phones turned off and out of sight. Students will still be permitted to carry a phone while travelling to and from school.

The ban is one of a number of measures the Government is putting in place to improve the classroom environment and student outcomes.

The NSW Department of Education offered schools several options for implementing the mobile phone ban, and following consultation with their local communities most have opted for zero or low-cost solutions, such as keeping phones in lockers or off and away.

Options for schools include:

- **Off and away:** Phones are 'off and away' in classrooms (typically kept in the student's school bag). Phones are not used for the duration of the school day.
- **Phones in lockers:** Students do not carry the phones with them; they must be kept in a locker for the whole school day.
- **Locked phone pouch:** Students place their phone in a magnetically locked pouch and are unable to use their phone. Pouches are magnetically unlocked at the end of the school day.
- **Phones collected at the front office:** Students deposit their phone at the school's front office at the start of the school day and collect it at the day's end (or when leaving the school premises).

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Consequences of Breach

There will be zero tolerance for breaches of the mobile phone policy. Below are the actions that will be taken.

