



**AUCKLAND COLLEGE
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL**

Mobile Phone Policy

Applies to Whole School – All Staff

Written By
Mrs Stephanie Livramento: Head of Lower School February 2025

Approved by
Mrs Erin Bakstad, Head of Upper School March 2025
Mrs Stephanie Livramento, Head of Lower School March 2025

Introduction:

This school is committed to providing an environment that is always conducive to learning. Accordingly, this environment should remain (as far as is practicable) free from disruption or distraction and should allow pupils to concentrate fully on their learning activities.

The unauthorised or inappropriate use of mobile phones* will not be tolerated, nor will any suggestion of using such devices as an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against students and/or staff.

*Throughout this policy the use of “mobile phone” should be taken to include all types of mobile phone, smartphone, iPhone and comparable electronic devices.

The policy aims to:

- Ensure there is a shared understanding of and adherence to the policy by all stakeholders and visitors (including e.g. contractors, kitchen staff, mid-day cleaners etc) and ensure increased vigilance.
- Ensure the awareness of all staff (including students on placement, volunteers and those from Supply Agencies) is raised in their role of safeguarding in all areas of school life.
- Ensure a secure environment in which students (and their families) are protected from the risk of images being recorded and used/stored for inappropriate purposes.
- Make sure that students always receive the undivided attention of adults.

Purpose and scope

This policy is designed to inform all staff of expectations regarding the use of mobile phones during working hours. It is intended to offer guidance to staff with regard to what constitutes appropriate (and inappropriate) use of mobile phones within the workplace or elsewhere, whilst carrying out duties of employment, and additionally covers the potential consequences of misuse in contravention of the policy.

Key principles which underpin this policy:

- The safeguarding of students is of paramount importance
- Every staff member is accountable for the safeguarding of our students
- All students have a fundamental right to be protected from harm
- Every child has a right to be valued as an individual and treated with dignity and respect

Mobile phones – Staff - acceptable use:

Any mobile phones brought into school remain the responsibility of the individual owner. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones.

Mobile phones must not be used for private or personal use during lessons or formal school time. They should be switched off (or set to silent) at all times.

Use of mobile phones by staff during working hours for social networking activity (other than in accordance with curriculum use) is strictly prohibited.

Mobile phones are not permitted to be used in the presence of children.

Staff members are not permitted to use their own mobile phones for contacting students or their families in a professional capacity (either on or off duty) other than in an emergency.

Staff should never give their personal mobile phone number to students, nor should they store students' telephone numbers on their personal mobile phone, as this facilitates the possibility of inappropriate contact from students and parents.

Staff should never send to (or accept from) colleagues or students, any texts or images that could be perceived as inappropriate or offensive.

Use of personal mobile phones during the working day

The use of mobile phones by employees for the purpose of making or receiving personal calls and/or texts during the working day is discouraged for the following reasons:

- it does not set a professional and positive example to pupils and parents.
- it is disruptive and interrupts lessons
- it is often discourteous to colleagues (eg during meetings)
- it is a misuse of the school's time and has potential to impact adversely on the students' learning

Any personal calls should routinely be directed to the school's landline number so that a message can be relayed to the member of staff when he or she is available, other than in the case of emergency where the message must be relayed to the employee immediately.

Employees using personal mobile phones during their breaks should be respectful of their colleagues and mobile phones should not be used in front of pupils.

Text messaging

Text messages are not an appropriate way of communicating with colleagues within a school or workplace setting as they are:

- not a formal means of communication
- capable of misinterpretation
- unsuitable for the purposes of audit

It is never appropriate to communicate by text in instances of:

- notifying a line manager or Headteacher of sickness absence (this should invariably be done by direct personal telephone contact in accordance with the contract of employment and agreed school procedures)
- the line manager contacting the employee during periods of sickness absence
- notifying changes to working arrangements

Mobile phones and driving

The use of mobile phones (other than hands free) whilst driving a vehicle is illegal. Drivers should find a safe place to stop and turn off the engine before making or answering calls.

Camera mobile phones

There is significant potential for camera mobile phones to be misused in schools. These can all too easily become an instrument of bullying or harassment directed against pupils and/or staff members.

No member of staff should ever use his or her own mobile phone to photograph a student or students or allow themselves to be photographed by students in inappropriate circumstances.

Contravention of this policy

All staff should be fully aware that failure to comply with this policy is likely to result in disciplinary action. Additionally, in certain circumstances, failure to observe this policy may potentially lead to allegations of inappropriate behaviour likely to generate a child protection investigation. Such enquiries may lead to suspension from work (in accordance with the disciplinary policy) pending police enquiries.

Any proven incident of this nature involving a student is likely to be viewed as a serious disciplinary offence warranting sanction up to and including dismissal for gross misconduct.

Accordingly, this guidance should be viewed as a necessary safeguard for both staff and students in addition to maintaining the valued reputation of the school.

Visitors (including parents, professionals, contractors):

It is the responsibility of **all** staff members to exercise vigilance at all times and to raise concerns as soon as possible, either directly with the person who is contravening expectations or by reporting the incident to a senior leader as soon as possible after the event.

Detail surrounding reported incidents will be investigated and action taken accordingly.

Staff are consistent and follow the policy outlined below for student mobiles:

Students are not allowed to use phones in school for the reasons outlined below:

- Prime source of Low-Level Disruption in lessons
- Students calling parents to pick them up if they feel ill, without any contact through staff or the School Office.
- Staff having photos/videos taken of them and used in social media
- Persistent safeguarding issues and concerns

Student mobile phone use is prohibited on the school site. This applies to any electronic device brought in by students that is deemed to be obstructive and disruptive to teaching and learning. This may include, phones, music devices, Game consoles and smart watches. This does not include those students who require the use of electronic devices as an essential tool for their learning.

Mobiles may be in school however must be handed in each morning upon arrival and will be returned as students leave the site. A register will be taken each day.

Students found with their phones or accessories out:

- The phone is confiscated, and behaviour for learning policy followed.
- The phone is placed in SLT office to be collected at the end of the day by the student.
- Repeat offenders (two or more incidents), parents are to be contacted and are required to pick up the phone from the main office when convenient, with pastoral team informing parents and an escalation sanctioned if required.
- If the student refuses to hand the phone over, the school behaviour policy is to be followed and pastoral team to follow up if escalation is required