



Toronto High School

MOBILE PHONE

POLICY

1. Rationale:

There is a range of technology available today including mobile telephones, pagers, digital cameras, portable audio players such as CD, DVD and MP3 players/iPods, personal digital assistants, entertainment devices (i.e. portable computer games such as Gameboys) and other similar devices. All of these have the **potential to be incorporated appropriately into lessons**, opening exciting new approaches to learning and personal time management (electronic diary/organiser). However, when these technologies are **misused or used inappropriately** by students they can be **very disruptive to teaching and learning** and in some cases cause harm.

Toronto High School supports the voluntary surrendering of mobile phones to Deputy Principals, (phones must be clearly labelled with student name) before school. Mobile phones will then be stored securely in the school's vault and returned at the end of the day. This acknowledges that we appreciate that students **may need to be in possession** of a mobile telephone at school for reasons relating to their safety in travelling to and from school. We therefore ask for parental support to ensure students remain within the guidelines of this policy.

Taking photographs or videos while at school or engaged in school-related activities, by students, may only occur if there is a sound reason for the photography. Depending on the particular circumstances and purpose of the photography, the permission of staff, parent/ carer or student may be required.

2. Aims:

To develop clear guidelines for the appropriate and relevant use of electronic equipment (particularly mobile phones) by students at Toronto High School

3. Implementation:

Where students bring a mobile telephone, portable computer game, MP3 player/iPod, camera and similar devices to school:

Student Responsibilities

- The **student must take full responsibility** for these devices. The **school or staff will not be responsible** for their loss, theft or damage. Students who bring them to school, do so at their own risk. Students and families should keep a full record of serial numbers and receipts in a secure place.
- Students will use their mobile phone in a way which **reflects the core values being taught in schools**, including the values of respect, responsibility, care and fairness.

- The use of mobile phones and other electronic devices, as mentioned above, is strictly forbidden in formal examination settings, either school or external. (Refer to 'Rules and Procedures' for HSC and School Certificate Examinations – Board of Studies.) Breaches in this area will be dealt with through the school's Assessment and Examinations policies.
- Students **must not use mobile telephones or other devices to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation** of the school. Such actions are intrusive and disruptive to the learning environment. Such activities may incur disciplinary action including suspension.
- Students must not use mobile telephones or other devices to **threaten, bully, intimidate** or otherwise **harass** other people through any SMS or text message, photographic, video or other data transfer system available on the telephone or for any illegal activity. Such activities may incur disciplinary action including suspension. Unauthorised photography and voice recording using mobile phones and such devices, will be treated as a serious violation of our shared rights. Appropriate sanctions and restitution will apply.
- Under **no circumstances will inappropriate use of mobile telephones with cameras be tolerated**. Students found to be using any camera contrary to this acceptable use policy will be dealt with under the school discipline policy. Disciplinary action will be taken in all cases.

Improper use of mobile telephones or other electronic devices may result in:

- Detention or other appropriate disciplinary measures as determined by the school's disciplinary policy.
- The student being required to hand in their mobile telephone or other electronic device at the beginning of the school day for **collection when the student goes home**.
- **Confiscation** of the mobile phone or other electronic device until the end of the school day. Clearly labelled devices should be sent to the Year Deputy, to be recorded in the Register of Confiscated Phones/iPods etc, then they will be locked away in the school's vault. **Refusal to hand the device to staff, once requested**, will be viewed as a breach of school discipline, in that the student has failed to follow a reasonable instruction, after electing not to follow the school's policy about appropriate usage. Similarly, a student who repeatedly offends will be regarded as persistently disobedient to school rules and policies. This may result in suspension from the school.
- **Confiscation** of the mobile telephone or other electronic device until such time as their **parent or caregiver is able to attend school to collect the device. This will occur if the student has the phone or electronic device confiscated 3 times or more, in any one term**
- Other disciplinary action in cases where students have bullied or threatened or harassed other students or staff via the mobile telephone or other personal communication device or where the device has been used to film (a fight for instance), to take photographs or to display inappropriate material.

Emergency Contact

- If a **parent or caregiver** needs to contact a student at school, as a result of an emergency, they are required to **call the school's main office** and a message will be sent immediately to inform the student to report to the Front Office area.
- If a **student** needs to make emergency contact with family, the student can report to the Front Office and appropriate communication will be afforded the student, through the **school's main office**.

This policy seeks to ensure that the learning environment at Toronto High School is one that recognises the right of students to learn and teachers to teach without interference or distractions from mobile phones and other electronic devices

The above policy is based on advice provided to Toronto High School by the Department of Education and Training and by the Legal Branch. Related Documents include:

- Legal Issues Bulletin # 7 – School photographs and Video
- Legal Issues Bulletin # 16 – Searches in Schools and TAFE NSW
- Legal Issues Bulletin # 35 – The Use of Mobile Phones, Portable Computer Games , Recording Devices and Cameras in Schools and TAFE NSW.
- Legal Issues Bulletin # 42 – Legal Issues Arising from Staff Subject to Cyber Bullying and Related Behaviour.
- Legal Issues Bulletin # 44 – Apprehended Violence Orders

10. Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last updated

June 2011