



## CELLPHONES, AWAY FOR THE DAY POLICY

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### Rationale

This policy applies to students at South Otago High School whilst attending school on site, attending courses with external providers, for Education Outside of the Classroom (EOTC) or other trips and activities related to the curriculum. It should be read in conjunction with associated procedures. This policy has been developed as a result of the government legislation and in consultation with the school community.

### Policy Statement

We believe all members of the South Otago High School community have the right to a safe and healthy work and learning environment, free from distractions. A school environment that protects and promotes the health and wellbeing of the entire school community.

The use of cell phones is not permitted by students during the school day which typically runs from 08:40am to 15:10pm.

All students are required to secure their personal cell phone, turned off, in their bag, locker or security pouch and NOT on the student's person for the entire duration of the school day.

The use of connected devices such as earbuds, speakers or smart watches will be regarded as a breach of this policy.

Whanau of students with specific learning needs or medical condition may apply for an exemption for their child.

Under exceptional circumstances whanau may seek approval from the principal for a student to have access to their cell phone for the duration of the day. An example for an exemption may include the student being a teen parent or is part of an emergency response team such as the Fire Service, St John's Ambulance, Land SAR etc.

### Our Commitment and Obligation

We will demonstrate our commitment to this policy by ensuring we:

- Include information about our policy in enrolment information, school newsletters and have it on display in appropriate spaces within the school (this may be through the policy being displayed or through associated signage).
- Feature this policy in our induction procedures for new staff, contractors, coaches, and others working within our school's premises.
- Promote all school activities outside of our school's premises as cell phone/device-free unless otherwise stipulated.
- Support our students/akonga to use technology appropriately.
- Following documented procedures when dealing with incidences of abuse of technology.
- Teachers will role model phones being 'away for the day'

### Procedure

All students will be made aware of the policy and this procedure prior to full implementation on 18 March 2024

Students will be required to turn off their cell phone by the start of the school day, 08:40am (Monday to Thursday) 09:15am (Friday only) and have secured it:

- In a locker
- Their bag
- A security pouch

It is not to be carried on their person in a jacket pocket etc.

Students on Education outside the classroom (EOTC): will not be allowed to use their cell phones for the duration of the trip unless specific permission is granted by the member of staff in charge of the activity.

Students attending courses with external providers: Will abide by the same rules as detailed above.

## **Exemptions**

All exemption requests are to be made using the [Cell Phone Exemption Request Form](#)

- i. Medical:** Where a student has a health plan recorded at school, where use of a cell phone is required, an exemption will be granted. Whanau/parent/caregiver may request an exemption where there is a new medical condition, or they believe an exemption is justified. The school may request a letter of support from a medical professional to support the exemption request. An exemption card will be issued to the student with the conditions of the exemption. Where possible the school will work with the whanau/parent/caregiver to establish mutually agreeable conditions. Such conditions may be:
  - i) Turned off and only turned on to check insulin levels
  - ii) Turned off and only turned on only if required to connect to medical device or for technical support.
  - iii) Kept turned on but on flight mode with bluetooth connection to insulin pumpThe exemption card is to be available upon request to staff for verification.
  
- i. Specific Learning Difficulty:** Where a student has a specific, diagnosed learning difficulty which is recorded on the Learning Support Register, an exemption may be issued if the use of a cell phone would support student learning. Whanau/parent/caregiver may request an exemption where there is new evidence, or they believe an exemption is justified. The school may request a letter of support from a professional to support the exemption request. Where possible the school will work with the whanau/parent/caregiver to establish mutually agreeable conditions. An exemption card will be issued to the student with the conditions of the exemption. Such conditions may be:
  - i) Turned off and only used to scan text and read back
  - ii) Turned off and only used to photograph notes from the whiteboardThe exemption card is to be available upon request to staff for verification.
  
- iii. Special circumstances:** Where there are exceptional circumstances whanau/parent/caregiver may request an exemption in writing to the principal. The threshold for granting an exemption will be exceptional. If granted, it will be expected that the use of the cell phone will not cause disruption to learning, follow the school expectations as set out in the cyber safety agreement and only be used for the specific purpose of the exemption. An exemption may be granted in the following instances:
  - i) The student is a teen parent.
  - ii) The student is a member of a recognised emergency response team eg, Fire Service, St John's Ambulance, Land SAR. Their phone is used as a pager for a 'callout'An exemption card will be issued and is to be available upon request to staff for verification.

**Application for exemption:** Where whanau/parent/caregiver would like to request an exemption they will be asked to complete a [Cell Phone Exemption Request Form](#)

**Appeals process:** Should an exemption be granted with conditions that are not agreeable or an exemption declined, the applicant may appeal the decision in writing to the Board of Trustees who will then make the final decision.

## **Teacher approved exemption**

A teacher may, under exceptional circumstances, allow students to use their personal cell phone for educational purposes. Where possible alternatives should be used such as using a chrome

book to photograph work/record a speech etc. In such instances the student will be allowed to use the cell phone for that specific purpose and once completed will be required to turn the phone off and return it to the bag, locker, security pouch etc.

Students travelling for EOTC activities may be given permission to use their cell phone to contact parents for pick-ups etc. This exemption will be given by the teacher verbally. In this instance the student is to use the phone for this single purpose only.

Students undertaking some activities may be requested to have their cell phone on and available for communication with the teacher, e.g. students on a ski trip may be asked to have their cell phone on to call them back to the vehicle or for an emergency.

### **Breach of the school expectations**

The school will endeavour at each step to support students to change their behaviour. Where possible, whanau will be informed and their support will be vital in changing the student's behaviour. The consequences for breaches are aimed to be incremental and allow the opportunity for reflection by the student.

#### **First instance:**

The cell phone/device will be secured in a security pouch and returned to the student who will be able to unlock the pouch at the end of the school day (3:10pm) by using the unlock device at the school office. An entry will be added to Kamar which will be visible to parents via the portal

#### **Second instance:**

The student will be required to secure their phone for two days in a security pouch during school hours. Unlocking will be possible at the school office at the end of each day. They will also receive a lunchtime detention and a second entry will be added to Kamar which will be visible to parents via the portal

#### **Third instance:**

The student will be required to secure their phone for one week in a security pouch during school hours. They will also receive an after-school detention and a third entry will be added to Kamar which will be visible to parents via the portal. A letter will also be emailed to the parent explaining that further breaches of the school expectations may mean that whanau will be asked to retain the cell phone at home.

#### **Fourth instance:**

The phone will be secured in a security pouch and placed in the school office for the whanau/parent/caregiver to collect.

#### **Further incidents:**

Any further instances will be considered as continual disobedience and will, therefore, follow the school disciplinary processes. This could lead to:

- a within school withdrawal from class (Internal suspension)
- loss of privileges, e.g. representing the school for sport/cultural activities
- formal stand down
- suspension from school

#### **For Family/Whanau:**

As a school we would prefer to work with students and family/whanau in a positive and collaborative manner rather than having punitive measures in place. However, to maintain a cell phone/device-free environment, clear consequence are required to support the implementation of a cell phone 'away for the day' environment.

Family/Whanau support in this matter is essential for both the school and the student.

If family/whaanau need to contact their children during the day, a message can be left at Reception which will be delivered to their student. Text messages sent during the day will remain on the network providers server and be delivered when the phone is turned on at the end of the day.

Whanau may email students on their school email with messages at any time during the day if they wish to make personal contact.

Students may use the school office phone if they need to make a phone call to family/whanau.

Family/Whanau may pick up a confiscated cell phone/device at any time from the school office.

**Signed**



**(Bronwyn Campbell, Presiding Member)**

**Established**

March 2024

**Review**

March 2025