

New Phone Rules 2024

New Government regulations require that schools must ensure students do not use or access a phone while they are attending school, including during lunch time and breaks.

As you may be aware the Government has introduced regulations that require all state and state-integrated schools to put in place school rules regarding mobile phones.

International research indicates that cellphones in schools are not conducive for learning and for student wellbeing. Therefore, these rules are designed to ensure that the learning of all students is maximised, while minimising any potential for distraction and cyber-bullying.

What are the new rules?

The new regulations require that schools must ensure students do not use or access a phone while they are attending school, including during lunch time and breaks. This includes students who are on a school course or visit outside the school grounds.

The new rules allow students to use or access a phone in certain circumstances including:

- a phone is needed for health reasons (for example, to monitor insulin levels); or
- a phone is needed to help a student with a disability or learning support need (for example, to assist with impaired communication); or
- a teacher requires students to use phones for a specific educational task or purpose (for example, for a class assignment); or
- the principal decides that they are needed for special circumstances (for example, the student is a teenage parent).

Napier Boys' High School's bylaws already limit use of mobile phones during class time unless teachers specifically allow devices for use as part of a learning activity so the new rules are consistent with our current practice in the classroom. What will be different, under the new rules, is that schools must now prohibit students from using mobile phones during interval and lunchtimes.

When do the new rules take effect?

The new government mobile phone rules must be in use as soon as possible in Term 1 2024 and no later than Term 2.

Our existing mobile phone policies will continue to apply as we update our bylaws to align with new regulations, which stipulate that mobile phones are not to be used in class unless expressly permitted by a teacher.

How you can help as a parent and caregiver

We are currently engaging with our students about the updated mobile phone policies and their role in enhancing the learning environment and taking responsibility for their own self-management. We are emphasising the critical importance of adhering to these new rules to ensure learning is not disrupted. We kindly ask parents and caregivers to discuss these guidelines with your teenagers and to reinforce the school's expectations.

Please be aware that students who choose to bring mobile phones to school do so at their own risk, as the school cannot be held liable for any loss or damage to the devices.

Expect more information on this topic during the first term. We appreciate your support in advance.