**MOBILE PHONE POLICY**

**Rationale**

The staff and P&C of Chatham High School recognise a large number of students and their families own a mobile phone. It is recognised that some parents/carers request that their child carry a mobile phone to school for before and after school safety and security reasons.

Our core business is the pursuit of quality teaching and learning in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions.

This policy was made in consultation with students, staff and P&C from Chatham High School June 2015. It should be read in conjunction with the NSW Department of Education’s [Student Discipline in Government Schools Policy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/student-discipline-in-government-schools-policy?refid=285835).

**Acceptable Uses**

**Teacher Direction -** There may be an occasion when a teacher may require students to use a particular application on their mobile phone during a lesson. If this occurs, the teacher will provide the students with this information prior to the lesson and for that lesson only.

**Principal’s Permission -** Other exemptions can only be approved by the Principal and then only in exceptional circumstances.

**Unacceptable Uses**

**Legislation -** Students must not take photographs or videos or recordings of other students or staff. They must not contact staff by phone unless given specific permission to do so on a particular occasion e.g. Overnight field trip where phone contact is required. Breaches of these rules are not only a serious matter under the school’s discipline code, but could also breach legislation such as Children and Young Persons Care and Protection Act, Privacy Act and Workplace Health and Safety Act.

**Disruption -** Mobile phones must not disrupt the learning environment or distract students from learning. This includes all areas of the school including the playground and at all times during the school day. They are not to be charged in class.

**Bullying -** Where the device is used to threaten or is likely to threaten the safety or wellbeing of a person such as to; bully, intimidate or otherwise harass through any voice call, text message, photograph, video or other data system available on the phone.

**Examinations and Tests -** The mobile phone can provide an opportunity to cheat in examinations and tests. Therefore, phones must be turned OFF and secured in students’ bags. “Mobile phones are not permitted in an examination room under any circumstances” (Board of Studies, NSW Students online 2015). If caught with a mobile phone students risk their examination paper being cancelled.

**Headphones -** This policy includes head phones and earphones which are also not permitted at school unless under the guidance of the classroom teacher for a specific purpose.

**iPods and other Electronic Devices -** This policy includes iPods and other electronic devices which are also not permitted at school unless under the guidance of the classroom teacher for a specific purpose.

**Note: It is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. Police may be informed.**

**Consequences for Improper Use**

If a staff member witnesses a mobile phone being used contrary to this policy, then the teacher may invoke any of the following:

* If they hear a mobile phone, see a mobile phone or have good reason to suspect a student is using a mobile phone during or between lessons, the staff member will ask the student to turn the phone off and place it in their bag.
* If the warning is disregarded or refused, the staff member will confiscate the phone for the remainder of the lesson.

If a student refuses to comply with this expectation, then the teacher will refer the matter to the Head Teacher for ‘Refusing to follow teacher instructions’.

**Failure to comply with Head Teacher instructions** results in Deputy Principal intervention.

* First offence – Deputy Principal may confiscate the phone for the day. Phone to be secured in the Deputy Principal’s office. Student to collect after 3:22pm. Incident recorded on Millennium. Letter sent to parent/carer.
* Second Offence - Deputy Principal may confiscate the phone for the day. Phone to be secured in the Deputy Principal’s office. Parent to collect the phone. Incident recorded on Millennium. Student issued with Whole School Red Card.
* If a serious breach occurs - Confiscation of phone, parent called, suspension may occur.

**Responsibility**

Mobile phones are not to be used (seen or heard) during and between lessons. They MUST be switched OFF and secured in the student’s bag.

Students bring mobile phones to school at their own risk. The school and school staff members will not be held responsible for any loss, damage or theft to mobile phones or for investigating any loss or damage.

Therefore, the school strongly discourages the bringing of mobile phones to school by students.

**Communication with School and Students**

* Parents wishing to contact their child should phone the school on 65522588 and our Administration staff will contact the student.
* Students needing to phone home during the day should do so via the front office with the permission from a Head Teacher, Deputy Principal or the Principal.
* Students who are feeling unwell must report to front office where Administration staff will contact parents and direct the student to sick bay until they are collected by their parent or carer.

**Guidelines for Staff**

* During teaching time, while on playground duty and during meetings, mobile phones must be switched off or put on ‘silent’ or ‘discreet’ mode.
* Teachers in the Support Unit, MC, practical or specialist class will have access to mobile phones for Duty of Care purposes in those classes.
* Except in urgent, serious or exceptional situations, mobile phone use is not permitted during class time, while on playground duty and during meetings.

**Guidelines for Parents and Community Members**

* At all official school functions, during meetings or when assisting in the classroom, mobile phones should be switched off or on ‘silent’ or ‘discreet’ mode.
* When making enquiries at the Administration Office, mobile phones should be switched off or on ‘silent’ or ‘discreet’ mode when being attended to by staff.
* All contact with students during school hours must be made through the Front Office.

**Introduction and Reinforcement of Mobile Phone Policy**

* Teachers will discuss and explicitly teach this policy to students at assemblies and in the classroom.
* When inappropriate use is detected it will be dealt with in terms of this policy.
* The school community will be made aware of the policy on the school’s website and when students enrol or transition to Chatham High School.
* The policy will be published in the School Handbook.