

# Student use of mobile devices

From the beginning of Term 1 2024, all Queensland state school students must keep their mobile phones switched off and 'away for the day' during school hours. Notifications on wearable devices, such as smartwatches, must be switched off so that phone calls, messages and other notifications cannot be sent or received during school hours.

The decision to implement a consistent, statewide approach to putting mobile phones away during the school day is based on the advice of Ms Cheryl Vardon AO, former Queensland Family and Children's Commissioner, who completed an independent review of Queensland's approach to mobile phones. Ms Vardon's review included consultation with key education stakeholders, such as principals, school staff, students and families from each education region, as well as a review of recent research on student use of mobile phones and personal devices in schools.

'Away for the day' will support schools to maintain a strong focus on educational achievement, and student wellbeing and engagement by:

- providing optimal learning and teaching environments
- encouraging increased face-to-face social interactions between students
- promoting the health and wellbeing of students through increased social interaction and physical activity
- reducing the potential for students to be exposed to the negative impacts of the digital world, resulting from unsafe or inappropriate technology use.

Guidelines and supporting documents have been developed in consultation with school leaders and key stakeholders to assist schools in preparing for implementation of the procedure in 2024.

## Exemptions

Exemptions will be available for digital learning opportunities or in exceptional circumstances, including reasons related to disability, health and wellbeing.

The Department of Education will work closely with principals and school leaders over the coming months to develop guidance materials, including how and when exemptions may be granted.

## Contacting your child at school

Students will be permitted to bring phones and wearable devices to school so that they can contact their parents or carers immediately before or after school hours.

Parents and carers will be able to contact their child during school hours using the school's existing communication channels.

For further information about school communication channels, please speak to your school directly.