



# Aquinas College

183 Pyes Pa Road, RD3, Tauranga 3173, NZ

## OPERATIONAL POLICY

### *Phone Free Policy*

<i>Latest Revision</i>	<i>February 2024</i>
<i>Reviewer</i>	<i>Principal</i>
<i>Next Revision</i>	<i>February 2025</i>
<i>Associated Governance Policies</i>	<i>5.7 Cyber Safety 5.10 Student Behaviour Management</i>

#### **INTRODUCTION**

*This policy meets the Government's legislation that requires schools to 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.*

*This policy ensures that the learning of students is maximised while minimising any potential for distraction.*

*It is important to note that if students do make the decision to bring a mobile phone to the school grounds, they do so at their own risk. The school is not responsible for any loss or damage caused to any mobile phone, except those that have been surrendered to a staff member in line with this policy.*

#### **POLICY OVERVIEW**

**Applicability:** *This policy applies to all students of the school.*

**Usage Hours:** *Mobile phones are not permitted during school hours, defined as between 8:40 am and 3:15 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, and between 9:00 am and 3:15 pm on Thursday.*

**Storage:** *Mobile phones, if brought to school, must be switched off and in bags unless use is granted under an exemption.*

## EXEMPTIONS

1. **Health and Safety Concerns:** Parents or caregivers may apply for an exemption to the Principal for their child based on immediate health and safety needs, such as medical conditions or protection issues.
2. **Additional Learning Needs:** Students with additional learning needs who use mobile phones in class to increase or improve their ability to participate and learn will be granted an exemption. In these instances, the mobile phone must offer a clear and substantial advantage over other devices. The college's Learning Support team will oversee and communicate these exemptions to staff.
3. **Specified Educational Tasks:** Mobile phones may be allowed for specific educational tasks when they offer a clear and substantial advantage over other devices. Such use is an exception rather than the rule and will be subject to careful consideration and discretion by teachers.
4. **Specified EOTC Activities:** During Education Outside The Classroom (EOTC) activities, mobile phones may be approved for use, especially (but not exclusively) in cases where they contribute to a student's health and safety. Students should check whether their device is allowed before the activity commences. Usage will be at the discretion of teachers and other adult supervisors.

## BREACHES

This policy is in effect to support our students' educational journey by minimising distractions and ensuring a conducive learning environment. We appreciate the cooperation of students, staff, and parents in adhering to these guidelines. Breaches of the mobile phone rules include:

1. Using the device when not permitted.
2. Misuse of the device when an exemption is granted:
  - a. Accessing content unrelated to the learning activity or educational task;
  - b. Taking photos or videos of other people without their permission;
  - c. Forwarding messages or content.

To promote learning and growth, the record of mobile phone offences resets at the start of each school year.

## PROCEDURE FOR BREACHES

### First Offence

**Consequence:** The student must surrender their mobile phone to a staff member. The phone will be securely stored in a locked cupboard in the college office. An entry will be made on the student's KAMAR record.

**Notification:** Parents/caregivers, the student's Dean and Mentor Teacher will be notified.

**Collection:** The student can collect the phone at the end of the day.

### **Second Offence**

**Consequence:** *The student must surrender their mobile phone to a staff member. The phone will be securely stored as before.*

**Notification:** *Parents/caregivers, the student's Dean and Mentor Teacher will be notified.*

**Collection:** *A parent must collect the phone from the child's Dean.*

### **Third Offence**

**Consequence:** *The student must surrender their mobile phone to a staff member. The phone will be securely stored as before.*

**Notification:** *Parents/caregivers, the student's Dean and Mentor Teacher will be notified.*

**Collection:** *A meeting with the Assistant Principal responsible for Pastoral Care in the Middle School or Senior School is required for parents and the student to collect the phone and discuss next steps. The student will be issued an after-school service. Other consequences may apply.*

**Note:** *If a student refuses to surrender their phone, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will remove the student from class and organise a meeting with the parents immediately.*

## **INCLUSIONS**

1. *Smart-enabled wearables, such as smart watches, are not allowed to access online content, receive or send notifications during the school hours specified above. The same consequences for breaches outlined in the mobile phone policy will apply to students who fail to comply.*
2. *Bluetooth and wired headphones, unless used with permission from a teacher to support an educational task, are prohibited during school hours. Non-compliance will result in the application of the outlined consequences, as with other breaches of the mobile phone policy. NB: Students are permitted to use headphones connected to their BYOD device under exemption. During break times, in the library or other classrooms, students may use headphones at their own discretion while studying.*