



Cell Phone Management Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to promote a focused and healthy learning environment by balancing the academic needs of the classroom, the well-being and mental health of pupils, and the responsible integration of technology as a tool for teaching and learning.

2. Context

Westerford High School recognises its shared responsibility to guide pupils in developing responsible and self-regulated cell phone use.

The School acknowledges the documented risks associated with excessive and unregulated cell phone use, including social media dependency, cyberbullying, and reduced face-to-face social interaction.

At the same time, the School affirms the value of technology as a meaningful educational tool when used appropriately.

Accordingly, this policy establishes clear boundaries for cell phone use by restricting access during the academic day to protect teaching and learning, and managing use during break times in an age-appropriate manner that promotes healthy social interaction.

Westerford High School maintains a balanced approach that combines traditional teaching methods with the purposeful use of technology, and this policy reflects that position.

3. General Rules and Procedures

3.1 Grades 8 and 9 (junior grades)

A start-to-end restriction on cell phone use applies to all Grade 8 and 9 pupils.

At the start of the day, pupils are required to place their cellphones in their assigned cellphone pouches. Pouches remain locked for the duration of the academic day. Magnet unlocking stations, which will only be accessible at the end of the academic school day, are available at designated exit points.

For pupils leaving early, the Front Office will have a magnet unlocking station accessible all day.

Cell phones may only be accessed during the academic school day when explicitly required for educational purposes, and under the direct supervision of a teacher using the unlocking magnets. Teachers can sign out magnets from the Front Office for classroom use.

Cell phone pouches may not be vandalised, damaged, tampered with, or opened through any means other than the authorised unlocking magnets.

3.2 Grades 10, 11 and 12 (senior grades)

Cell phone use is restricted during all academic lesson time.

Each classroom is equipped with a designated cellphone storage box. Pupils are required to place their cellphones in the box at the start of each lesson. Devices are collected at the end of the lesson.

Cell phones may only be used during lessons for clearly defined educational purposes, and at the discretion and under the supervision of the teacher.

3.3 Use of Alternative Digital Devices

The use of laptops, tablets, or similar devices is allowed for academic use with permission from the House Head or Academic Office, or as an academic accommodation for specific barriers to learning, authorised through the Wellness Department or the Academic Office.

Use is subject to monitoring to ensure alignment with academic tasks.

Any misuse of these devices will result in the application of the School's confiscation procedures.

3.4 Earphones and Headphones

The use of earphones or headphones is not permitted within the school building during school hours.

Exceptions may be granted for noise-cancelling headphones or earplugs on a case-by-case basis, supported by appropriate motivation, and managed through the Wellness Department.

4. Consequences for Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy will result in the following consequences:

The device will be confiscated during school hours for a period of two weeks. The pupils will be required to hand the device in at the Front Office before the start of the academic day, and may collect it after the conclusion of the academic day.

In addition, the pupil will be assigned six demerits, resulting in a detention.

Should a pupil be found vandalising, damaging, tampering with, or forcibly opening a cellphone pouch through any means other than the authorised unlocking magnets, the same consequences will apply.

Earphones or headphones will be confiscated immediately and full-time for a period of two weeks. Pupils may collect the headphones or earphones from the Front Office at the end of the confiscation period.

Confiscated items will be securely stored in the school strong room.

Repeated contraventions of this policy will result in progressively more serious disciplinary consequences, such as Friday afternoon detentions, a longer day-confiscation period and/or a formal disciplinary process.

5. Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the School Management Team to ensure that it remains relevant, effective, and aligned with the evolving needs of the school community.