

22 September 2023

Dear Parents and caregivers

## MOBILE PHONE POLICY

You may have heard recently about changes to the use of mobile phones / smart devices in NSW High Schools, beginning in Term 4, 2023. As of term 4, 2023, the NSW Dept of Education has adopted the following policy for all High Schools in NSW:

- Mobile phones and/or smart devices **WILL NOT** be used during school hours, including break times.  
**Smart devices are any device (eg a watch) that is being used for communication purposes. The NSW Department of Education allows these devices in schools for non-communication purposes only (eg telling the time).**
- In the case of an emergency, parents / caregivers will be able to contact their child via the school office on 02 6777 2777.

### What does this mean for Walcha Central School?

The new mobile devices policy will apply at Walcha Central School. All mobile phones / smart devices will be banned from Walcha Central School as of Day 1, Term 4, 2023.

For students with existing medical needs that require the use of a mobile phone to monitor, exemptions to use mobile phones / smart devices can be applied for. To do so, parents/caregivers must apply in writing to the Principal, Mrs Amanda Cooper, for an exemption (sample exemption letter attached). Along with the exemption application, parents/caregivers are required to include a doctor's certificate supporting the medical reason for mobile phone use and arrange an interview with Mrs Cooper to discuss the exemption application. Until this has occurred the student will not have permission to use a mobile phone / smart device at Walcha Central School.

*If the school already holds an exemption for your child, please complete the attached proforma only, so our information is up to date. In that case, there is no need to provide another doctor's certificate or have an interview.*

### What if my child uses their phone / device at Walcha central School without an exemption?

If a mobile phone / smart device is sighted and a child does not have an exemption for its use, the device will be confiscated and kept in a secure locker by the school Deputy Principal. The student can collect the device at the end of the day, **subject to the availability of the Deputy Principal**. If a student has their device confiscated 3 or more times, the device will need to be collected by their parents from Mrs Cooper.

If a student continues to use a device, or does not comply with the stated instructions above, they will be subjected to the NSW DET behaviour policy.

We look forward to working with you to implement these changes at WCS. Please do not hesitate to contact the school to discuss this at any time.

Yours sincerely

Ben Ussher  
RELIEVING DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Amanda Cooper  
PRINCIPAL

## EXEMPTION APPLICATION

Parents and caregivers wishing to apply for an exemption to the NSW Department of Education and Training *Use Of Mobile Devices In Schools Policy* will need to complete the following proforma and submit a hard copy at the front office.

*PLEASE NOTE: If the school already holds an exemption for your child, please complete the attached proforma only, so our information is up to date. In that case, there is no need to provide another doctor's certificate or have an interview.*

Mrs Cooper will then assess the application and make a determination as to whether an exemption is granted.

STUDENT NAME: .....

YEAR / CLASS: .....

PARENT / CARER NAME: .....

Outline the health or wellbeing reason for this exemption (please provide a copy of supporting documentation from a health professional):

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

SIGNATURE .....

DATE ..... / ..... / .....