



MARLBOROUGH GIRLS' COLLEGE

Te Kāreti Kōhine o Wairau

Marlborough Girls' College Cell Phone Policy (March 2024)

Government Legislation:

The new government regulations require that schools must 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 (education.govt.co.nz).

MGC Policy

International research indicates some key challenges with cellphones at school such as being a major distraction for our students. This policy is designed to ensure that the learning of all students is maximised, while minimising any potential for distraction and cyber-bullying. The policy also aligns with the government regulations from above.

Our approach is “away for the day”, meaning cell phones either do not come with the student to school, or are switched off and in bags for the full school day, whilst onsite (8.30am - 3.15pm, including Thursday's). The phone must not be visible and cannot be used. It must be turned off so it can not be heard. It is important to note that if students do make the decision to bring a cellphone to the school grounds, they do so at their own risk. The school is not responsible for any loss or damage caused to any cell phone.

Air pods and headphones will not be allowed during school hours unless connected to a laptop and used for educational purposes. Smart watches are to be switched to airplane mode and/or disconnected from their phone.

Exemptions

Learning activities

If cellphones are used for a learning activity, this will be at the teacher's discretion. Prior notice if a phone is needed or can be used in class, will be given and the phone's use will be supervised by a staff member. Guidelines on appropriate usage still apply.

Learning and Health Situations

To gain an exemption, a student and their parents/caregivers, will need to have a meeting with an AP/DP. An exemption may be granted to a student who has additional learning needs and uses a cellphone in class to increase or improve their ability to participate and learn.

In matters related to a student's immediate health and safety concerns, an exemption may be granted (e.g., medical conditions or protection issues) following a meeting with an AP/DP.

If an exemption is granted, a card will be issued (that can be shown to staff), teachers of the student will be notified and the exemption recorded on the students file on KAMAR.

Education outside the classroom (EOTC)

Our cell phone policy still applies whilst a student is on a school course or visit outside the school grounds. Students should check whether their device is allowed before the activity/trip commences. Usage will be at the discretion of teachers and other adult supervisors.

Sport and Cultural Overnight Trips

Our policy still applies to sport and cultural trips away. Phone use will be managed by the adults on the trip and phones may be used at their discretion.

Please note with all exemptions and exceptions, appropriate usage guidelines and other relevant school rules still apply.

Student Expectations

- We expect our students to uphold our school values of Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga and Kotahitanga, and to act responsibly with their devices and cellphones.
- Students are always encouraged to regulate/manage themselves and develop healthy kanohi te kanohi relationships.
- If students are seen with a cell phone during the school day they must give their name to the staff member, take their phone to the Student Office and hand it over. This applies whether the cellphone is being used or not. It can be collected by the student from the Student Office at the end of day. A note will be made on the student's record (KAMAR).
- If students are using air pods they will also be expected to hand them into the office when asked. Again, they will be collected from the Office at the end of the day. A note will be made on the student's record (KAMAR).
- If a student fails to hand over their phone to the office, Middle Leaders and/or SLT will follow up with the student. They will be expected to hand their phone over. Their parents/caregivers will need to come and collect the phone.
- If a student fails to hand over the phone to ML/SLT, they will be removed from class and their parents will be contacted to come and address the issue.
- The second or subsequent time a student has a cellphone or earbuds confiscated, whānau or a caregiver will be contacted to collect the item from the Student Office at the end of the day. Repeated breaches of our cell phone rules will require a hui to discuss our school values | uara.

FAQs For Students and Whānau

I need to contact my child or they need to call/contact me

We understand that some parents like their children to have a phone to communicate with them and cell phones will be available for students to use after school hours. If a parent or caregiver needs to contact their child urgently during the day, they should call Reception and we can pass on messages. Alternatively, whānau can send an email

which can be accessed on a student's laptop. Likewise students can use our phones at the Student Office to contact home.

What if I need to use phones for a task in my class?

In specific situations, staff may permit the use of mobile phones. Prior notice will be given before the lesson. Examples may include: Specific learning activities in the classroom, gathering evidence for assessments, students with specific health conditions where a phone is required. If the task can be done on a laptop then you cannot use the mobile phone.

Can I use my phone at break times?

Phones need to be away for the day. This includes break times. If your phone is out at break time it will be confiscated.

How will I access my timetable?

Your whānau teacher can give you a hard copy of your timetable. You can also check your timetable through Schoolbridge on your laptop. If you use google calendar you can link your timetable to your calendar on your laptop.

How will I tell the time?

We will ensure all classrooms have a clock. We also have bells to indicate the end of break times and the start and end of lessons. Laptops have the time on display as well.

Can I use Apple/Google Pay at the canteen?

You will need to bring your eftpos card or cash to use the canteen. You will not be able to use Apple/Google Pay.

Can teachers use phones?

Teachers are not students and do not follow the same rules as students. Teachers have responsibilities with their job and their family which students do not have. Teachers need to use their phones for these responsibilities. However, teachers are role-models and will not engage with their phones inappropriately, for example during class time and in front of classes. We ask all staff to be professional and fully engaged in the lesson, as we are asking our students to be.

Can I use my phone when I am away with a sports team or cultural group?

We want you to enjoy the experience and activities that you have gone outside of school for and focus on the purpose of the trip. Phones may be taken with you and only used at the discretion of the staff member of adults on the trip.

How can I apply for an exemption?

You will need to make an appointment to see an AP/DP with your parents/caregivers to discuss a plan to have an exemption. If an exemption is granted you will be given an exemption card and your teachers will be notified so they are aware.

Our MGC Procedures

Student Expectations

- Students are responsible for handing in their phones if they are seen with them out. Phones are to be handed to the Student office. This will hopefully take away the confrontation with staff - the responsibility goes back onto the student.
- Students are expected to give their name if asked.
- This policy includes air pods and headphones (unless connected to a laptop, for educational purposes). These too can be confiscated.
- Smart watches to be switched to airplane mode or disconnected (we are not confiscating smart watches).
- **No warnings will be given** - our policy is away for the day, don't get it out!
- Payment at the canteen - students need to use an eftpos card or cash. Not able to use apple/google pay.
- Telling the time - students can use laptops and clocks in rooms. Students can wear a watch. We have bells and staff can let them know the time.
- If a student needs to contact home they can visit the student office to call. Students can send an email home via laptop. Parents needing to contact students can ring the school and we will get a message to them.
- Viewing timetables: via schoolbridge on their laptop or request a hardcopy from their whānau teacher.
- Camps and school trips - same policy but used at the staff members discretion.

Staff Expectations

- If a staff member sees a student with a phone, whether it is being used or not, they are to ask the student to go and hand it in to the student office. This will hopefully take away the confrontation with staff - the responsibility goes back onto the student.
- Students are expected to give their name if asked.
- If a student refuses to give their name and/or they walk off, the staff will record in detail the incident and what the student looks like and designated staff will look at the cameras.
- **The staff member is to record the breach of policy via a form on Schoolbridge, with the students name, date, time, location and brief details of the incident.**
- The office staff will confirm once they have received the confiscated phone via the spreadsheet.

Recording of Confiscation:

- We will be using a google form linked to Schoolbridge for staff to record the cell phone violation. Our online system means there is a clear record and tracking system.

Follow up if a student refuses or fails to hand in their phone

- MLs and SLT must follow up with a student if the office staff do not receive a confiscated phone.
- If there is continual defiance - we follow our school disciplinary procedures (phone call home, parent meeting).

Handling of a confiscated phone

- Office staff receive a phone, place the phone in a plastic bag with paper slip - name, whānau class, date, note any obvious features eg: cracked screen (using the same process as now).
- Phones are stored securely during the day in the Student Office.
- If phones are left at school overnight they will be locked in the finance office safe.

Handing back confiscated phones

- Phones will be available to collect after 3.15pm. Students will need to bring ID cards with them to collect their phones.

Exemptions

- The student will be issued an exemption card - they can show the card at break times to duty staff.
- Sports trips - phones away and managed by coaches and managers (allow time to message/phone family, share successes, listen to music pre game). The coach and manager need to outline the guidelines before the trip.