



GLADSTONE

State High School

6/12/2024

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

In 2024 as most of you are aware, the expectations and guidelines related to student mobile phones and smart wearable device use at Gladstone State High School will change. This is consistent with the education minister announcing in July the 'Off and Away' approach for all Queensland Schools from the start of next year. As communicated at the announcement the key reasons for adopting this approach include;

- reducing distractions in the classroom
- increasing face-to-face interactions between students
- promoting student health and wellbeing
- reducing the potential for student exposure to negative impacts of the digital world, such as cyberbullying

To this point we have included some information and hints and tips on our Facebook page in relation to 'Off and Away' at Gladstone State High School. Additionally, we have also spoken to our students across parade and assembly opportunities about this change. The purpose of this correspondence is to provide some final information before the end of this year to ensure we as a school community are ready for this approach in 2024.

I would like to emphasise the following points to our school community in relation to how we will manage some aspects of this process;

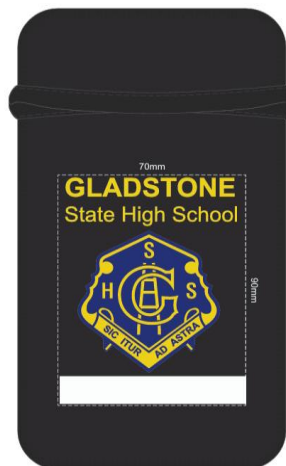
- Students will be required to turn their devices off and put them away in their bags at the ringing of the first bell each school day (Mon-Thurs 8:50/Fri 8:45). Device use is permitted before the first bell and we encourage this as a time in which final messages/calls are made for the school day.
- This approach applies to **all** types of mobile phones. The Smart wearable device types this approach applies to are smart watches (Apple Watch), EarPods, and smart glasses (e.g., Ray-Ban type).
- Students will **not** be able to use their device until the end of the school day (3pm). This relates to the entire day and **INCLUDES LUNCH BREAKS and TRANSITION TIMES**.
- If parents/carers need to urgently contact students at the school this correspondence will be passed on through **our school office**.
- If students need to urgently contact their parents during the day, they will be allowed to do this through the school office.



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- Students who are caught using mobile phones and/or smart wearable devices during the school day will be directed to hand their device in to the Wellbeing Hub (D Block). In the first instance that this occurs students will be able to collect the device at the end of the school day. Further instances of device misuse will result in action that may include parents being required to collect the device, support plans assisting the responsible use and adherence to school rules and, in some cases, consequences being applied as per our Student Code of Conduct.
- We encourage students to bring cash and/or card to conduct purchases at our tuckshop and/or cashier. Using devices to purchase at school will only be permitted if a student has no other options.
- In some classes and situations student bags will not be visible at all times. We are currently working through how this will be best managed and will communicate this to students during week one of 2024. In doing this our priorities will be to ensure that devices stay turned **OFF** whilst reassuring our students about concerns related to their personal items.
- To assist students in managing their device at school all students at the beginning of the school year will be provided with a storage pouch (see below).



We understand and appreciate this change may be challenging for some students. During the first week of term 1, 2024 students will be comprehensively stepped through all elements of the 'Off and Away' process. We strongly encourage all parents and carers to discuss the upcoming changes for 2024 and as always if you have any concerns, please contact the school on 49766 111.

Enjoy the holiday break and I look forward to seeing our students back at school in 2024.

Yours sincerely,

Garry Goltz

Principal

Gladstone State High School