
RESTRICTIONS ON THE CLASSROOM USE OF PERSONAL MOBILE DEVICES AT SCHOOL

The York School (the “School”) has established this Policy on Restrictions on Classroom Use of Personal Mobile Devices (the “Policy”). This Policy should be read in conjunction with applicable legislation, including the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (the “Code”), and with the School’s other applicable policies, including its [Code of Conduct](#) and [Acceptable Use of Technology Policy](#).

In all cases, the School will comply with its duty under the *Code* to provide members of the School community with reasonable accommodations for needs relating to protected grounds, to the point of undue hardship. Usage of a personal mobile device during instructional time may be an example of such an accommodation.

1. DEFINITION

In this Policy, “personal mobile device” refers to any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate or to access the internet, such as a cellphone, or tablet.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Personal mobile devices are restricted during the school day. Phones are to be kept in students’ lockers at all times. Middle and Senior School students are permitted to take their phones with them when they are leaving campus for lunch. Personal devices are permitted during instructional time under the following circumstances:

1. **For educational purposes:** Teachers, administrators, and other educators may ask students to use personal mobile devices in limited circumstances.
2. **For health and medical purposes:** Students may use personal mobile devices during instructional time if necessary to support, monitor, or regulate their health and/or medical conditions.
3. **To support special education needs:** Students may use personal mobile devices during instructional time if such usage is part of an accommodation plan for the student’s special education needs, or other needs as set out in the *Code*.

Notwithstanding the above, in the event of an emergency, students may use their personal mobile devices to contact the appropriate individual or service to respond to the situation (eg 911) and this shall not be considered a contravention of this Policy.

3. PROCEDURES FOR PERMITTED USAGE

(a) Educational purposes

Teachers and other classroom educators retain sole discretion to restrict or permit personal mobile device usage during instructional time for educational purposes. Educators may direct any questions or disputes in this regard to the Head of School.

(b) Health and medical purposes

Students seeking to use personal mobile devices during instructional time in order to support, monitor, or regulate their health and/or medical conditions must submit a request in writing to the **division principal** at the beginning of the school year, or as early as possible if September notice is not feasible.

The request should set out the reason why the usage of a personal mobile device during instructional time is necessary for the student to support, monitor, or regulate their health and/or medical condition.

Students are not required to obtain a physician or nurse practitioner's signature to be eligible for this exception; a note from a parent or guardian is sufficient. However, the School may require further information in order to properly consider the request.

(c) Special education needs

Where students have special education needs or other needs relating to protected grounds, they may request usage of a personal mobile device during instructional time as an accommodation under the *Code*. Such requests must be submitted in writing to the **Associate Head - Wellbeing** at the beginning of the school year, or as early as possible if September notice is not feasible.

The request should set out:

- The *Code*'s ground with respect to which accommodation is being requested;
- The reason why usage of a personal mobile device during instructional time is required as an accommodation, including enough information to confirm the existence of a need for accommodation in this respect; and
- The specific needs related to the *Code* ground.

In the case of disability-related accommodations, the request need not specify a diagnosis or unnecessary medical information, but should set out the restrictions or accommodations requested.

The York School's restrictions on personal mobile devices (cell phones) include the following stipulations:

- The IT Helpdesk does not support personal mobile devices (cell phones, tablets)
- The School's Information and Communication Technology policy does apply to personal mobile devices used at school, as well as to the mandatory school tablets and laptops;
- Junior School students shall not use personal mobile devices during the school day. This includes lunchtime, before and after school, excursions and co-curriculars.
- Middle and Senior School students shall not use personal mobile devices from the moment they start school, in the hallways, in the lunchroom, or during classes unless permitted by a teacher as part of an educational activity. Middle and Senior School students need to store their personal mobile devices in their lockers from the moment they arrive at school. They are permitted to take them for off-campus lunch and events.