

## **Mobile Phone Restrictions at Schools**

**November 2019**

The Commissioner for Children and Young People Leanne McLean today stated her support for restrictions on mobile phones in classrooms, urging further consultation with students to implement the new policy.

“Research around the risks and benefits of students’ use of mobile phones and other digital devices in schools is mixed,” Ms McLean said.

“What is clear is that we must effectively balance the right of children and young people to a safe, engaging and effective learning environment with other rights, including their right to learn about technology and participate in our digital age.”

Ms McLean said the Minister for Education Jeremy Rockliff’s announcement today to regulate mobile phone use in Tasmanian Government schools helps to balance those rights.

“The new policy also reflects some of the views of children and young people I have consulted with across the state.

“Through my engagement with the nearly 200 CCYP Ambassadors around Tasmania, I have had an opportunity to discuss use of mobile phones in schools.

“Views on this matter are varied, ranging from some Ambassadors strongly opposed to any form of a ban, to others strongly in support.

“Despite that broad range of views, there is a common theme from my discussions that mobile phones are not necessarily required at school unless it is for a specific learning purpose or other health or safety reasons.”

Ms McLean said some schools had already imposed mobile phone restrictions.

“For example at Cosgrove High School, students to whom I have spoken have reported positive outcomes - such as less disruption in class rooms and more socialising during recess and lunch times.”

Ms McLean said she was generally supportive of restrictions on mobile phone use and other mobile digital devices in primary schools and for restrictions on their non-educational use in secondary schools.



“Ensuring Principals have discretion to allow exceptions at the individual school level should accommodate this.

“The views of children and young people on the implementation of this new policy are essential. It is my strong view that students should be consulted about exceptions to restrictions on the use of mobile phones at the individual school level before the new rules are implemented.”