



Cell Phone Policy Immaculate Heart of Mary School

In August 2024, Manitoba Education announced new rules around cell phone use in schools. These rules intend to provide a learning environment with fewer distractions and to help children develop a healthier balance in their use of technology. The Immaculate Heart of Mary School policy aligns with these rules.

Students

Extent of Policy

Kindergarten to Grade 8 students are not allowed to use cell phones during school hours, including lunch and breaks. This also extends to time spent in the Before and After School Program.

It is strongly recommended that students leave their cell phones and wearable technology (earbuds, smart watches, etc.) at home. If students do bring phones to school, they must be powered down and left in the school office for the school day.

Parent Communication

If parents need to reach their child during the school day, they can call the school office. A message will be relayed to the student. Usually, students are not called to the phone, but may call the parent back at the next break, if needed.

Consequences

Students who do not follow these rules will have their cell phones taken away to be kept in the office for the remainder of the day. Repeated offences will require a meeting between the student, the parents and the school administration.

Exceptions

In certain circumstances, students with exceptional medical and/or learning needs may require an exemption from these rules. Parents/Guardians can request this accommodation by contacting the school administration.

Acceptable Use Agreement

Students and parents must read and sign the Student Acceptable Use policy, which governs the use of technology use at school.

Staff

Educational/Professional Use

Staff members are expected to model appropriate cell phone behaviour (ref. Manitoba Catholic Schools Code of Professional Ethics). Staff members may use their cell phones for instructional purposes (e.g. Kahoot, translating, etc.). Although the school's digital cameras are the preferred device for taking school photos, staff members may use their phones for the purpose of taking photographs of school activities. Photographs must be uploaded to the school server within two weeks and then deleted from the personal device.

Personal Use

Staff members may not use their phones for calls, texting or other personal use when they are supervising students, except in an emergency. Cell phones should be out of sight during instructional/ supervisory times (in a drawer, pocket, bag, etc.) unless being used for the specific purposes outlined in the above paragraph. During school hours staff may use phones when on break, on prep periods or at lunch. Phones may be used in the staffroom or in other areas of the school where students are not present.