



Cell Phone Practice at École Howden 2026-2027 Kindergarten to Grade 6

Following the Minister of Education's announcement on August 15th, 2024 regarding the [ministerial guidelines on cellphone use](#), LRSD and École Howden's approach will be to prioritize building trust, engagement, and well-being within our school community. We wish to provide you with information as to how we will continue to manage cell phones for the 2026-2027 school year in accordance with LRSD Policy [GBEF/JFJCJ](#). At the beginning of each school year, an updated cell phone practice will be shared with the entire community. This policy is not just about limiting distractions but about creating an environment where every student can thrive, free from the pressures and challenges that constant connectivity can bring.

The following guidelines will be in place to support a successful learning environment in alignment with [Policy JK](#):

Use of devices at school:

Cell phones are not permitted in all K-8 schools. If a student must bring a cell phone to school for safety reasons, they must abide by the following:

- Students will turn in their cell phones to the teacher upon arrival at school.
- Listening devices, such as AirPods, are not to be worn at any time.
- Apple watches or other devices that can receive messages must be put on "do not disturb" during the school day.
- Photo/video taking of any kind on school premises (including school bus and school yard), will not be permitted.
- Cell phone use in any washroom or changeroom is strictly prohibited.
- In the event of a lockdown, all use of cellphones is prohibited.

As we navigate the complexities of cell phone use, we ask your assistance by requesting that all communication between parent/guardian and child be made through the office (204-257-0656). **Please refrain from sending text messages during school hours. This can be very distracting if a student wears a watch that receives messages as well.** If a student needs to contact home, they must do so through the school office.

Storage of Cell Phones:

Although we will help students identify how to keep personal devices secure, École Howden and Louis Riel School Division take no responsibility for stolen, lost, or damaged devices. Some devices have a device locator; it is recommended that you enable this feature if possible. If a loss or theft occurs, students should inform their teacher and school administrators to see if we can help locate it; however, we will not be able



to replace the device. Similarly, if damage occurs, we will not be able to repair the device nor pay for the repair. It is always a good idea to record the device's serial number in case of theft. Please check with your homeowner's insurance policy regarding coverage of personal electronic devices, as some may cover loss or damage.

Enforcement of the policy:

Once students have arrived at the school, phones will be silenced or turned off and given to the homeroom teacher.

If a student chooses to use their cell phone at school without permission, the following will occur:

- For the first infraction, the cell phone will be confiscated and brought to the office. It will be returned at the end of the school day. The student will meet with school administration regarding the infraction and parents/guardians will be informed.
- If a second infraction occurs, the cell phone will be confiscated and stored at the office until the end of the day. Parents will be notified and will be responsible for claiming the cell phone at the office.
- Any subsequent infractions may lead to an in-school suspension for that student for disregarding the province/LRSD/school policy on cell phone use for our K-6 students.

Responsibilities of School Personnel:

School staff will model positive and responsible use of technology during school hours. Personal devices will only be used for urgent communication amongst staff. They may also be used to perform work duties when a desktop device is not available.

Commitment to Education around Responsible Use:

With the goal of appropriate and responsible use in mind, we will continue to teach students about the responsible use of personal devices that will include a focus on safe and healthy behaviours when using and creating information, especially online.

Please take a few moments to review the content of this message with your child.

Parents/guardians who wish to appeal a decision related to this policy shall follow the steps outlined in the [LRSD Protocol for Resolution of Concerns](#).

This cell phone practice is revised annually in consultation with staff, students, and parents/guardians and communicated to all parties, including the Superintendent of Schools (or designate) prior to November 1.