



Gladys Berejiklian

Premier of NSW

Rob Stokes

Minister for Education

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW TAKES ACTION ON MOBILE DEVICES IN SCHOOLS

Mobile devices will be banned during school hours in NSW public primary schools and high schools will have the choice to opt in to a ban or introduce measures to more tightly restrict the use of devices during school hours.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian and Education Minister Rob Stokes said the new measures are in response to an expert review which shows rising cases of online bullying, inappropriate sharing of explicit images between students, predatory behaviour from strangers and unnecessary distraction for students.

Secondary schools will consider a range of options to manage devices, ranging from complete restriction to promotion of safe, responsible and informed use. The decision will be made by individual schools in consultation with their communities.

“Distraction and bullying have always been issues for schools to deal with but mobile phones present a new challenge for schools, teachers, parents and students,” Ms Berejiklian said.

“We want to ensure mobile phones and other smart devices complement students’ learning, and are handled at school in an age-appropriate way.”

“These changes will provide clear boundaries in our schools to ensure technology remains an enabler, not a detractor.”

Mr Stokes said the review stopped short of recommending a ban on smart devices in high schools, but offered several approaches that schools could adopt based on their circumstances.

“We’ll work with schools to implement the changes recommended in the report, helping them manage the risks and rewards of using mobile phones inside the school gates,” Mr Stokes said.

“These changes are about keeping our schools safe and protecting the welfare of our students when they’re in our care.”

The reforms are in response to the independent *Review into the non-educational use of mobile devices in NSW schools* report, which the NSW Government commissioned in June.

The review was led by renowned child psychologist Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, whose team considered input from almost 14,000 survey responses and 80 written submissions.

“I’d like to particularly thank the many thousands of young people and their families who took the time and effort to make submissions, as well as the many experts in mental health, technology and cyber-safety who contributed to this report,” Dr Carr-Gregg said.

The review examined the impact of devices in schools on students of different ages in terms of educational outcomes and child development, as well as their potential benefits when used to complement teaching, particularly for students in the latter years of high school.

The NSW Government will consider the other recommendations in the report.

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