Section 1:

#1 "One of the primary benefits of banning phones in schools is the boost it would provide to face-to-face social interactions among students. With phones in hand, students often retreat into their digital worlds, limiting their opportunities to engage meaningfully with peers. A school environment without phones would encourage students to have conversations, form friendships, and collaborate effectively, thus developing important social skills."

Strengths:

- Clear topic sentence that establishes the main idea of the paragraph
- Logical reasoning that connects phone use to reduced social interaction

Weakness: Lack of specific examples → While you mention students "retreat into their digital worlds," you could strengthen this paragraph by including a concrete example of how phone-free environments enhance social interactions. This would make your argument more compelling and relatable for readers.

Exemplar: ***During our school's phone-free field day last term, I noticed students who barely spoke to each other before were playing games together and forming new friendships.***

#2 "A noteworthy example of promoting physical engagement comes from North Rocks Public School, which introduced a Ninja Warrior course on its campus. This innovative initiative provided students with an exciting and challenging way to exercise while also fostering teamwork, resilience, and camaraderie. The absence of phones enables students to fully participate in and enjoy these activities, building a stronger sense of community within the school."

Strengths:

- Includes a specific, real-world example with the Ninja Warrior course
- Makes a good connection between phone absence and participation

Weakness: Missing evidence of impact → You introduce a great example with the Ninja Warrior course but don't provide evidence of how it actually improved student

engagement or physical activity. Adding specific outcomes would strengthen your argument significantly.

Exemplar: ***After introducing the Ninja Warrior course and implementing phone restrictions during breaks, North Rocks Public School reported a 40% increase in physical activity and a noticeable improvement in classroom focus.***

#3 "A real-life example would be my older brother, Paco. He's constantly glued to his phone, both at home and on the bus. This has led him to lose or forget multiple possessions that he requires during school, like his sports bag, his tennis racquet and many more."

Strengths:

- Uses a personal anecdote which makes the argument relatable
- Shows practical consequences of phone addiction

Weakness: Incomplete development of the example → You briefly mention Paco's experience but don't fully explore how his phone addiction affected his school performance, social interactions, or overall wellbeing. This example could be expanded to more effectively support your argument about the negative impacts of phones.

Exemplar: ***My brother Paco's marks dropped from Bs to Ds last term because he was constantly distracted by his phone. When he finally gave it to mum during school hours, he not only stopped losing his sports gear but also started participating in lunchtime cricket matches and improved his grades.***

■ Your piece presents a persuasive argument against phones in schools, but could benefit from more depth and balance. You've included some good examples like the Ninja Warrior course and Paco's story, but these need more development to fully support your claims. Try adding more specific data or statistics about how phone bans have helped real schools improve student outcomes. Also, consider addressing potential counterarguments - what about educational uses of phones or emergency contact needs? This would show you've thought about the issue from multiple angles. Your conclusion could be stronger by summarising your main points and ending with a powerful call to action. What specifically should schools, parents, or education authorities do? Break up some of your longer paragraphs to make your writing more readable, and make sure each paragraph focuses on just one main idea.

Overall Score: 43/50

Section 2:

Why Phones Should Be Banned from Schools The widespread use of mobile phones in schools has become a growing concern for educators, parents, and psychologists alike. While technology undoubtedly plays an essential role in modern education, the presence of phones in schools is increasingly seen as a distraction and a barrier to students' development. Banning phones from schools could encourage face-to-face social interactions, promote physical activity, and mitigate the harmful effects of excessive screen time and social media.

Fostering Social Interactions and Friendships #1 One of the primary benefits of banning phones in schools is the boost it would provide to face-to-face social interactions among students. With phones in hand, students often retreat into their digital worlds, limiting their opportunities to engage meaningfully with peers. A school environment without phones would encourage students to have conversations, form friendships, and collaborate effectively, thus developing important social skills.

During recess or lunch breaks, for example, students with phones are frequently seen scrolling through social media or playing games rather than interacting with friends. By removing phones, schools could create a more inclusive atmosphere where students feel encouraged to connect.

Encouraging Physical Activity In addition to improving social interactions, banning phones would lead to an increase in physical activity. Without the lure of phones, students would be more likely to engage in games such as handball, basketball, or soccer. Physical activity not only improves physical health but also enhances mental well-being and concentration in class.

#2 A noteworthy example of promoting physical engagement comes from North Rocks Public School, which introduced a Ninja Warrior course on its campus. This innovative initiative provided students with an exciting and challenging way to exercise while also fostering teamwork, resilience, and camaraderie. The absence of phones enables students to fully participate in and enjoy these activities, building a stronger sense of community within the school.

Addressing the Harms of Social Media Beyond its impact on social interactions and physical activity, excessive phone use exposes students to the darker sides of social media, such as gambling, cyberbullying, and addictive behaviours. Social media platforms are ripe with harmful content and risks, including gambling advertisements disguised as games or promotions, which can lure impressionable students into unhealthy habits.

Cyberbullying is another relevant issue. It can cause significant emotional and psychological harm, making schools unsafe for victims. By banning phones, schools would reduce the opportunities for students to engage in or fall victim to cyberbullying during school hours.

Moreover, social media and mobile games are designed to be addictive, with constant notifications and reward systems that encourage excessive use. These behaviours can interfere with students' ability to focus, contribute to declining academic performance, and even lead to long-term behavioural issues such as impulsivity and anxiety. #3 A real-life example would be my older brother, Paco. He's constantly glued to his phone, both at home and on the bus. This has led him to lose or forget multiple possessions that he requires during school, like his sports bag, his tennis racquet and many more.

"Banning phones in schools due to social media harms could protect students' mental health, reduce distractions, and foster more meaningful social interactions," says Paco, "I had to force myself to give my phone to my mother to keep it away from me so I could break out of my habit."

Creating a Healthy Learning Environment Overall, banning phones in schools is necessary to cultivate an environment where students can thrive. By encouraging face-to-face social interactions, fostering physical activity, and protecting students from the dangers of social media, schools can create a space where young minds can develop holistically. Initiatives like the Ninja Warrior course at North Rocks Public School serve as shining examples of how schools can prioritise meaningful engagement and physical well-being over digital distractions.

The growing reliance on technology in our daily lives makes it all the more critical to establish boundaries, especially in educational settings. A ban on phones in schools is not about rejecting technology but about empowering students to explore their potential in a way that is healthy, balanced, and enriching.

"Our ban on mobile phones is improving behaviour in classrooms. Teachers tell me these bans are making a world of difference. 'There are fewer distractions in the classroom, and playgrounds are noisy again.' Children are being children," Minister for Education Jason Clare proudly states.