

Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy (Students)

Definition

A mobile phone is a wireless handheld device that allows users to make and receive calls and send and receive text messages.

Purpose

Mobile phones should be used responsibly. This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to ensure that potential issues involving mobile phones can be clearly identified and addressed, ensuring that the benefits that mobile phones provide (such as increased safety) can continue to be enjoyed by our students.

ARIS has established the following Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, students, parents and carers guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.

Students, their parents or carers must read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy as a condition upon which permission is given to bring mobile phones to school.

The Acceptable Use Policy for mobile phones also applies to students during school excursions, field trips and co-curricular activities both on the school campus and off-site.

Rationale

Ghana presents challenges when it comes to communications. The school recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life but that such technologies need to be used well.

Personal safety and security

ARIS accepts that parents/carers give their children mobile phones to protect them from everyday risks involving personal security and safety. It is acknowledged that providing a child with a mobile phone gives parents reassurance that they can contact their child if, in the absence of responsible adults (eg teachers) they need to speak to them urgently.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of students who bring mobile phones to school to abide by the guidelines outlined in this document.

The decision to provide a mobile phone to their children should be made by parents or carers. It is incumbent upon parents to understand the capabilities of the phone and the potential use/misuse of those capabilities.

Parents/carers should be aware if their child takes a mobile phone to school. ARIS cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or costs incurred.

Students are responsible for keeping their Homeroom Teacher informed of their current mobile phone to aid return if it is lost on the school campus. A student may bring only one phone to school.

Parents/carers are reminded that in cases of emergency, the landline at Reception (030 254 4511) remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached

quickly, efficiently and can be assisted in any relevant way. Under no circumstances should lessons be disrupted.

Acceptable Uses

Mobile phones should be switched off and kept out of sight during lessons and while moving between lessons. Exceptions may be permitted by members of Faculty only when specifically requested. Such requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis and should be directed to Ericka Obese-Jecty. Parents/carers are requested that in cases of emergency they contact the school (via Reception) first so we are aware of any potential issue and can make the necessary arrangements.

While on school premises, and at break times only, students should use soundless features such as text messaging, answering services, call diversion and vibration alert to receive important calls.

Mobile phones should never be used in any manner or place that is disruptive to the normal routine of the school (see below).

Students should protect their phone numbers by only giving them to close friends and keeping a note of who they have given them to. This can help protect the student's number from falling into the wrong hands and guard against the receipt of insulting, threatening or unpleasant voice, text and picture messages.

ARIS recognises the importance of emerging technologies present in modern mobile phones (eg camera and video recording, internet access, MP3 and MP4 playback, blogging). Teachers may wish to utilise these functions to aid teaching and learning and thus students may at times have the opportunity to use their mobile phones in the classroom. On these occasions students may use their mobile phones in class, but only when express permission has been given by the teacher. The use of personal mobile phones in one lesson for a specific purpose does *not* mean blanket usage is then acceptable.

Unacceptable Uses

Unless express permission has been granted, mobile phones should not be used to make calls, send SMS messages, surf the internet, take photos or use any other application during school lessons and other educational activities, such as assemblies.

The Bluetooth function of a mobile phone must be switched off at all times and must not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones.

Mobile phones must not disrupt classroom lessons with ring tones, music or beeping. They must be turned off during lesson times.

Using mobile phones to bully and threaten other students is unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated. In some cases it may constitute criminal behaviour. If the use of technology humiliates, embarrasses or causes offence it is unacceptable, regardless of whether 'consent' was given.

It is forbidden for students to 'gang up' on another student and use their mobile phones to take videos and pictures of acts to denigrate and humiliate that student and then send the pictures to others, or upload images to a website for public viewing. This also includes using mobile phones to photograph or film any student or member of staff without their prior

consent. Using a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person constitutes assault. Calls, text messages and emails can be traced.

Mobile phones are not to be used or taken into changing rooms or toilets or used in any situation that may cause embarrassment or discomfort to their fellow students, staff or visitors to the school.

Should there be disruption to lessons caused by a mobile phone, the responsible student will face disciplinary actions as sanctioned by the Head of Secondary. This will normally entail confiscation of the phone and may include a prolonged mobile phone ban in school.

It is unacceptable to take a photo of a member of staff without their permission. In the event that this happens the student will be asked and expected to delete those images and the phone may be confiscated.

Theft or damage

Students should indelibly mark their mobile phone clearly with their names.

Students who bring a mobile phone to school should leave it locked away in their locker/bag when they arrive. To reduce the risk of theft during school hours, students who carry mobile phones are advised to keep them well concealed and not make it obvious that they have them.

Mobile phones that are found in the school and whose owner cannot immediately be located should be handed into Reception.

The school accepts no responsibility for replacing lost, stolen or damaged mobile phones.

It is strongly recommended that students use passwords/PINs to ensure that unauthorised phone calls cannot be made on their phones (eg by other students, or if stolen). Students must keep their password/PINs confidential. Mobile phones and/or passwords may not be shared.

Inappropriate conduct

Mobile phones are banned from all examinations. Students are expected to hand phones to invigilators before entering the exam room. Any student found in possession of a mobile phone during an examination will have that paper disqualified. Such an incident will result in the phone being confiscated and may result in all other exam papers being disqualified. It will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

Any student who uses vulgar, derogatory, or obscene language while using a mobile phone will face disciplinary action.

Students with mobile phones must not engage in personal attacks, harass another person, or post private information about another person using SMS messages, taking/sending photos or objectionable images, and phone calls. Students using mobile phones to bully other students will face disciplinary action.

Students must ensure that files stored on their phones do not contain violent, degrading, racist or pornographic images. The possession and/or transmission of such images is a

serious offence. Similarly, 'sexting' – which is the sending of personal sexual imagery - is also a serious offence.

Sanctions

If a phone is suspected of being used inappropriately the student must give it to a teacher on request.

On the first infringement of this policy the mobile phone will be confiscated and stored in the school safe. The student will be able to collect the phone at a time determined by the Head of Secondary. A record will be made of the incident.

On the second infringement the sanctions equivalent to the first infringement will apply. Furthermore, parents will be notified and the phone will not be returned to the student without the parent/carer's written consent.

Any further infringements of the mobile phone code of conduct will result in a ban on bringing a mobile phone to school.

Mobile Phone: Parent/Carer Permission

I have read and understand the Mobile Phones: Acceptable Use Policy.

I give my child permission to carry a mobile phone to school and understand that my child will be responsible for ensuring that the phone is used appropriately and correctly while under the school’s supervision, as outlined in this document.

I understand that the school will not accept any responsibility for loss, damage or theft of a mobile phone.

Parent/carer (Print) Name:	Signature of parent: Date:
(Print) Name of student:	Signature of student: Date:
<p>Mobile phone details:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Make and model number.....2. Mobile phone number.....3. Colour/description of phone..... <p>This information may be used to help return lost property</p>	