

GRAHAMSTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mobile Phone Policy

Rationale

The increased ownership of mobile phones requires that Grahamstown Public School has clear guidelines for the management of mobile phones on school premises and whilst on excursions.

Our core business of teaching and learning needs to be conducted in an environment free from unnecessary distractions or disruptions. Therefore the school strongly discourages the bringing of mobile phones to school by students. The school is prepared to allow mobile phones on the premises but only within the parameters of the policy as stated below.

School Commitment

Grahamstown School provides a supportive environment for children and staff which promote safe living and positive decision making. The school recognises that its teachers have a duty of care towards each student and that all students and staff have the right to their school being a safe and supportive environment. The school does not recognise the need for primary aged children to use a mobile phone whilst at school or on any school based excursions, as the school takes this responsibility upon itself as part of their duty of care.

The school's mobile phone policy aims to:

- increase awareness of the importance of not providing mobile phones for students' personal use while on excursions or school based activities;
- encourage parents and carers to support the school's policy;
- remove the concerns associated with unsupervised or improper use of mobile phones and their damage;
- promote parental trust in the school and its teachers to provide a safe and supportive environment for their child and be confident that if medical assistance or other is required, that the school will provide it;
- promote that the school accepts no responsibility for replacing or repairing mobile phones lost or damaged during school hours and
- promote that the school accepts no responsibility for replacing or repairing mobile phones lost or damaged while travelling to and from school.

Guidelines

The school will ensure that:

- if a student must access a mobile phone for any reason outside of school hours the mobile phone will be securely stored in the office upon arrival at school and collected at the conclusion of the school day and
- excursion notes remind parents and carers of our mobile phone policy.

Staff Responsibility

- Staff will encourage parents, carers and their children to respect and fully support this policy for the safety and well-being of every student at Grahamstown Public School.
- During teaching time, while on playground duty and during meetings, mobile phones will be switched off or put on silent mode.
- Except in urgent or exceptional circumstances, mobile phone use is not permitted during teaching time, while on playground duty and during meetings.

Parents and Carer's Responsibility

- Parents and carers are expected to fully support the school in the implementation of this policy thus consolidating trust in the school's ability to provide a safe and supportive environment for their child.

Student's Responsibility

- Students are expected to adhere to this policy in consideration of the safety and well-being of all students at Grahamstown Public School.
- In general students should not bring valuable items to school, as they can be easily lost, stolen or damaged, which is often distressful for primary aged children.
- Students remain responsible for all of their personal effects whilst at school. Mobile phones are brought to school entirely at the owner's risk.
- The school accepts no responsibility for replacing or repairing lost, damaged or stolen mobile phones.
- There are no reasons why a student needs to have in their possession or use a mobile phone during the school day.
- Parents are reminded that in cases of emergency the school office remains a vital and appropriate point of contact and can ensure your child is reached quickly and assisted in an appropriate way.
- Students are advised that if they bring a mobile phone to school they must hand the phone in at the office before school and collect it at the end of the school day. The

phones will be secured in the office and students can retrieve their phone at the conclusion of the day.

- If students do bring their phone to school it should be clearly marked with their name.

Sanctions

In line with our Student Welfare Policy, for students who fail to follow these guidelines, the following sanctions may be applied:

- confiscation of the mobile phone to be handed back to student or parent at the end of the day;
- a time-out of two school days;
- communication with parent/carer regarding mobile phone use at school or
- a student being banned from bringing a phone onto school premises.

Inappropriate Use

Generally a mobile phone will be used inappropriately if it:

- disrupts or is likely to disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the operation of the school; or
- threatens or is likely to threaten the safety or well-being of any person; or
- is in breach of any law.

Inappropriate use of mobile phones will include students using them to bully, intimidate or otherwise harass other people through the use of SMS or text message, photographic, video or other data transfer system available on the phone.

It should be noted that it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone to menace, harass or offend another person. The school may consider it appropriate to involve the police.

Related Technology

The procedures applying to the inappropriate use of mobile phones, apply equally to the inappropriate use of portable computer games, i-pods and similar devices.