



Mobile Phones Usage School Policy for Students, Staff, Parents and Visitors

Introduction and aims

At The Bloomington Academy, Ajman, we recognise that mobile phones, including smart phones, are an important part of everyday life for our parents and staff, as well as the wider school community.

Our policy aims to:

- Promote, and set an example for, safe and responsible phone use.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones for staff, parents and volunteers.
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to child protection and behaviour.

This policy also aims to address some of the challenges posed by mobile phones in school, such as:
Risks to child protection

- Data protection issues.
- Potential for lesson disruption Risk of theft, loss, or damage.
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom.

Things that have happened in schools and why we need to ensure safety

- Inappropriate and 'dangerous' material stored on personal devices by family members, then accessed without internet connectivity in school.
- Staff taking pictures and videos of students and staff and publishing online, leading to suspension / termination and disciplinary action.
- Using images taken of other staff and students for bullying and humiliation on social media
Sharing of personal data on social media inappropriately.

Roles and responsibilities

Staff

- All staff (including teachers, support staff, and supply staff) are responsible for enforcing this policy.
- All staff are being protected by the procedures in this policy.
- Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.
- Visitors, or anyone else otherwise engaged by the school will be made aware of this policy through the information given at Reception.
- Staff need to use the Mobile Phone usage declaration form should this policy be breached. These forms must be given/ emailed to the Head of School and/or the Head of Section.
- The Online Safety Leader is responsible for monitoring the policy every year, reviewing it, and holding staff and visitors accountable for its implementation.

Use of mobile phones by staff

Personal mobile phones

- Staff including parents, visitors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school are not permitted to use their mobile devices while children are present/during contact time. Staff keeping their phone with them during contact times must ensure their phone is switched off (not silent/ vibrate only).
- Use of personal mobile phones is restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present such as the staff room and offices.
- In circumstances where immediate contact is needed, then staff should let family/ their child's school know to call Reception as personal phones will be switched off during lessons.
- The Online Safety Leader will decide on a case-by-case basis whether to allow for special arrangements. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, school staff can use the school office number as a point of emergency contact.

Data protection

See the schools' policies on Data Protection

- Staff must not use their personal mobile phones to process personal data, or any other confidential school information.

- Staff can use school cameras to take pictures – not personal devices.
- Staff can access website programmes that access data on external servers though should never download content onto their personal devices.
- Staff must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions. Staff must also secure any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.

Safeguarding

See the schools' policies on Safeguarding See the schools' policies on IT

- Staff must not give their personal contact details to parents or pupils, including connecting through social media and messaging apps.
- Staff must not contact children on the child's personal devices, only ever contacting them through their parent/carer should this be required/necessary to do so.
- Staff must avoid publicising their contact details on any social media platform or website, to avoid unwanted contact by parents or pupils.
- Staff must not use their mobile phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil.
- If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.
- Our schools' use of classroom apps or programmes that require can be accessed via staff's personal devices can be done outside the classroom/ contact with children. Information/ images/data cannot be downloaded to a personal device.

Using personal mobiles for work purposes

See the school's policies on educational visits.

See the schools' policies on supervising residential visits

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips

In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with our staff code of conduct

- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a student
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

Work phones

- Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.
- Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet.
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with our staff code of conduct.

Sanctions

See the schools' Disciplinary Procedures

Staff that fail to adhere to this policy may face disciplinary action.

Use of mobile phones by students

Students are not allowed to bring mobile/ or any electronic gadgets to school. If in case, they require for communication purpose during arrival and dispersal and it is permitted for students Grade 7 and above after the approval of their parent, they must hand it in upon arrival to the respective Head of Section.

This includes:

- Students travelling to school by themselves.
- Students travelling by car by their parents/carers (preferably left with their parent when reaching school).
- Students travelling via School Transport.
- No electronic gadgets are allowed on school trips or during any school events (specific personal circumstances will be considered on a risk-assessed basis).

Disciplinary for any misuse of mobile/electronic gadgets use at school by students

- Schools are permitted to confiscate phones from students as per the MOE Behaviour policy.
- School Counsellor and Head of Section have the authority to search students' phones, as set out in the MOE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. The MOE guidance allows schools to search a student's phone if we have reason to believe the phone contains pornographic images, or if it is being/has been used to commit an offence or cause personal injury.
- If they are confiscated, parents/carers will be contacted to collect the phone/device. Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously, and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting.
- Up skirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

Use of mobile phones by parents, volunteers and visitors

Parents, visitors and volunteers must adhere to this policy as it relates to staff if they are on the school campus during the school day.

This means:

- Not taking pictures or recordings of students / staff on school grounds or school trips or when working with students.
- Not posting any images/data about the school on social media without consent.
- Parents, visitors, and volunteers will be informed of the rules for mobile phone use when they sign in at reception or attend a public event at school.

Parents or volunteers supervising school trips or residential visits must not:

- Use their phone to make contact with other parents.
- Take photos or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil

Parents or volunteers supervising trips are also responsible for enforcing the school's policy for pupils using their phones, as set out in section 4 above. Parents must use the school office as the first point of contact if they need to get in touch with their child during the school day. They must not try to contact their child on his/her personal mobile during the school day.

Loss, thief or damage

- Students bringing phones to school must ensure that phones are appropriately labelled.
- Students must secure their phones as much as possible, including using passwords or pin codes to protect access to the phone's functions.
- Staff must also secure their personal phones, as well as any work phone provided to them. Failure by staff to do so could result in data breaches.
- The school accepts no responsibility for mobile phones that are lost, damaged or stolen on school premises or transport, during school visits or trips, or while pupils are travelling to and from school.
- Confiscated phones will be stored in the school office in a secure location until collected.
- Lost phones should be returned to Reception. The school will then attempt to contact the owner.

Monitoring and review

The school is committed to ensuring that this policy has a positive impact of pupils' education, behaviour, and welfare. When reviewing the policy, the school will consider:

- Feedback from parents and pupils.
- Feedback from teachers.
- Records of behaviour and safeguarding incidents.
- Relevant advice from the Ministry of Education, the local authority, or other relevant organisations

Visitors: Use of mobile phones in our school

- Please keep your mobile phone on silent/vibrate while on the school grounds.
- Please do not use phones where students are present. If you must use your phone, you may go to the Staffroom.
- Do not take photos or recordings of students (including your own child), or staff.
- Do not use your phone when working with students.

- The school accepts no responsibility for phones that are lost, damaged or stolen while you are on the school grounds. A full copy of our mobile phone policy is available from the school office.

Read, Understood and Received:

Name of the Staff/Student/Parent: _____

Signature: _____

Department: _____