

WHOLE SCHOOL CELL PHONE POLICY

Anglican International School Jerusalem

Reviewed by:	Dana Mix Dalia Gerrish HR Teachers Michelle Loubser (DSL)	**Date:**	August 2026
Approved by:	SLT	**Next review due:**	February, 2028

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide students with a school environment where they can focus on learning, develop meaningful relationships and participate fully in the life of the school without the constant distraction of personal mobile devices. Research increasingly shows that smartphones can interfere with students' attention and learning; UNESCO reports that even the mere proximity of a mobile device has been found to distract students and negatively affect learning**,** with evidence from 14 countries.[1] Students also spend a significant amount of time on their phones during the school day, with one national study reporting that adolescents use smartphones for an average of 66 minutes during school.[2]

The school recognizes that technology is an important part of modern education and that smartphones can have legitimate educational and medical uses; however, technology should serve a clear educational purpose rather than compete with teaching, learning and human interaction. A phone-free school day also provides students with greater opportunities to communicate face-to-face, engage in activities and conversations during breaks and lunch and develop the interpersonal skills that are essential both in school and beyond. In addition, removing access to phones during the school day can reduce opportunities for students to become distracted by social media, messaging, gaming, notifications and other online activity that is unrelated to their education.

For AISJ, the purpose of the policy is therefore not simply to take phones away from students, but to establish clear boundaries around when personal technology is appropriate. During the school day, students should be present in their classrooms, engaged in their learning and available to interact with their peers and teachers without the competing demands of their personal devices. The policy also supports the development of responsible digital habits by helping students learn that being connected does not mean being constantly available. The school will continue to teach students about digital citizenship, responsible technology use, online safety and the appropriate use of digital tools for learning. **Approved medical needs, such as glucose monitoring, will continue to be accommodated through clearly defined exceptions.**

Policy

- Students are not permitted to use, carry or have access to cell phones during the school day. This includes regular school hours, lessons, breaks, lunch, assemblies and other school activities taking place during the school day.
- At the beginning of each school day, students must turn off their cell phones. Elementary Classroom and Secondary Homeroom teachers will securely collect and store the phones for the duration of the school day in a locked box in their classrooms.
- Elementary and MY1-5 students may not access their phones during the school day unless they have been given specific permission by:
    - Elementary: the Head of Elementary or the Head of Inclusion Needs
    - Secondary: Dean of Students or Deputy Head of Secondary.
- DY1 students will have access to their phones beginning at 1:00pm as some students will have permission to leave school for the day.
- If a DY1 student has a 6th and/or 7th period, their cell phones must be kept in their bag.
    - If a DY1 student does not keep their phone in their bag, their phone would be confiscated and a parent must come and pick it up.

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[1] UNESCO. *Global Education Monitoring Report 2023: Technology in Education: A Tool on Whose Terms?* Paris: UNESCO, 2023. https://doi.org/10.54676/UZQV8501

[2] Ibid.

Morning Collection

At the start of the school day:

- Students will turn off their cell phones.
- Cell phones will be placed in the designated lock boxes upon entering classroom/homeroom each morning, where they will be securely stored for the duration of the school day.
- At the end of the school day, students may collect their phones from their classroom/homeroom teacher.

Late Arrival to School–Secondary Students

- Students who arrive at school **after the start of the school day** must give their cell phone to the receptionist/office manager when they sign in at reception.
- The receptionist/office manager will securely store the phone for the remainder of the school day. The student may collect their phone from Reception **at the end of the school day**.
- Students who arrive late *should not* take their phone directly to their homeroom teacher.

Medical and Other Approved Exceptions

- The school recognizes that some students may require access to a phone or smartphone for a documented medical need. For example, a student who uses a phone to monitor blood glucose levels may be permitted to retain access to their device.
- Medical exceptions must be approved by the school in advance and communicated to the appropriate staff members. Students with an approved exception may only use their phone for the specific purpose for which the exception was granted.
- Other exceptions may be made by the Secondary Leadership Team when there is a specific educational, safeguarding or school-related reason.

If a Student Is Found With a Phone

If a student has a cell phone in their possession or uses a cell phone during the school day without an approved exception:

Elementary

- Students will be given one warning and their parents/guardians will be contacted by the Head of Elementary or the Head of Inclusion Needs
- If there is a second offense, the phone will be confiscated and securely stored for the remainder of the school day. A parent or guardian must come and collect the phone.

Secondary

- The phone will be confiscated and securely stored for the remainder of the school day. A parent or guardian must come and collect the phone.
- Repeated violations may result in disciplinary consequences and/or a parent meeting with the Dean of Students and/or the Deputy Head of Secondary.
- If a student refuses to hand over their phone when requested by a staff member, this will be treated as a separate failure to follow a reasonable staff instruction and may result in an additional consequence.

Communication With Parents and Guardians

- Parents and guardians should not expect students to be available by cell phone during the school day. If a parent or guardian needs to contact their child urgently, they should contact the school office, which will assist with communication. School phone number +972 02 567 7200.
- Likewise, students who need to contact a parent or guardian during the school day should speak with:
    - Elementary: the Head of Elementary or the Head of Inclusion Needs
    - Secondary: the Dean of Students or the Deputy Head of Secondary.

Responsibility for Devices

Students remain responsible for their personal devices. Phones must be handed directly to the classroom/homeroom teacher and stored according to the school's procedures. The school will take reasonable steps to secure collected phones; however, students should not bring unnecessary valuables to school.

Implementation

- This policy applies to all Elementary and Secondary students and will be communicated to students, parents/guardians and staff before implementation. (For the academic year 2026-2027, this policy will apply only to Elementary and MY1-DY1.)
- The goal of this policy is not to punish students for having phones. Rather, it is to establish clear and consistent expectations that allow students to be present, engaged and focused throughout the school day.
- The school reserves the right to review and amend this policy when necessary.

Bibliography

UNESCO. *Global Education Monitoring Report 2023: Technology in Education: A Tool on Whose Terms?* Paris: UNESCO, 2023. https://doi.org/10.54676/UZQV8501