MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Policy and Procedures

on

Use of Mobile Phones

By Students in Primary One to Secondary Five

and

During School Activities

1st September 2015
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1.0 Introduction

With advancement in technology, many homes are equipped with computers and some parents are buying the most up-to-date models of mobile communication devices for their children. Within this context, schools are grappling with the question of whether to allow students to use their mobile communication devices on school premises as well as during school activities.

The preoccupation of educationalists and parents is trying to find the most appropriate framework so that the children and youth do not misuse and are not negatively affected by Information Communications Technology devices.

2.0 Rationale

The inappropriate use of mobile phones in schools by students has become a matter of great concern for the Ministry of Education, school leaders, teachers, and many parents as the devices are often being used irresponsibly. While it is recognised that with the rapid growth in technology, fast communication between people is considered to be of great importance, it is undoubtedly crucial that we do not underestimate the adverse impact of mobile phone on students’ performance, pressure by peers, distraction in the classroom, cyber bullying, and extortion.

According to records, incidents of cyber bullying, recorded fighting on video, filming, and texting during class hours are on the increase in schools.

The Ministry of Education believes that students should not be distracted by mobile phones in the classroom at any time and should not be using their mobile phones anywhere on the school premises or during school activities as stipulated in the Code of Conduct for Primary and Secondary Schools (2011), without authorisation.
3.0 Aims of the Policy

- To restore control and order in relation to the management of mobile phones in schools
- To promote serious and purposeful classrooms setting without distractions
- To create an environment where students, teachers and school leaders feel respected and safe from the dangers of misuse of mobile communication devices.

4.0 Implementation of the Policy

4.1 Scope of the Policy

For the purpose of this policy, ‘mobile phones’ include

- Cellular/mobile phones
- Smartphones

‘Use of mobile phones refers to all functions of a mobile, including but not limited to:

- Texting
- Making and taking phone calls
- Internet browsing
- Using social media
- Video recording
- Audio recording
- Taking photographs
- Using calculator functions
- Playing games
- Listening to music
4.2 Use of Mobile Phones

Use of mobile phones is not permitted within school hours for any purpose unless authorised in writing.

Violation of this policy statement shall result in the following consequences -

**First Violation:** The mobile phone will be confiscated for one week. A written warning to be signed by the student and parent will be issued.

**Second Violation:** Forfeiture of the mobile phone until the end of the school term. A final warning to be signed by the student and parent will be issued.

**Third Violation:** Indefinite confiscation of the mobile phone. The necessary documents will be signed by the student and parent.

Depending on the context of the violation of this policy statement, such as whether bullying is involved, other consequences may be applied in line with the Whole-School Behaviour Management Policy.

Where there is reason to believe that the mobile phone has been used in a manner and/or contains material pertinent to a criminal offence, the matter may be referred to the relevant authorities, as per established procedures.

4.3 Parental / Guardian Contact

The School Administration’s Office remains THE appropriate point of contact and can ensure that the child is reached quickly, and assisted in any appropriate way in cases of emergency. Where a student needs to make a telephone call during the day, he/she must ask permission from the class teacher and a school telephone will be used where deemed appropriate. Such cases shall be appropriately documented.

4.4 Loss or damage of the Mobile Phone

The school accepts No responsibility for any loss, damage, or theft of the mobile phone brought to school premises or on school activities.
5.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
The successful implementation of this policy will depend largely on its regular, consistent and effective monitoring and evaluation of the process.

School Management shall report on the implementation of the policy on a quarterly basis through an approved Reporting Template.

6.0 Implementation Process
The implementation of the Policy calls for the cooperation and understanding of all students, parents, teachers, school management, schools councils and other school personnel in the implementation process.

It will also be necessary to have in place approved tools (forms, etc...) to objectively support the implementation process.

7.0 Review of the policy
The Policy will be reviewed as and when necessary. The review shall take into consideration information gathered through the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Process.

8.0 Date of Coming into Force
The Policy shall come into force with effect of **01st September 2015**.