



International School
Groningen

Devices Policy 2025/6

MYP & DP

September 2025

“We need to embrace technology to make learning more engaging. Because when students are engaged and they are interested, that’s where learning takes place.” April Chamberlain

This incorporates the mobile policy 2024 and adds the provision of earbuds as discussed by the Maartenscollege and MR 14/04/25

Changes from the original are shown in highlighted yellow.

ISG Mobile Phone Policy (from 01 September 2024)

Background information

While there is no legal framework, the Dutch government has recommended that from January 2024 all schools implement a policy that will limit the phone & device usage for students in education.

Our current policy is that all devices are switched off and away during lesson time. However, we remain concerned about the continued use of mobiles during breaks, limiting face-to-face interaction and not giving our students a screen downtime. This has a negative effect on student well-being.

We are also aware that the school will have some responsibility to organise or facilitate activities during (longer) break times.

Devices covered by this policy:

1. Mobile Phones:

Aim

To promote a high-quality teaching and learning environment where teachers are allowed to teach, and students are allowed to learn, free from distractions caused by personal use of devices.

Phone use is restricted to minimise distractions during lessons, ensuring students can focus without disruptions. This will further foster student engagement and active participation in the learning process.

The rules and policy here aim to encourage face-to-face communication and collaboration among students, which are considered important aspects of a good pedagogical approach.

We also encourage using breaks as quality time away from screens for more face-to-face social interactions. The school will provide extra facilities for 'play' during breaks. This may include table football, air hockey and a selection of board/card games. Further activities will be in liaison with the school council.

Who does this apply to?

The mobile phone policy will cover every student in the school. Differences will be made clear where needed.

We understand that all students may bring a personal mobile phone to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

- Students who choose to bring mobile phones to school are requested to have them switched off and placed in a school locker on arrival. They should not have them with them in their bag or pockets, including during breaks and lunchtimes. All students are assigned a school locker that is available to them and can be locked during the school day. All students are responsible for their own locker keys. Lockers are under camera surveillance.

- If a student leaves the school premises during the day, they may collect their phone and return it to their locker when returning to school. They should not use their phone until they have left the school premises.
- When emergencies occur, parents or caregivers can reach their child by calling the school's reception. (050 5340084 or 050 5375200)

2. Earbuds/Headphones

Aim

For reasons of safety and to enable clear and constructive communication, all students are required to remove their earbuds/headphones when entering the building.

Earbuds may be kept on the person, and their use in school is restricted to self-study in the common room, in the DP study areas, and in the first-floor study area.

With express permission from the teacher, earbuds may also be used during lessons.

Earbuds should be linked to a student's laptop. Mobile phones are not permitted to facilitate the use of earbuds.

3. Laptops

All students in MYP1-5 have a laptop that is brought to lessons and charged. The use of the laptop in the lesson is managed by the teacher of the class.

In DP1 and 2, students are encouraged to have a device which can be used in class, but only at the discretion of the teacher. For activities requiring a laptop, the current laptop carts can be booked.

Implementation of this policy in students' own time (break times)

Part of this guidance includes **device-free break times**. This includes the use of the student's own laptops or tablets. Students can access their laptops through most lessons and study hours, approximately 4 hours daily. Research suggests that there should be at least two moments of screen downtime per day. Screen downtime helps with emotional regulation and stress release; students can also take a moment for learning reflections.

Students should not need to work on their laptops during break times. If there is an exceptional circumstance or situation, this should be discussed with the teacher involved, and agreements should be made (working in class under supervision, for example).

Students who listen to music during approved activities may use a laptop or other (non-smart) device.

Students can use their laptops or tablets during 'free' hours to complete school work. Students are not allowed to use their phones.

Exceptional Circumstances

The school's curriculum includes teaching our students skills in digital literacy, online safety, and respectful relationships. Each subject has the power to promote this, but much will come via the pastoral curriculum and digital citizenship programme.

Exemptions from the general device usage policy may be considered and granted by the Head of School or senior leadership team on a case-by-case basis under the following circumstances:

- The student uses their device to monitor or manage a medical condition, which must be documented in the student health and medical register.
- The device serves as an agreed adjustment for a student with a disability or learning difficulties, and this should be documented in the student's educational learning plan (IEP) or support plan (for example, graphic organisers).
- The student faces extenuating personal circumstances that require more immediate access to their device, such as being the primary caregiver for a child or family member.
- If parents or guardians wish to discuss an exemption request based on these exceptional circumstances, they should write a formal request to the head of school.
- Teachers may request students to collect or bring their phone to a specific class where it supports learning and no other device is available. Students will be required to place phones back in their lockers once the task is performed.

Consequences

Consequences for using a phone or device in school which goes against the school policy will result in the following consequences.

1. Warning:

If a student is caught with a phone when they are not allowed, they must immediately place it in their locker (or bag if a laptop or they are in DP). Teachers or school staff may accompany the student to the location.

2. Confiscation (phone):

Teachers or school staff may confiscate a phone for repeated offences (same day or different days). If a student is caught using it during the school day. The phone must be given to the ISG reception. The phone or device may be returned to the student or their parents at 16.00

Mentors will be informed via Managebac behaviour notes with parental notification.

Phones will be bagged and named before placing in the school safe.

3. Detention:

Repeated offences report on Managebac will be communicated to the deputy head DP or MYP (as appropriate). A detention may be assigned as a consequence of using a banned phone. The student may be required to spend additional time at school before or after regular school hours as a penalty for the violation. Parents may be called or invited to have a conversation about behaviour.

5. In-school Suspension:

In most serious cases, students may be placed in internal suspension, where they are separated from regular classes and school activities for a specified period. During this time, they may be required to complete assignments or reflect on their behaviour.

6. Educational Programmes or Workshops:

The ISG may also require students who violate phone policies to attend educational programmes or workshops on responsible technology use, digital citizenship, or related topics.

Students and parents need to be aware of the specific rules and consequences outlined in the school's policy regarding phone usage. The school will communicate this policy at the beginning of the academic year, and adherence to the rules helps maintain a positive and focused learning environment.

Exclusions

This policy does not apply to:

- Out-of-school-hours events
- Travelling to and from school
- School Trips (where separate information/restrictions may be implemented)

