



## DEVICES POLICY (CELLPHONES and LAPTOPS, etc)

Technology plays a significant role in the lives of our pupils, influencing their studies, work, and social interactions. When used positively and in moderation, technology can enhance communication, raise awareness of global issues, provide access to educational resources, offer enjoyable leisure activities, and help build support networks.

However, misuse or excessive use of technology can lead to distractions, exposure to inappropriate content, bullying, decreased self-esteem and mental health.

### Goals of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- **Connect:** Encourage appropriate and positive use of technology.
- **Protect:** Implement safeguards to limit overuse and misuse.
- **Educate:** Help pupils develop the knowledge and habits necessary to become responsible digital citizens.

### REGISTRATION OF DEVICES

At the start of each term, all devices must be registered with the Housemaster or Housemistress for security purposes. Any new devices brought to school during the year must also be added to this register, this includes standard (eInk) Kindles, Smart Watches, gaming consoles, etc. If a device is found that is not registered, it will be confiscated and handed over to a parent or guardian as per the stipulated sanctions.

Additionally, all devices must have the school-managed parental control app installed to ensure appropriate usage.

Pupils may not set up private Wi-Fi networks on campus.

### CELLPHONES

***It is important to note that parents are not required to provide their child with a cellphone. Having a cellphone at school is optional. Families should consider whether it is necessary for their child's needs and ensure that it aligns with the governing policies.***

Neither the School nor its employees are responsible for any valuables, including cell phones, that are brought to school. Parents are advised to insure cell phones.

Peterhouse Group of Schools : Private Bag 3741, Marondera, Zimbabwe: [www.peterhousegroup.co.zw](http://www.peterhousegroup.co.zw)  
secretary@peterhouse.co.zw +263 (0) 65-2324951/2/3, 2322200/1/2/3, (0)772-136470/1

While at school, including during travel to and from fixtures, tours, and other school-related activities, pupils do not have an automatic right to access their cell phones. The school reserves the right to deny access if deemed appropriate, particularly as part of a disciplinary sanction.

### **Use of cell phones:**

#### **Vth and VIth Form:**

- Weekdays (Monday- Friday): Pupils are not allowed to use their phones during the academic day. Phones may be signed out after school and used **only** in the boarding house until the start of prep. All phones must have the school-managed parental control application installed to ensure that screen time is not misused.  
Additionally, pupils in the Vth and VIth Form are not permitted to keep their cell phones overnight.
- Floatings:
  - Pupils may sign out their phones if they are going on a floating. However, those attending a sports fixture beforehand must be aware that cell phone use is prohibited during school fixtures. Phones may only be used to contact parents after the fixture is completed, and this is contingent upon obtaining permission from a staff member.
- Weekends :
  - **Saturday:** Phones may be signed out after prep and must be handed in by 21:00.
  - **Sunday:** Phones may be signed out after breakfast (or after Eucharist) and must be signed in before evening prep.
  - Phones may be used **only** in the boarding house. No pupil will have access to their phones overnight.

At all other times, outside those stipulated in this policy, phones are locked in the House office and/or appropriate safe facility.

### **D-A Block:**

Pupils in D-A Block are not permitted to have a cell phone (brick or smart phone) while at school.

#### **International Pupils (D-A Block):**

International pupils are allowed to have access to a cellphone for travel to and from school following a visit home. Upon arrival at school, the phone must be handed in to the pupil's Housemaster or Housemistress.

## **Safeguarding:**

### Communication with Staff:

- Pupils shall not communicate with any Peterhouse Group staff member via social media platforms. All communication must be conducted via email **only**.

### Digital Material:

- Pupils must not use their laptops (or other devices) to record (audio or visual) or post any inappropriate material that could bring the school, themselves and others into disrepute and/or cause harm. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Offensive or discriminatory content
  - Harassment or bullying of any kind
  - Misrepresentation of the school or its values
  - Sharing private or sensitive information without consent

Pupils will be held accountable for the consequences of posting such material, which may include disciplinary and/or legal action. It is vital to uphold the school's reputation and foster a respectful online environment.

## **Sanctions for Breach of Cell Phone Guidelines**

Pupils in breach of the guidelines above will face a range of disciplinary sanctions, depending on the nature of the offence. The following specific sanctions will apply:

### **1. Cell Phones Used Outside the Boarding House:**

- First Offence: Confiscation for 3 weeks.
- Second Offence: Confiscation for 6 weeks.
- Third Offence: Gating and confiscation for 3 months.

### **2. Cell Phones Used During Away Sporting Fixtures:**

- First Offence: Confiscation for 3 weeks.
- Second Offence: Confiscation for 6 weeks.
- Third Offence: Gating and confiscation for 3 months.

### **3. Posting Inappropriate or Indecent Material:**

- Pupils will face severe disciplinary and/or legal consequences and will be sanctioned accordingly.

### **4. Public Use of Phones:**

- Any phone used by a pupil in public must be confiscated.

## 5. Possession of Second or Illegal Devices:

- First Offence: Confiscation and loss of cell phone privileges for 3 months.
- Second Offence: Confiscation and loss of cell phone privileges for 1 year.
- Consequences may include losing the option to bring a cellphone to school for the duration of their enrolment and receiving a formal warning on record.

Please note that cellphones, devices etc, kept by senior pupils (Vth & VIth Form) for junior pupils (D-A Block) is considered an illegal device for both parties.

The confiscated device will be handed over to a parent or guardian **at the end** of the sanction period, regardless of the timing.

## LAPTOPS

### Use of Laptops:

#### Vth and VIth form:

- Weekdays (Monday - Friday): Pupils in the Vth and VIth forms are allowed to bring laptops and Kindles to school. They may keep these devices in their possession throughout the day, at the discretion of the Housemaster or Housemistress. However, pupils in the Vth and VIth Form are not permitted to keep their laptops overnight.
- Floatings:
  - Pupils may sign out their laptops if they are going on a floating.
- Weekends :
  - **Saturday**: Laptops may be signed out for prep and must be handed in before lights out.
  - **Sunday**: Laptops may be signed out after breakfast (or after Eucharist) and must be signed in after evening prep.

#### A and B Block:

- Weekdays (Monday - Friday): Pupils in A and B Block are expected to have a laptop for school purposes **only**. Laptops will be issued in the morning for lessons. They are not permitted to keep their laptops overnight.
- Floatings:
  - Pupils may sign out their laptops if they are going on a floating.
- Weekends:
  - **Saturday**: Laptops may be signed out for prep and must be handed in before the evening's entertainment.
  - **Sunday**: Laptops may be signed out after breakfast (or after Eucharist) and must be signed in after evening prep.

Pupils are not allowed to use the laptop for watching movies or playing games without staff permission.

### **C Block:**

- Weekdays (Monday - Friday): Pupils in C Block are expected to have a laptop for school purposes **only**. They will have access to their laptops for prep in the evening and are not permitted to keep their laptops overnight.
- Floatings:
  - Pupils may sign out their laptops if they are going on a floating.
- Weekends:
  - **Saturday:** Laptops may be signed out at the start of prep and handed in at the end of prep.
  - **Sunday:** Laptops may be signed out after breakfast (or after Eucharist) and must be signed in after evening prep.

Pupils are not allowed to use the laptop for watching movies or playing games without staff permission.

### **D Block:**

Are not allowed any devices at school.

Pupils in D and C Block will be permitted to use a laptop in school when recommended by a specialist for academic purposes – this policy will override all of the above.

### **Safeguarding:**

#### Digital Material:

- Pupils must not use their laptops (or other devices) to record (audio or visual) or post any inappropriate material that could bring the school, themselves and others into disrepute and/or cause harm. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Offensive or discriminatory content
  - Harassment or bullying of any kind
  - Misrepresentation of the school or its values
  - Sharing private or sensitive information without consent.

Pupils will be held accountable for the consequences of posting such material, which may include disciplinary and/or legal action. It is vital to uphold the school's reputation and foster a respectful online environment.

## Sanctions for Breach of Electronic Devices Guidelines

If any pupil is in breach of the rules regarding electronic devices, the following sanctions will apply:

- **First Offence:** The device will be confiscated for a period of 1 week.
- **Second Offence:** The device will be confiscated for a period of 3 weeks.

### Possession of Second or Illegal Devices:

- First Offence: Confiscation and loss of device privileges for 6 weeks.
- Second Offence: Confiscation and loss of device privileges for 3 months.
- Consequences may include losing the option to bring a device to school and receiving a formal warning on record.

The confiscated device will be handed over to a parent or guardian **at the end** of the sanction period, regardless of the timing.