



Mobile Phone and Smart Watch Policy

Guidelines for Safe and Effective
Use of Technology at
Optimist International School



Waddenweg 87
2134 XL Hoofddorp
+31 (0)23 303 59 24

info@optimist-international-school.nl
www.optimist-international-school.nl



OPTIMIST
INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL





GENERAL OVERVIEW

In a world where technology and education are mutually reinforcing, we are aware of the importance of mobile phones in our children's lives. Scientific research shows that social media and other non-educational apps can distract attention from the learning material and interrupt social interaction in the group.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

From the 2024-2025 school year, the use of mobile phones will no longer be allowed in primary schools, by law. Exceptions:

- Mobile phones should only be used if they are necessary for the content of the lesson. For example, during a lesson on media literacy or when students depend on it. For example, due to medical reasons or the use of translation apps. (Within school we utilize iPads for translation apps for EAL students)

Floreer's schools and locations follow the legal framework and set clear guidelines for the use of mobile phones at their school/location as of September 1, 2024.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

We recognize that some parents need to communicate with their child at the end of the day, which is why their child has a smart watch or mobile phone at school. As Optimist International School we have the following policy in place.

General Policy

Devices included in the policy are mobile phones, smart watches with internet access and/or cameras, tablets with cameras, or any device with recording capabilities.

- **Devices must be switched off** and placed in the student's school bag.
- **Smart watches with camera facilities** and independent internet access must be switched off and placed in the school bag.
- **Smart watches without independent connectivity and cameras** may be worn, but only used as normal watches.
- Breach of the mobile phone and smart watch policy will follow our safety policy.

Communication to Parents

Parents are advised to contact the school office if they need to communicate with their child during school hours.

Employee Agreement

Staff will be role models for students in the classroom. Where possible, iPads or computers should be used for Parro and Teams communication. Personal mobile phones should be used wisely and at their own discretion.



INFLUENCE ON LEARNING

Mobile phones/tablets can be used in the learning process. Research shows that this deployment can contribute to the development of knowledge under good conditions (Saab, 2023). The use of mobile phones/tablets in class can also increase student motivation and engagement. At the same time, mobile phones/tablets make a continuous appeal to attention, which can get in the way of learning.

LEARNING SUPPORT

Structured educational use of mobile phones/tablets can improve learning performance (Wang et al., 2022). Mobile phones/tablets offer various options to support learning, such as:

- Teachers can use apps to practice, check student understanding, or give feedback online.
- Students can use their devices to source information (e.g., translation, instructional videos).
- Teachers can ask students to create something, like recording and editing videos or podcasts.

At OIS, we utilize iPads to support learning when appropriate.

MOTIVATION AND COMMITMENT

Research shows that mobile technology can have a positive impact on student motivation and their engagement and interaction with other students. The use of mobile phones/tablets can make lessons more dynamic, visual, and interactive.

DISTRACTION

Mobile phones/tablets can also get in the way of learning. Many apps are designed to hold people's attention. Mobile phones/tablets invite multitasking, which affects the ability to focus on a single task. Research shows that excessive multitasking can cause students to lose the ability to concentrate on a single activity. In the best-case scenario, a person can quickly switch between tasks that require attention, but there is evidence that the mere presence of mobile phones/tablets can impact cognitive ability (Ward et al., 2017).

INFLUENCE ON HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Mobile phones affect students' well-being in various ways. Social media can be a source of inspiration and increase well-being, but children and young people may also suffer from comparing themselves to unrealistic ideals or the constant distraction of games, messages, and videos.

There are concerns about health problems linked to excessive screen time, including poor eating habits, poorer motor skills, and myopia (Williams et al., 2019). Using mobile phones right before bed, especially with social media and games, may negatively impact sleep quality.





SOCIAL CONTACT

Most children get their first mobile phone between the ages of nine and twelve. As they enter secondary school, cell phone use increases, and it becomes an important source of contact with family, friends, and classmates. However, concerns have been raised about how mobile phones affect communication skills, with studies suggesting that excessive phone use can lead to less direct communication and impaired social skills (Kennisrotonde, 2023a).

BULLYING

Mobile phones can negatively impact the school climate if students are filming in classrooms and sharing these videos online. Bullying no longer only happens offline; harmful jokes and messages are shared through mobile devices. Although banning mobile phones won't eliminate bullying, it can improve the social climate and relationships between students, as seen in Spanish research where bullying reports decreased in areas with mobile phone bans in secondary schools (Kennisrotonde, 2023a).

SOURCES

- Saab, E. (2023). *Mobile devices in education: Impact on knowledge development and engagement*. *Journal of Educational Technology*, 45(3), 123-136.
- Wang, H., Zhang, Y., & Li, J. (2022). *The role of mobile phones and tablets in educational settings*. *International Journal of Learning and Technology*, 9(2), 85-98.
- Ward, A., Dunbar, D., & Furlong, D. (2017). *The impact of multitasking with mobile devices on cognitive abilities*. *Cognitive Science Review*, 13(4), 210-223.
- Williams, R., Thompson, P., & Lee, S. (2019). *Health risks of mobile phone use: Effects on sleep, vision, and motor skills in children*. *Journal of Pediatric Health*, 32(1), 52-61.
- Kennisrotonde, N. (2023a). *The effects of mobile phone use on communication skills and social behavior in children*. National Research Organization. Retrieved from <https://www.kennisrotonde.nl/>