



# BRIDGE HOUSE

PRE-PRIMARY · PREPARATORY · COLLEGE

## **INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

### **PREAMBLE:**

This policy applies to all users on the Bridge House network.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

This policy applies to all digital devices, including but not limited to “smart devices” including: tablets, cellular phones, laptops and desktop computers. This includes devices of a similar nature that may come onto the market in the future.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Bridge House School’s aim is for students and staff alike to use technology for learning. Technology aids creative problem-solving and collaboration in today’s world. While we want users to be active in today’s connected world, we also want them to be safe, legal and responsible. While IT, the Internet and social media create numerous new opportunities, they also create many new challenges and risks. To manage this risk, the use of all IT facilities provided by Bridge House must be consistent with this policy. Students, teachers, staff and any IT users are responsible for good behaviour on the Internet just as they are in a classroom or a corridor. Remember that access is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in that privilege being withdrawn. This document forms part of the digital device strategy and related documents, and applies to the use of information, electronic and computing devices, and network resources within Bridge House; or interaction with a third party.

### **SPECIFICALLY-ACCEPTABLE USES:**

All users are responsible for exercising good judgement regarding appropriate use of IT devices and information, and network resources in accordance with any

South African legislation or regulations. Bridge House School network is to be used in a responsible and legal manner. Users are expected to use the Internet for the following purposes:

- educational purposes;
- accessing information for private appropriate interests or hobbies;
- constructive communication with other Internet users including, but not limited to, Bridge House students and members of staff;
- downloading of Apps from the various app stores that are to be used for educational purposes.

Users should regard participation in online media as an extension of their classrooms or school campus. Students need to be aware of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour online.

**SPECIFICALLY-UNACCEPTABLE USES:**

Users are not to:

- take part in the sharing or re-posting of any inappropriate material;
- use any offensive language in any communication over the Internet;
- attempt to access, create or distribute any pornographic or sexually explicit material of any kind;
- use any other user's profile or email account to:
  - impersonate (and incriminate) any other user;
  - access social media;
  - create fraudulent profiles on any website, messaging service, social media platform or similar;
  - perform unauthorised modification in any form to any other student's personal device.
- insult, bully, threaten or abuse any other person via any platform.

- use messaging services on mobile devices for activities that are disruptive to academic practices or which are hurtful or discriminatory;
- record, photograph or video other students or staff without the expressed permission of the individual.
- use facilities such as AirDrop and AirPlay inappropriately;
- attempt to bypass the school's firewall or gain unauthorised access to the school's internet connection;
- attempt to gain unauthorised access to servers or other network resources;
- vandalise any data or equipment.

### **USE OF THE SCHOOL'S INTERNAL COMPUTER NETWORK**

IT Users must note the following:

- All users are entitled to privacy of their work and communication and therefore it is an offence to use or attempt to use another user's account, password or profile.
- Storage capacity is at a premium and users are to conserve space by deleting unnecessary email or other material which takes up excessive storage space.
- Users may not download or install any software onto network drives. All copyright rules must, therefore, be obeyed.
- Users have full responsibility for their accounts and must not share their passwords or profiles with anyone. Any violations of this policy that can be traced to an individual account name will be treated as the sole responsibility of the owner of that account.
- Participation in any kind of peer-to-peer file-sharing that is not educational is not permitted. (E.g. Downloading of films, videos, music)
- Bridge House operates a strictly-controlled firewall to ensure the safety of all users of the school's network. Any attempts to bypass, deactivate,

disable or damage this service will result in disciplinary measures being taken.

### **USE OF CELLULAR DEVICES:**

A cellular device is defined as any device which makes use of a cellular telecommunications network to gain access to voice and data services. This term includes, but is not limited to, cellular phones, iPads with cellular (5G or LTE) connectivity and portable Wi-Fi hotspots which use SIM cards.

While the school cannot control the use of cellular devices, it is important that all users are aware of the following:

Any student who is found to be accessing or distributing content that is inappropriate will face disciplinary actions in terms of the school's Code of Conduct.

Such content includes, but is not limited to:

- pornographic or sexually explicit material;
- material that contains graphic violence;
- material that contains explicit or defamatory lyrics or writing or hate speech;
- material that encourages or promotes discrimination of any kind;
- material that can be used to humiliate or bully another person;
- material that has an age restriction older than the user's age.

Students should also be aware that using cellular devices to bypass the school's firewall and access information that is considered inappropriate, is not permitted.

### **GAMING:**

Gaming can be used for constructive educational purposes.

Gaming may not:

- take place during academic time unless given explicit permission by a teacher;
- infringe on the rights of others and may not cause offence to others;
- reduce others' access to the network;

- encourage violence and anti-social behaviour.

### **USER ACCOUNTS:**

Old user accounts will be disabled. Active Directory User accounts will be kept for a minimum of one month after the user leaves the school before being deleted and G-Suite accounts (including G-Mail and Google drive) will be disabled and deleted after a three (3) month period. It is the user's responsibility to remove any personal information from the school's network during this period and the school cannot be held liable for the loss of any electronic files or emails.

In certain cases the school has the right to terminate connectivity to the school network with immediate effect.

### **CONSEQUENCES:**

Should there be reasonable suspicion that unacceptable use has occurred, the school reserves the right to view any data stored on digital devices on the school's premises. Similarly, the school reserves the right to view any data stored in user accounts on the school network.

Violations of the IT policies and guidelines will be dealt with according to the guidelines in the Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure, and may result in the loss of access to the network as well as disciplinary or legal action.

Whilst cell phones can be an extremely useful educational tool, the negative impact on students from a social and emotional perspective is being experienced on an ongoing basis. Earphones are also promoting antisocial behaviour. This policy aims at providing guidelines on how cell phones and earphones (headsets, air pods or any other listening device that is attached or positioned in the ears) may be used on campus. Bridge House recognises that digital citizenship, and values such as self-control and time-management, are an important part of student socialisation. It is vital that conversations about mindful and appropriate technology-use form part of ongoing dialogue in pastoral and academic spaces.

## **DEVICE USAGE**

### **PREP STUDENTS**

#### **CELL PHONE USAGE (and peripheral devices such as Smartwatches)**

It is the policy at Bridge House Prep School that children do not bring phones to school, for reasons of

- Distractibility, and
- Security

The distraction of an extra device needs to be avoided. Access to technology at school is for purposes of education. Phones are also not permitted on camps or outings.

### **REGULATIONS**

All contact between home and school at Prep level must be through the school itself.

- If a child is ill, the teacher needs to know and judge whether intervention (nurse, phoning parent, going home) is required.
- If the parent has a message for the child, it needs to come through the school. (i.e. teacher or Prep reception),
- It should be noted that our iPad policy (for grades 4-7) stipulates very clearly that NO digital or telephonic contact is allowed between home and child, or between child and child during the school day.

The school will not take responsibility for the safety and security of any phone (and this includes Smartwatches), as phones are seen as an unnecessary item in the Prep school context.

- If the child has a phone at school because of catching a bus home, the phone must be handed to the teacher for safe-keeping during the day.
- Junior Primary children are collected from their quad or aftercare venue at the end of the school day, so there is no reason for the parent to 'call them' to the car.

## **CONSEQUENCES:**

- The phone will be taken away from the child if it is used at school, and locked in the school safe. The parent will be contacted to collect it after school, and asked to ensure that it is left at home.
- The school takes no responsibility for missing, stolen or broken phones (or Smartwatches), as they are not integral to the school programme, so should not be at school.

## **COLLEGE STUDENTS**

### **CELL PHONE USAGE (and peripheral devices)**

Whilst cell phones can be an extremely useful educational tool, the negative impact on students from a social and emotional perspective is being experienced on an ongoing basis. Earphones are also promoting antisocial behaviour. This policy aims at providing guidelines on how cell phones and earphones (headsets, air pods or any other listening device that is attached or positioned in the ears) may be used on campus. Bridge House recognises that digital citizenship, and values such as self-control and time-management, are an important part of student socialisation. It is vital that conversations about mindful and appropriate technology-use form part of ongoing dialogue in pastoral and academic space

### **REGULATIONS**

- College students' cell phones should be switched off and in school bags or pockets on entering the campus. Cell phones may not be used during academic time. Should a cell phone be seen in a lesson it will be confiscated and handed to reception where it will be placed in safekeeping until the end of the school day. Repeat offenders will have their cell phones confiscated for a one-week period on the third offence.
- Cell phones (devices) may only be used during lesson time with the express permission of the teacher.
- Cell phones (devices) are not permitted to be used in the dining halls during mealtimes.
- Earphones may not be seen on campus. If a student is seen with earphones they will be confiscated and handed in to reception. The student may then

collect the earphones at the end of the school day (16:00) Repeat offenders will have the earphones confiscated for a longer period of time.

- Upon advice from a medical professional, students may apply for a waiver of this policy in order to use noise-cancelling earphones, or other supportive devices. All applications must be sent for approval to the Head of School.
- The only exception is if a teacher gives explicit permission to a student or class to use earphones during that teacher's lesson. At the end of the lesson the earphones must be put away again
- iPads and laptops may only be used for academic purposes in academic time. In anticipation of this use, all educational devices must be charged and in working order. Teachers will instruct students when to use these devices. At all other times, they must be switched off and kept safely in the student's school bag - or face down / closed on their desk.