

# MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND EDUCATION

## POLICY RE USE OF CELLULAR PHONES

The Ministry of Education, acknowledging the ubiquitous spread of cellular telephones in our society in recent times, hereby issues the following policy regulating the use of cellular telephones in schools and educational institutions.

### Philosophical Principles

1. The spread of cellular telephones is an inseparable part of the spread of new technologies throughout our society; and such technology will inevitably reach the school.
2. We have reached the era of universal individual communication.
3. It is also the duty of the education system to teach students the responsible and social use of new technologies.

### Protocol of Use

4. Students are to be permitted to carry cellular telephones to school with the permission of their parents.
5. All cellular phones are to be turned off on entering the school premises.
6. All cell phones must be concealed and will be confiscated if seen or heard while engaged in any learning or school activity.
7. On NO ACCOUNT will cell phones be permitted on school compounds in the possession of persons sitting exams, during the conduct of major examinations such as school promotional examinations and CXC examinations. CXC regulations stipulate that cell phones are not to be brought into an exam room, as the potential for cheating through text messaging exists. Any breach of this CXC rule will result in debarment from the exam in question.
8. Student cell phones are liable to forfeiture by the school authorities for breach of these regulations.

### Use by Teachers

1. Teachers' cell phones must be turned off completely while conducting classes, supervising students in any school activity, or attending a function for teachers
2. Teachers' cell phones can be turned on in the staff room, during non-teaching time, during school recess periods and after the dismissal of school.

### Use by Ministry Staff

1. The Ministry of Education has an obligation to set the right example and accordingly the essential principles governing the use of cell phones apply to staff members.
2. Cell phones are to be turned off completely when attending meetings. Proper protocol of use requires that any officer needing to maintain access during the course of the meeting, seek the permission of the meeting to do so and if granted, the cell phone must be kept in vibrate mode.
3. The same guidelines that seek to safeguard the abuse of line telephones at the workplace apply to cell phone use - officers are to exercise discretion in the use of cell phones and ensure that working hours and productivity are not disrupted by casual conversation. Cell phones are to be kept on either vibrate mode or low ring.