

American Gulf School Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy

POLICY FOR Acceptable Use of Digital Resources

PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Head of IT/ Heads of Pastoral

REVIEW DATES: Aug 2025

REVIEWED BY: Acting Principal

APPROVED DATE: 15 Aug 2025

APPROVED BY: Ms. Vanda

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: Aug 2026

RELATED POLICIES: Student Code of Conduct, Social Media Policy, E-Safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Wellbeing Policy

1. Purpose

1.1. The purpose of this policy is to set clear and transparent guidelines for all members of staff, learners, parents, and stakeholders regarding the use of personal digital devices in school.

1.2. This policy outlines what the AGS leadership team expects from learners who are using their own devices in school.

1.3. It is essential to educate our learners on becoming internationally minded and responsible global citizens, both online and offline.

1.4. Learners will be continuously reminded of cyber-safety, netiquette, and safe online behavior.

1.5. Learners are expected to follow the outlined guidelines and adhere to instructions given by any AGS staff member while using their own devices.

1.6. Learners must practice proper digital etiquette when communicating with peers or staff online. Respectful, constructive, and inclusive communication is expected at all times.

2. Introduction

2.1. American Gulf School (AGS) is a smart school with advanced digital solutions.

2.2. AGS offers a 100% inclusive education, focusing on providing learners with 21st-century skills, fostering lifelong learning, and preparing them for future technological advancements.

2.3. The BYOD Policy ensures that all expectations are clearly communicated to the school community.

2.4. Digital technology integration is a core expectation at AGS, and allowing learners to bring their own devices encourages responsibility, media literacy, innovation, and critical thinking.

2.5. Providing learners with personal device access enhances e-learning, collaboration, and adaptability to digital tools.

3. Scope

3.1. This policy applies to all learners from KG to Grade 12. Any breach of this policy will result in an investigation and possible disciplinary action.

3.2. This BYOD policy works in conjunction with AGS's wider Safeguarding, Behavior, and ICT policies. All students are expected to comply with these frameworks while using their personal devices.

4. Definitions

4.1. **AGS:** American Gulf School

4.2. **Digital Devices:** Any computing device capable of photography, recording, storing, transmitting, or receiving messages, images, or data. Examples include desktops, laptops, tablets, e-readers, and similar technologies. Mobile phones are restricted.

4.3. **Digital Citizenship:** Responsible digital behavior, including literacy, ethics, etiquette, and online safety.

4.4. **User:** Any individual authorized to use digital devices, including learners, parents, staff, volunteers, visitors, and service providers.

4.5. **LMS:** Learning Management System

5. Digital Device Types and Specifications

5.1. AGS may periodically review approved digital platforms and device compatibility to ensure alignment with learning needs and data privacy requirements.

5.2. Learners are required to bring their devices to school daily, in line with required device list. Borrowing a school device is only permitted following communication from their parent if device is being serviced/repaired.

5.2. We highly recommend that the device you bring to school is newer technology, older devices may not be able to handle required academic software and can become unreliable.

Minimum and recommended specifications:

PreK – Grade 5

No device is required in Pre-KG and KG1

In KG2 – Grade 5 an iPad is required.

Grade	Device	Peripherals
Pre-KG and KG1	None	Not required
KG2 – Grade 5	iPad	Bluetooth/Wired headphones Keyboard (optional)

Feature	Recommended Specifications
Device Type	Apple iPad 10 th generation onwards
Storage	64 GB or higher
Keyboard (Optional)	Bluetooth-enabled or compatible smart keyboard
Battery Life	Minimum 8 hours
App Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to the App Store PDF Reader Microsoft Office 365 & Microsoft Teams (provided by the school to all students free of charge) <p><i>Additional subject-specific apps may be required (to be communicated by teachers)</i></p>
Operating System	<p>IOS 16 or higher</p> <p><i>*Regular OS updates are essential, as some apps may not function on outdated systems.</i></p>

Grade 6 – Grade 12

Laptop is Mandatory – Windows recommended.

Device Type	Windows PC	Apple Mac
Operating System	Windows 11 or newer	macOS 13 (Ventura) or higher
Processor Type	Intel Core i5 or equivalent/higher	Intel Core i5 or Apple Silicon (M1/M2/M3) or higher
Memory	8 GB RAM or higher	8 GB RAM or higher
Hard Drive	256 GB SSD or higher	256 GB SSD or higher
Graphics Card	512 MB Video Memory or higher	Integrated Apple GPU (sufficient for educational applications)
Screen Size	13” or larger	13 or larger
Wireless Connectivity	802.11a/b/g/n/ac/ax supported	802.11a/b/g/n/ac/ax supported
Battery Life	Minimum 5 hours	Minimum 5 hours
Antivirus Protection	Windows Security (built-in)	Avast or ClamXAV recommended
Additional Hardware and Accessories	Keyboard, Charger, Mouse/Trackpad, Camera, Microphone, and Headphones <i>*These are necessary to ensure students can fully participate in modern learning activities</i>	
Additional Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum weight: 2kg Accidental loss and breakage insurance Additional Warranty above the standard 1 year. Carry case or skin for device protection 	
Educational Software	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Microsoft Office 365 provided by the school at no cost to students Web browser: Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, Safari PDF Reader: Adobe Reader or equivalent Additional subject-specific software may be required this will be provided by the subject leads 	
Backup	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary: Microsoft OneDrive (provided free by the school) Alternative: External USB or other cloud-based backups <i>Students are expected to back up their files regularly to avoid data loss.</i>	

6. Authorized Use of Digital Devices

6.1. Digital devices may only be used for educational activities, including:

- Forums
- Discussions
- Educational videos
- Completing assignments
- Educational games (approved by teachers or subject specialists)
- Accessing educational platforms (e.g., Education City, Kahoot, ClassDojo)

6.2. Unauthorized Use of Digital Devices

Prohibited activities include but are not limited to:

- Using devices in areas with an expectation of privacy (e.g., restrooms, changing rooms).
- Circumventing the school's network infrastructure using VPNs.
- Downloading non-educational or culturally inappropriate content.
- Playing non-educational games, watching videos, using social media, or making personal calls.
- Using devices for cheating, unauthorized access, cyberbullying, or violating copyright laws.
- Sharing or recording images, videos, or audio without permission.

6.3. Consequences and Disciplinary Action

Students who do not comply with this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures in line with the school's behavior policy. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Temporary Confiscation:** Any unauthorized use of a device will result in its confiscation.
- **Device Search:** If misuse is suspected, a senior administrator or social worker may conduct a search with documented justification and in the presence of a witness. Student consent will be sought where possible, and a record of the search must be maintained.
- **Parental Involvement:** If further review is necessary, the school reserves the right to check the phone through social workers. Parents will be invited to review the device alongside the social worker to ensure transparency and cooperation.
- **Strict Mobile Phone Policy:**
 - First Offense: If a mobile phone is found with a student, it will be confiscated, and the parent will need to collect the phone from the Dean of Students.
 - Second Offense: The phone will be confiscated for one month, and the parent will need to collect the phone from the Dean of Students.
 - Third Offense: The phone will be confiscated until the end of the academic year, as per the Social Services Department in Sharjah.

- **Restrictions on Access:** Violations may result in the suspension or revocation of access privileges to school technology resources.
- **Legal Action:** Severe infractions may lead to legal action and prosecution by relevant authorities.
 - Misuse of electronic devices such as tablets etc., during the class, including playing games and using headphones inside the classroom.
 - Bringing mobile phones or misuse any means of communication
 - Various types and forms of bullying.
 - Attempting to defame peers and the school staff via social media or abusing them
 - Capturing, possessing, publishing or disseminating photos of the school staff and / or students without their permission.
 - Using the communication means or social media for unlawful or immoral purposes, or in a manner discrediting the educational institution and its staff or others. (**Ministerial decree 851**)

6.4. Accessing and Capturing Digital Content

- Staff are not permitted to access, photograph, or screenshot a student's private digital content (such as messages, emails, or personal files) unless explicitly authorized by school leadership with documented justification.
- If a digital content review is necessary, it must be conducted by a designated administrator in the presence of a witness, with parental notification as soon as possible.

6.5. Compliance with UAE Privacy Laws

- All searches, confiscations, and access to digital content must comply with UAE Federal Cybercrime Laws and Student Data Protection Regulations.
- Any violation of UAE privacy laws regarding student devices or data may lead to disciplinary action for staff and potential legal consequences.

6.6. Appeal Process

- **Right to Appeal:** Students and parents have the right to formally appeal a device confiscation or digital search.
- **Submission Deadline:** Appeals must be submitted in writing to the school administration within three school days of the incident.
- **Review Process:** A designated school committee will review the appeal and provide a decision within five school days.

7. Liability

- Users are solely responsible for their digital devices.
- AGS is not liable for loss, damage, misuse, or theft of learner-owned devices.
- AGS is not responsible for software-related issues or network access disruptions.
- Student responsibilities to:

- Ensuring devices are fully charged daily.
- Labeling devices for easy identification.
- Regularly updating antivirus and software.
- Avoiding any attempt to bypass school filters or firewalls.

8. Technical Support

9.1. AGS Technology team is responsible for:

- Providing each student with a login username and password to connect to the school's domain and applications.
- Support students with user login issues. With the help of the teachers, the technology team will connect the students-owned devices to the school's Wi-Fi and provide the required support for connectivity and internet access issues.
- General troubleshooting.

9.2. AGS Technology team will not be responsible for any hardware-fixing or technical issues on student-owned devices, including:

- The operating system updates or re-installation.
- The installation of licensed software. Students need to purchase their own licenses.
- Support for the upgrading of hardware replacement as needed.
- Student-owned devices Data backup or recovery.

9.3. Learners must ensure their devices meet the minimum specifications provided by AGS.

9.4. All learners (KG-12) will have access to the school's network, LMS, and approved e-learning platforms.

9. Mobile Phone Usage Policy

- Mobile phones are strictly prohibited during school hours.
- Mobile phones should be switched off and handed to the Dean of Students or Supervisor upon arrival to school and then collected at dismissal.
- Students may use mobile phones to contact parents only after school hours (from 3:15 PM onwards).
- Any visible phone before 3:15 PM will be confiscated.
- Repeated offenses may lead to further disciplinary action or referral to authorities.

10. Cyberbullying & Social Media Misuse

AGS has a **zero-tolerance policy** for cyberbullying and online misconduct, including:

- Harassment, threats, or defamation against students, staff, or the school.
- Misusing the AGS name or logo on social media.
- Online behavior affecting the school's academic environment.

- Violators will face severe consequences, including suspension or expulsion.

11. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

- The use of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, AI-based translators, summarizers, or image generators) is permitted only under teacher guidance and for educational purposes.
- Students must not use AI tools to:
 - Plagiarize or generate work that is submitted as their own without proper acknowledgment.
 - Bypass learning objectives or assessment integrity.
 - Access or create inappropriate, misleading, or harmful content.
- AI-generated content must be used ethically, with proper citations when included in student assignments or projects.
- Teachers and the IT team reserve the right to review how AI tools are being used and may restrict access if misused.
- The school encourages responsible and informed use of AI as a support tool, not a substitute for critical thinking, creativity, and original work.

12. Monitoring & Compliance

- The Pastoral and Leadership Teams will monitor compliance with this policy.
- This policy will be reviewed annually and updated to comply with UAE laws and school regulations.

All students and staff are expected to fully comply with this policy to maintain a safe, respectful, and disciplined learning environment. The school will ensure that periodic checks are conducted by the pastoral team to enforce compliance.

Learners are responsible for the costs associated with the loss or damage of devices owned or not owned by AGS School while connected to the network. All transferred, lost or damaged equipment owned by the school must be reported immediately to the IT department. A student who has caused damage will be banned from borrowing IT items for a month or more based on the decision of the school management.

Failure to adhere to these regulations may result in appropriate action. The school appreciates the cooperation of students, parents, and staff in upholding these guidelines.