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October 5, 2024

Dear Parents,

Subject: Policy on Mobile Phones for Students

I hope this letter finds you well. At Aitchison College, we are committed to creating an environment that promotes academic excellence, personal development, and responsible behaviour. In recent years, we have observed an increasing number of challenges associated with students' use of smartphones on campus. As part of our ongoing effort to prioritize our students' success, we have decided to limit the use of mobile phones to basic for C1, C2 & H1, non-smart devices, commonly known as "brick phones." The H2 is allowed to keep the smart phone on them but switched off. In case, the H2 boys want to use the phone they have to have the permission of the teacher present in their class. If the teacher has not allowed and a boy is caught using it, the phone will be confiscated for the whole term.

Reasons for this decision:

1. Minimizing Distractions

Smartphones can be a major distraction, pulling students away from their academic responsibilities. Social media, games, and continuous notifications disrupt focus, leading to a decline in attention during lessons, study time, and extracurricular activities. By allowing only basic phones, we ensure that students remain focused on their studies and personal growth, rather than becoming absorbed in digital distractions.

2. Mental Health and Well-being

Numerous studies have linked excessive smartphone use with increased levels of anxiety, depression, and stress among teenagers. The pressure to stay constantly connected via social media and messaging platforms can affect students' self-esteem and social interactions. Limiting smartphone access helps foster a healthier school environment where students can focus on real-life connections and personal development.

3. Preventing Exposure to Inappropriate Content

While the internet offers many educational resources, it also exposes young minds to inappropriate or harmful content. Despite monitoring apps, it is difficult to fully restrict access to such material on smartphones. By limiting the use of basic phones, we can better protect students from exposure to content that is unsuitable for their age group.

4. Encouraging Face-to-Face Interaction

In this digital age, it is essential that students develop strong interpersonal skills. Over-reliance on smartphones can reduce meaningful face-to-face interactions, hindering the development of essential

communication skills. By restricting smartphone use, we encourage students to engage more actively with their peers, teachers, and the school community.

5. Reducing the Risk of Cyberbullying

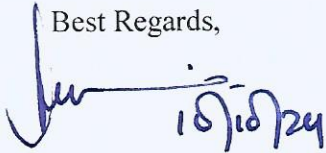
Social media platforms and instant messaging apps are common avenues for cyberbullying. By restricting smartphone use, we reduce the chances of such incidents occurring, ensuring that students have a safe and positive experience both inside and outside of the classroom.

We understand that this policy may present an adjustment for both students and parents, but we strongly believe that it will benefit our students in the long run. We ask that you support this initiative by providing your son with a basic mobile phone, if needed, which will allow him to communicate in case of emergencies, without the distractions and risks associated with smartphones. For boarders, the school can buy a phone and add the cost to the fee bill. The parents are requested to give their consent to the respective housemasters.

Boys when working for an event may bring their phones and deposit them in an envelope in Senior School office and may collect after off time. The H1 boarders can have their smart phone in their boarding houses. They may collect their phones after Maghrib and deposit them back at lights out time to the Housemasters.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Amina', followed by the date '18/10/24' written in a similar style.

Amina Kamran
HMSS