



**Friday, 04 December 2020**

Dear parents and carers,

After much consideration, we have taken the decision to not allow the use of mobile devices including phones and tablets on the school site from January 4<sup>th</sup> 2021. This includes inside the school building, outside at break, lunch and after school. Mobile devices are not to be used on school trips, or other activities organised with the school.

This decision has not been taken lightly and we have completed significant research into the action to investigate the main issues in terms of safeguarding and other risks. You will appreciate that our first priority must always be to keep our young people as safe as possible during the school day.

**National levels of concern among parents about their child's online activities:**

 Content on sites or apps that child visits	<b>34%</b>	<p>A recent report by Ofcom on 'Media use and attitudes', found that parents had increasing concerns about a number of issues. The concerns are listed to the left.</p> <p>The report explains that children are accessing apps including Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube.</p> <p><u>Some other statistics from the report on 12-15year olds:</u> 83% have their own smartphone 81% use their phone to go online 71% of online users have a social media account platform</p> <p><u>To look at the report in more detail, please go to:</u> <a href="https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0023/190616/children-media-use-attitudes-2019-report.pdf">https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0023/190616/children-media-use-attitudes-2019-report.pdf</a></p>
 How much time child spends online	<b>39%</b>	
 Child giving out their personal details to inappropriate people	<b>43%</b>	
 Child being bullied online / cyberbullying	<b>42%</b>	
 Child damaging their reputation now or in the future	<b>40%</b>	
 Child seeing content which encourages them to hurt or harm themselves	<b>45%</b>	
 Pressure on child to spend money online	<b>41%</b>	
 Companies collecting information about what the child is doing online	<b>49%</b>	
 Possibility of child being radicalised	<b>32%</b>	

At school, we have a duty of care to take steps to ensure that your child is safe. We take this duty very seriously.

National research tells us that unsupervised usage of mobile phones can lead to issues with child protection, exposure to inappropriate content, exploitation, bullying, mental health and well-being, safety and staff protection. Other risks can also be a negative impact on learning and a decrease in social skills and personal interaction.



**The following rules on phones and mobile devices will come into effect on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021:**

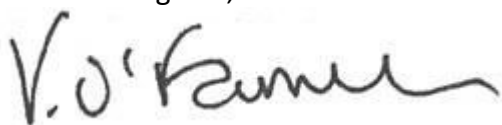
1. Phones and mobile devices should be 'switched off and away' at all times. Phones and mobile devices should be fully switched off, not 'on silent' and kept either in a bag or an inside blazer pocket. Any phone or mobile device seen or heard will be confiscated, this includes phones on display in shirt pockets.
2. Mobile devices and phones that are confiscated will be placed in the school safe to be collected at the end of the day in the first instance, although should there be a second occurrence a call will be made home with the requirement for a parent/carer to collect the phone on their child's behalf. If confiscation happens on a third occasion, pupils will be put into IMPACT.
3. The restriction is in place at all times while pupils are in the grounds of the school building, this includes when pupils arrive and leave at the end of the day. Mobile devices and phones should be away before pupils enter the school grounds and not accessed until they have left the site. The ban also applies to school trips.
4. Should pupils wish to use their phone at the end of the day to contact parents with any concerns or for collection following enrichment after school, pupils are asked to report to the school reception where a member of staff will allow them to call home.

**What do we do if....**

- **A pupil needs to contact home in an emergency**- they must speak with a member of staff who will deal with the matter. Pupils should not contact home themselves in the case of illness; this should only be done by a member of staff.
- **A parent needs to contact pupils in an emergency during school hours** - they should contact the school reception and a message will be taken to the student. Parents are reminded that pupils should not have their phones turned on whilst on the school premises and, hence, will be unable to check for messages.
- **A pupil needs to check home learning on ClassChart**- they should discuss home learning with their subject teacher. In the event that they cannot contact their subject teacher, they can go to their House Tutor/ Head of Year/ Progress Leader.
- **A pupil needs to check their timetable**- printed timetables for all year groups will be visibly displayed in the Year areas (Year 7 on A floor, Year 8 on A floor, Year 9 on E floor, Year 10 on the B3 corridor, Year 11 on D floor).
- **A pupil needs to use a calculator in a lesson**- all pupils are encouraged to have a maths department recommended calculator as part of their learning equipment pack these can be purchased on the following website; <https://www.sciencestudio.co.uk/product-category/product-type/calculators/scientific-calculators/> Or the RENU S 2-Line Engineering Scientific Calculator or the Casio fx-83GTX Scientific Calculator can be searched for online. Alternatively, students can borrow calculators from their subject teachers.

If you have any concerns about the mobile devices ban, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With kind regards,



**Mrs Victoria O'Farrell**  
**Vice Principal**