

19 February 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian

## MOBILE PHONES

Following the guidance released today by the Department for Education which states: '**Mobile phones will be banned in schools across England under new guidance issued to teachers**', I am taking this opportunity to remind everyone about our procedures in relation to mobile phones. I would ask you to keep prompting your daughters and sons of this and I thank you in advance for your support.

We of course understand that parents may wish their child to carry a mobile phone for their personal safety, so as a school, we take a sensible and practical approach with this in mind.

However, as I'm sure you can understand, it remains vitally important towards maintaining our 'Priory Standard' and in terms of our culture in the school, that mobile phones do not pose a safeguarding risk to others, do not distract from pupils' learning or become a source of conflict between pupils or between pupils and staff. Our procedures, therefore, intend to ensure that all our pupils feel safe, always, and that they cannot be filmed, photographed or recorded without their permission. Equally, a substantial body of evidence, most recently published by the Royal Society for Public Health, confirms that there is a clear link between mobile phone usage in teenagers and an increased susceptibility to anxiety and depression.

So, whilst mobile phones can be brought into school, to minimise any detrimental impact they may have on our core purpose of 'Learning to Succeed', every day, the following applies once pupils enter the school grounds:

- Mobile phones must be 'off and out of sight', always.
- They should not be seen on the school site at any time.
- All pupils have a locker, so we advise them to store phones securely in their locker at the start of the day.
- If not in their locker, then they should be kept in their bags, but they must be 'off and out of sight', always.
- The only exception is that they may be used in the school reception area after 3:20pm to contact parents regarding travel arrangements, with the permission of a member of staff.
- If your daughter or son needs to contact home for any reason during the school day, they should go to either the school reception or the Pastoral office, at either break or lunchtime, and we will allow them to use a school phone.
- To support us in implementing our procedures, we would ask that if you need to contact your daughter or son during the school day, that you ring the school and a message will be passed on to your daughter or son by a member of staff.
- If you require a response to the message from your daughter or son, a member of staff will allow them to use a school phone to call you.
- Pupils who bring mobile phones into school do so entirely at their own risk.



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- The school cannot accept any responsibility for theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential or actual) resulting from their use.

### **Consequences:**

- Any pupil seen by a member of staff with a mobile phone will have the device confiscated by that member of staff for it not being 'off and out of sight'.
- Mobile phones confiscated by a member of staff at breaks or lunch time, will be taken to the Pastoral office, where they will be named and locked away securely until the end of the day.
- If a mobile phone is confiscated by a member of staff during a lesson, a member of the Pastoral Team or Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will come to the lesson to collect the mobile phone and take it to the Pastoral office for secure storage.
- Confiscated mobile phones may be collected by the pupil, from the Pastoral Office, at the end of the day, and they will be issued with an SLT After School Detention.
- If any pupil refuses to give any member of staff their mobile phone for it not being 'off and out of sight', the pupils' parent/guardian will be contacted, and the pupil will be sent home.
- The following morning, the parent/guardian will need to come into school with their daughter or son to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Persistent flouting of the mobile phone rules will result in inclusion in our isolation and reflection room.
- As such, a pupil who persistently has their mobile phone confiscated will result in the device being placed in the school safe until a parent or guardian is able to come to school to collect the device and speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

**Remember, 'Off and out of sight' always.**

Finally, being a teenager is hard enough, but the pressures faced by young people through the use of mobile phones are arguably unique to this digital generation. It is vitally important therefore, that we not only put safeguards in place, but in so doing, provide our pupils with some welcome 'time out' from their phones to focus on their learning.

With this in mind, pupils can also choose to hand their mobile phones in to us at the Pastoral office, for safe storage, for a period of time should they so wish. This may be a for a day, a week, or longer, and we are happy to accommodate any such request, with parent's or guardian's approval. Pupils' preparing for exams for example, in a bid to avoid any unnecessary distractions, may find this particularly useful as part of their approach to revision. Please do speak to your daughter or son about this, as a viable option at certain times in their learning journey with us.

Once again, thank you for your continuing support with our procedures as a school in relation to mobile phones.

Yours faithfully



**Mr M Eastham**  
**Principal**