



The Federation of St Elphege's and Regina Coeli Catholic Schools



St Elphege's

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Executive Head Teacher: Mrs F Hawkes OBE

Head of School: Mr M Jones

Head of School: Mrs K Jones

Deputy Head Teachers:

Mrs T Christoforou, Mrs. R Duffy, Mrs C Guilmartin-Cole, Mr L Hawkes

Friday, 14 September 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

The schools make every effort to ensure that children are educated about how to keep themselves and others safe online and how to conduct themselves appropriately in the online world. In the most part, our children are able to *articulate* what they must do to remain safe online and what is considered inappropriate online behaviour. However, despite being able to *articulate* these values, many children do not have the maturity to conduct themselves appropriately.

I would urge all parents and carers to read Sajid Javid's, (Home Secretary) speech from the 3rd September 2018 regarding the growing problems associated with child abuse online. I am sure after reading the speech you will agree that it is imperative for parents and carers to monitor their child's phone and electronic devices. Parents, carers and schools must be vigilant in ensuring young people are safe online.

Over the last few years, there has been a significant increase in the number of children who are bringing a Smart Phone to school. This, in turn, has resulted in an increase in the number of incidents in which pupils have acted inappropriately towards other pupils online. Whilst the vast majority of these incidents occur outside of school hours, the impact of them often spills into school time, disrupting the learning, wellbeing and safety of our pupils and taking-up valuable staff time.

For these reasons, **I have made the decision that pupils will no longer be permitted to bring a Smart Phone to school.** However, I do appreciate that many children travel to and from school alone and bring a phone in case of emergency. Therefore, I will allow pupils who travel to and from school alone to bring a very basic mobile phone which is capable of SMS text messaging and phone calls only. The only contacts permitted to be saved on the phone will be family members or those responsible for caring for your child; pupils will not be allowed to have the contact details of other pupils on the phone. Should you wish to send your child to school with a basic mobile phone, it will continue to be collected at the start of the day, stored in the school office and returned at the end of the day. Any Smart Phones brought into school after **Friday 14th September 2018** will be held in the school office until a parent or carer is able to come into school to collect it.

I thank you in advance of your understanding on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs F Hawkes

Executive Head Teacher