

26th September 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to inform you of a change to rules around mobile phones that will come into effect after October half term. We are planning to ban all use of mobile phones in the college between 8:40am and the end of the school day. Students will be expected to keep phones completely out of view and switched off between these times, including at break and lunch.

As you will be only too aware as parents, mobile phones can be very useful to families but phones and social media can also cause many issues for our young people and for us as adults.

Unfortunately, we are seeing an increase in the misuse of phones at breaks and lunchtimes in school. An increasing number of students are also complaining about pictures and comments being posted about them on social media. We are also having to deal with regular fall outs in school from comments sent at break and lunch. This can cause serious upset which can subsequently hinder our young peoples' ability to learn throughout the day.

The other issue we have is our young people contacting you at home about feeling unwell or being upset before they speak to a member of staff. This can be very worrying for you and very difficult for us to then deal with in school.

Finally, given everything we read and hear about the impact of social media on our young peoples' wellbeing I would like to think that a screen free school day will provide a break from this world. There has been a significant amount of research into the damaging effects of social media on mental health. It has also been shown to prevent people from learning key social skills and understanding how to make long lasting and meaningful friendships. If students can improve their social skills this can have an impact on their ability to communicate, which in turn may help some students in lessons and dealing with their emotions. Ultimately, time away from screens learning social skills and developing friendships can only benefit our young people and further enable their ability to become a successful part of our community.

I hope you understand and support our move. If you do need to contact your child urgently during the school day please contact our main number. Messages will be passed on to students.

The consequence for a phone being used in school will be confiscation and you will be asked to collect it. As you will understand if we simply return the phone to the child ourselves at the end of the day it is not a sanction.

If you have any concerns as to how this change in rules will affect your child please contact your child's pastoral leader for clarification or reassurance.

Yours sincerely



Mrs R England
Headteacher