

Dear Parent/Carer(s),

Thank you very much for your time in helping us with our mobile phone surveys last term. Your opinion and views are important to us and after careful consideration and further student consultation, the College has decided to adopt a 'mobile device free' policy for our Year 7-11 students during school hours from Monday 2nd November 2020. This is part of our ongoing efforts to ensure our students meet their academic potential, and to safeguard their emotional health and wellbeing. Year 7 students have already been adhering to this policy since they started with us in September.

There is a growing and robust body of evidence that mobile device use by students in schools harms academic achievement and that the negative effect the distraction of a mobile phone has on students' achievement reinforces insecure progress. It has become increasingly clear that unrestricted mobile device use is a risk to the mental health of the adolescent students we serve.

For example, a 2018 study (published in June 2019) by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development found that cyberbullying in English schools is significantly and profoundly more prevalent than in any other developed country. We have seen an escalation in the number of incidents of cyberbullying that we have had to deal with in recent years and even since our return, taking precious time away from the classroom for teachers.

You will be aware that our Government are still considering the ban, however we do not believe that we can or should wait for the problem to be addressed systemically, and feel we should take this step, as other schools in this country and governments and states across the world have done. Our policy is outlined in more detail on the enclosed document, but in short, and for clarity, our 'mobile device free' policy means that from Monday 2nd November 2020:

- 1) For Year 11 students and below, mobile devices must not be used, seen, or heard at any point anywhere on the College site.
- 2) We will have a week of no confiscations to give students and staff the opportunity to have positive conversations and reminders about the new policy.
- 3) From the week beginning 9th November if a student breaches this rule, without express permission in exceptional circumstances, mobile devices will be confiscated, within our Covid safety guidelines.

We thank you in advance for your support and should be grateful if you would discuss these changes and reiterate your support with your child. We will communicate the changes to students through tutor time to ensure that all students are aware of the new policy starting after October half term.

Yours sincerely



Derrick Brett
Principal

