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Re: Use of Mobile phones in school

Dear Parents and Carers,

Over recent months there has been growing concern reported in the media of the negative impact of mobile phones on children's mental health and wellbeing. We are aware that many of our students bring a mobile phone to school and they are useful when needing to communicate home regarding transport home, staying in school for a club or similar day-to-day arrangements.

This year due to restrictions in meeting friends in other year groups we relaxed our rules on mobile phones so that students could use their phones at break and lunchtimes; previously we had a ban of any phone use on site. We are continuing to review our phone policy for the remainder of this academic year and will decide whether or not we need to reinstate our previous rules restricting any phone use at all.

We want our students to act responsibly and only to use their phones during lunch and breaktime while on the playing field and not to use them in lessons or in tutor time where they are an unwanted distraction. We want our students, as do you as parents/carers, to be fully engaged in lessons and not to be distracted by phones.

Our rule about mobile phones in school is: 'Phones are not to be seen or heard in school and can only be used during break or lunchtime on the field or on the tennis courts.' If they are seen at any other time, they will be confiscated and put in a safe place for collection at the end of the school day (ie pupils should not be 'checking messages' on the way to/from the field/tennis courts). Those students who have chosen not to follow these simple expectations will risk their phones having to be collected by parents/carers and the student will be issued with an after-school detention.

I recognise that there may be occasions when a member of staff invites a pupil to use their phone for learning. For example, they can be valuable in GCSE Dance so that pupils can listen to and rehearse their own piece of music under the specific direction of the class teacher, and in such a case, phone use will be permitted.

I hope that you will continue to support us in our quest to combat the distraction phones create and in the message that we are sending out about how important it is for children to prioritise their learning whilst in school.

Yours sincerely,

James Davidson
Headteacher