

Our Ref: PGR/EW/mobilephonelett2011

20 May 2011

Dear Parent/Carer

We wrote to parents earlier in the year to reaffirm the school's position with regard to the use of mobile phones in school. In the letter, we acknowledged that pupils see mobile phones as a 'must have' item; we also acknowledged that, in emergency situations, the mobile phone could be really useful. However, we stated that, for all the right reasons, mobile phones should not be used in school.

Our position has not changed and, yet, a growing number of pupils have had phones confiscated as a result of having their phones out in school. The reliance that some pupils are placing on their phones, including their inability to go any length of time without using them, is a worry; some pupils have become visibly distraught at the thought of having their phone confiscated, after having been seen using it in school.

I feel that it is timely to remind everyone of our position with regard to mobile phones to avoid any further upset. Ideally, our view is that pupils don't bring these phones to school to avoid any temptation to use them. However, if, against our advice, they are brought to school they should remain **out of sight and switched off**, in the bottom of bags, for the duration of the school day, including break and lunchtimes. All pupils will be briefed in assemblies over the next week by way of a reminder.

As stated in the school's letter of September 2010, if a pupil is found using a mobile phone or an MP3 device, it will be confiscated and held at Reception until a parent/carer can come to school to collect it. Alternatively, the phone/MP3 device will be returned to the pupil after five school days.

Please be aware that there are a number of landline phones in school should you wish to contact us on behalf of your child; similarly children have access to a phone in pupil point should there be a reason why they need to contact you.

This letter is also timely as we are approaching the busiest examination period of the school year. Examination boards take a firm line where mobile phones are taken into examination rooms. Last year, even though pupils were told to hand in phones prior to the exam and have them returned at the end, six students disregarded this instruction. The resultant action from the examination boards was that pupils paid a significant price when they were given a zero mark for the exam.

I would ask, therefore, that you support the school in the measures outlined above. I do believe that technology can enrich our lives; unfortunately it can also lead to less positive outcomes when used irresponsibly.

On the subject of technology, can I take this opportunity to encourage you, as parents, who are still receiving hard copies of correspondence, to consider the option of receiving mail via 'Schoolcomms'. This will enable you to receive information from school quickly and efficiently. For further details, please contact school and ask for North Office.

Yours sincerely



Mr P Gallagher
Deputy Head