



Dear parent/carer,

Our current school rule regarding the use of mobile phones have been in place for a number of years. It is clear and simple and it is shared with students. It states whilst students (or their parents/carers) may wish to have a phone for communication on their way to and from school, phones should be switched off and put away from 8.25am until 3.00pm; from 'bell to bell'.

Phones have caused an increasing number of issues over recent months. They are proven to be a distraction to students in lessons, with work being missed and learning being lost as some students have surreptitiously tried to use their phone in lessons. In addition, a small number of students have wasted time in between lessons by using their phones. This has led to some late arrivals to lessons, causing disruption to the teaching and learning that is taking place. There have also been incidents of poor behaviour that has been caused by phone use during the school day. All of these scenarios were identified as examples of inappropriate phone use in the 'Mobile Phones in Schools' guidance that was published by the Department for Education in February 2024.

We will be clarifying our expectations with students this week, and a phone reset will start on the first day after half-term (Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February). This will see clear and consistent sanctions applied to any students that are choosing not to follow these expectations.

All students were issued with a new paper timetable upon their return to school in January and they will receive another copy on 24<sup>th</sup> February. This highlights that there is no need for students to use their phone for this purpose. Equally, please can I remind you that if you need to contact your child whilst they are at school, this should be done through the Head of Year office as their phones must be turned off and in their bags. If students need to know the time, they should use the clocks in class, use a watch or ask a member of staff. Phones will not be used at any point for part of their learning in lessons or around the site. A recent survey showed that the vast majority of Year 10 students use their fingerprint or their card to pay for food in North canteen. From 24<sup>th</sup> February, the two methods of payment in North canteen for students will be card and fingerprint. Phones will not be able to be used for payment.

If a student's phone is seen at any point during the school day, it will be confiscated and will need to be collected from the Head of Year office at the end of the day. If it happens for a second time, the student will lose their phone for that day and will have to hand their phone in for the next day and will have it returned the next day after a 45 minute detention. If their phone has to be confiscated for a third time, they will have it confiscated for the day, will receive a 90 minute SLT detention and will have a 5 day phone ban in school, during which time they will have to hand their phone in. Failure to hand a phone over to a member of staff upon request will result in escalated sanctions.

I fully appreciate that the vast majority of students are not currently using their phones in school. However, to support the wellbeing, behaviour and learning of all students, and to ensure that all students are able to remain engaged and present in all areas of their school life, these steps will be implemented from 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025. As quoted in the Department for Education guidance, this will also "protect students from the background noise of their lives outside of school... giving the headspace and calm to focus on their lessons."

As ever, your support for the school in maximising your child's potential is greatly appreciated in this matter.

With kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ms Fearon', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Ms Fearon  
Headteacher