



Dear Parent/Carer

13<sup>th</sup> February 2019

As we approach the end of the half term I would like to say thank you to everyone for what has been a positive start to the New Year. Following our return there has been the standard activities to support all students with a focus on clarity of requirements in the New Year.

I am particularly pleased with the positive response to the Behaviour and Reward system which will further enhance communication between home and school and further support students within their academic studies.

A real focus for us as a school has been to ensure the very best climate for learning so that students are fully prepared for lessons and any distraction is eliminated. To support this, you may be aware that we have made the decision to ban the use of mobile phones within school because of the negative effect on student learning. This decision has not been taken lightly as we have done significant research into the topic to look at what the issues are. Students were informed in assembly and students have been given the opportunity to adjust to the new way of working this week with the policy fully implemented from Monday 25<sup>th</sup> February.

To ensure that the policy is clear, the school website is being updated to reflect how the policy will be implemented, although the basic principles areas a listed below.

1. Mobile phones should be **'off and away'** at all times, any phone seen or heard will be confiscated, this includes phones on display in shirt pockets or even when used for checking the time etc.
2. Phones that are confiscated will be returned to students at the end of the day in the first instance, although should there be a second occurrence a call will be made home with the requirement for a parent / carer to collect the phone on their child's behalf
3. The restriction is in place at all times while students are in the grounds of the school building, this includes when students arrive and leave at the end of the day. Phones should be away before students enter the school grounds and not accessed until they have left the site. (Switched off mobile phones should be handed over to reception to be stored safely and collected at the end of the academic day.)
4. Should students wish to use their phone at the end of the day to contact parents with any concerns or for collection following school based activities they are asked to use the main reception area of the school where phones may be used during this time.

We would very much encourage you to not allow your child to carry a phone at all. We will collect phones for safe keeping at the start of the academy day. These will be placed in names envelopes and collected at the end of the day. We will be a mobile phone free school. This is very much in line with the latest government advice for schools and academies.

We would ask that you further discuss this with your child over the half term break and thank you for your support.

**Principal - Thomas Raymond**

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## Feedback on the use of mobile phones in school

·We have spent a great deal of time over the last few months examining the impact of the use of mobile phones in School. We have spoken to staff, students and parents and have looked at the latest research regarding their use in a school setting.

·In the UK, more than 90% of teenagers own a mobile phone. The prevalence of these devices pose problems for Head teachers and in many cases attitudes to their use has hardened as they have become more ubiquitous.

·Risk of theft inside and outside the academy. The rise in popularity of high value smartphones, which thieves can resell for cash puts the students at risk.

·In a survey conducted in 2001, no schools banned mobile phones. By 2007, this had risen to 50% and by 2012 some 98% of schools either did not allow mobile phones on school premises or required them to be handed in at the beginning of the day.

·Our experience at Oasis Arena is that mobile phones are increasingly involved in creating confrontation between staff and students in school and have also been very influential in inappropriate gatherings of students either before or after the school day. The situation is further complicated by many students and parents seeing it as their "right" to have constant use of a device.

·As well as the obvious social disadvantages of phone use in school, recent has cast doubt on their educational worth. "Ill communication: The impact of mobile phones on student performance." by Louis –Phillipe Beland and Richard Murphy found that after schools banned mobile phones, the test scores of 16-year-old students improved by 6.4%. The economists reckon this is the "equivalent of adding five days to the school year."

·There is growing evidence that the internet and digital gadgets are making it harder for us to concentrate. The Pew research centre in America surveyed 2,500 teachers and found that they thought the internet had a "mostly positive" impact on student research work, while 87% felt modern technologies were creating an "easily distracted generation with short attention spans." The generation Y report felt that while young people are "undoubtedly capable of long periods of concentration" but those who spend a lot of time alone using technology" tend to have less in the way of communication skills, self-awareness and emotional intelligence."

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