



Kingsthorpe
College

Boughton Green Road
Kingsthorpe
Northampton NN2 7HR
T: 01604 716106
F: 01604 720824

E: Admin@kingsthorpecollege.org.uk
www.kingsthorpecollege.org.uk

Headteacher : Jennie Giovanelli

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Dear Parent / Carer

Re: Mobile Phones

The accessibility to mobile technology is rapidly changing the world in which our young people live and develop. There are many positives to this and we recognise that it can be a powerful and beneficial tool.

We have high expectations for what our students can achieve and are very ambitious about the progress they should make. Our focus on significantly raising standards and expectations is balanced alongside the paramount need to safeguard all within the school community. This has subsequently led us to reflect on the often-damaging role that mobile phones can play in our students' school day and the negative impact they can have on teaching, learning, behaviour and mental health.

More specifically, the wide-spread use of mobile technology poses a significant safeguarding concern in relation to:

- The ability to identify student location through roaming identification.
- The damaging prevalence of antisocial and bullying behaviour through the posting of harmful comments, pictures, videos and messages.
- The detrimental effect and pressures that social media can have on young people's self-esteem and mental health.

There have also been a number of studies into the educational benefits of restricting phone use. For example:

- A study (2017) by the London School of Economics found that in schools where mobiles were banned, the test scores of 16-year-olds improved by 6.4% – the equivalent of adding five days to the school year.
- Research has shown that, whilst outcomes improve across the board when the use of mobiles is restricted, the greatest gains were for lower achieving students and those from lower incomes. The impact of banning phones for these students was equivalent to an additional hour a week in school.
- Between 2006-2012, the number of schools restricting use of mobile phones in school (either by not permitting them or insisting students hand them in) has significantly increased.
- Receiving messages, even if phones are on silent, is a significant and serious distraction to learning.

We firmly believe that giving students a break from constant updates and messages, will not only improve academic progress and outcomes, but will also support safety and benefit their social skills, fostering an environment of positive communication and interaction with peers and adults.



Having considered all of this important evidence, we intend to prohibit the use of mobile phones for all students throughout the school day. This restriction would be in effect from the **moment the students enter the school gates at the start of the day and until they leave at the end of the day**. This will mean that the focus in school will be on learning and for pupils to feel safe.

We know that many parents whole-heartedly agree and already do not allow their children to bring phones to school for a variety of reasons - some of which are linked to the information shared above. Nevertheless, we also acknowledge that for some students, the idea of not having access to their phone during the day will be a challenge. We will continue to educate on the benefits of this decision, whilst providing reassurance to students and parents about how to maintain effective communication between the school and parents in both routine and emergency situations.

As with any major change, there will need to be a period of adjustment in order for all concerned to acclimatise and adjust to the idea. The following table outlines the introduction of this to the school:

Action	Date	Information
Student voice meeting Parent forum feedback	w/c 18 th June 2018	Feedback from students and parents regarding initial policy.
Tutor period feedback	w/c 25 th June 2018	Debate regarding the advantages and disadvantages of preventing the use of mobile phones in schools.
Letter to parents	w/c 2 nd July 2018	Rationale explained behind banning mobile phones.
Year team assemblies	w/c 2 nd July 2018	Students informed of the changes.
'Soft' implementation	9 th -20 th July 2018	Reminder that from 2 nd July, policy will be implemented. If a phone is seen, the students will receive a reminder about the new policy and warned about future consequences. Countdown to policy implementation. Phones will not be confiscated at this stage.
Policy implementation	5 th September 2018	New policy implemented. Please find attached policy.

Please note that, as at present, any valuable items brought into school are entirely the students' responsibility. The school cannot be held responsible for any phones confiscated due to students choosing not to meet our expectations. We do however understand the safety benefits of having a phone for the journey to and from school and that this is something which parents feel strongly about. Nevertheless, we ask for your support in ensuring that all pupils understand that, while in school, phones must be switched off and be out of sight in school bags. The expectation will be simple – if it is seen or heard, it will be confiscated.

Please be assured that our actions are in the best interest of the safety, learning and progress of your child.

Yours sincerely,

Danielle Eddy
Assistant Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead