



16 February 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians

As we continue to monitor, adapt and review our practices, following two years of Covid we believe the time is right to encourage the use of computer devices, instead of mobile phones in College. The pandemic has seen a shift in young people's use of technology during recreational time, which has been shown to correlate with changes in both mental and physical health.

Therefore, after half-term, all students Remove to Upper Five are asked to have their managed device in College, with phones for use only as a back-up during a half term transition period. Students *can* continue to bring their mobile phone into College, but it must remain in their locker or switched off in their bag and **not** be used during the College day (**including break and lunchtimes**) without express permission from a teacher, linked to a specific learning activity.

It is timely to make this adjustment to our mobile phone policy as:

- All students in the Senior School now have a managed device in College and therefore the requirement for another device is unnecessary.
- Face-to-face communication is important at social times such as lunch and breaktime. Since lockdown, we have seen an increase in the number of students using mobile phones in classrooms, which we want to discourage.
- We value kindness. Last term, as part of our ongoing wellbeing provision, we surveyed the students in the Senior School and Sixth Form about the value of kindness in College as well as their experience of on/offline behaviour. We feel that removing access to mobile phones during the College day will support this aim.
- We value parental contact highly and have listened to your feedback on the use of mobile phones in College.
- We encourage all our students to take part in our co-curricular timetable to have fun, develop new skills and form new friendships. Our 'Phone Free Friday' has demonstrated that students can make good use of their lunchtimes without mobile phones.

Sixth Form students are asked to ensure their mobile phone is not used in communal areas, including corridors and The Core. Any inappropriate use will be followed up in accordance with our expectations policy.

We understand that phones are part of how young people, and their families connect, yet we want to prioritise face-to-face contact at school and support our young people to have a healthy relationship with devices, rather than reaching for them as a default. Should your daughter need to contact you during the College day or indeed you need to get a message to her, this can be done via Reception. If you wish to drop off forgotten items including lunchboxes or PE kit, this can also be done via Reception.

I hope that parents and guardians will support us in this change of expectation and that our students will understand that it has their well-being at heart.

Yours sincerely



Dr Vanessa Mitchell
Deputy Principal (Pastoral)