

17<sup>th</sup> of July 2018

Dear Parent/ Carer

## Re. Changes to Use of Mobile Devices

You may be aware of the considerable media coverage recently regarding the use of mobile devices, especially smart phones, in schools.

Much of this coverage has, quite rightly, focussed on evidence suggesting that many young people find the distraction of mobile devices a source of anxiety – even if the devices are not being actively ‘used’. Furthermore, many young people get embroiled, often without intention, in unpleasant communications over social media that cause upset. Finally, there is evidence nationally that incidents relating to online bullying, sexting and other safeguarding issues are, sadly, on the increase.

At Kingsmead, we have, over the last few years tried to foster a positive approach to bringing mobile devices to school. We believe these personal devices can have a tremendously positive part to play in learning. We also believe that, as a school, we have a role to play in educating young people in using technology safely and responsibly.

We still strongly believe this. However, we also have concerns that our previous policy of allowing mobile devices to be used by students during social times creates distractions and issues that are counter-productive. These include some of the concerns mentioned above, but also a noticeable increase in students ‘closing down’ at break and lunchtimes and just ‘playing’ on their phones – often limiting meaningful social interaction with their peers.

Therefore, having discussed the issue fully with governors and staff, we have decided to change our acceptable use policy as from September 2018.

You will shortly receive an email setting a task in Firefly providing a link to read the new policy and to discuss this with your son(s) / daughter(s). At the bottom of the document you are requested to enter your name, the name(s) of your child(ren) and their tutor group(s). Date the form and tick to confirm that you have read and discussed this with your child(ren). If you tick the box we will send you a copy of the completed policy. If you would prefer to receive a paper copy and do not have access to Firefly, please contact the school and we will arrange for this to be sent to you.

**CARE**

**ASPIRATION**

**RESPECT**

**DETERMINATION**

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We do not want to ban mobile devices from Kingsmead. As a rural school, students feel safer travelling to and from school with them. However, our new policy now outlines that students will keep phones/ devices turned off, in their bags at all times, unless requested by staff to use them in lessons.

If students have devices out at any other times, they will be asked politely to put them away. Refusal will result in the device being confiscated for collection at the end of the day.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely



Mark Williams  
Acting Head Teacher  
(From September 2018)



Andrew Dunnett  
Deputy Head Teacher