



KIRK EDGE ROAD ~ WORRALL ~ SHEFFIELD S35 0AE

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Dear Parent/Carer,

At Bradfield School we strive to create a positive and purposeful learning environment for all of our students and we hope to equip our students with the skills and attributes which will allow them to flourish as they move forwards into the world of further study and work. We are committed to ensuring every lesson counts for our students and believe a respectful, orderly environment free from distractions is the best way to achieve this.

In order to create the right environment for learners at Bradfield we have taken the decision to ban the use of mobile phones for years 7 – 11 at Bradfield School. Students are being informed of this during assemblies this week and the policy outlined below will begin as of **Monday 6th November 2017**.

To ensure we are all clear about the policy I have outlined how it will work 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. This will apply from arrival into the building in the morning until students leave the school building at 3.05pm or later if they are in an after-school detention; this includes at break and lunchtime.
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 within the same school year a letter home will let parents/carers know that they need to collect their child's phone from reception during the school opening hours.
3. The restriction is in place at all times while students are in the grounds of the school building, this includes at break and lunchtime.
4. If you have an urgent message which it is essential for your child to know during the school day please contact the school reception and we will pass it on. If your child, in an emergency only, needs to contact you they should go to the school reception desk where we will arrange for one to be made. We envisage very few situations requiring this.
5. If a phone is confiscated from a student they will be given a behaviour point resulting in a fifteen minute detention the following day.
6. Refusal to follow this reasonable request, of handing the phone over in line with the school's protocol, will result in the student receiving further more severe sanctions for defiance.

We are taking this decision as we believe it will help the emotional wellbeing and the learning of our students. As well as the obvious social disadvantages of phone use in school, recent studies have 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. We want to provide the very best education for our students and believe this represents a positive step towards achieving that goal and helping them succeed in their studies.

Furthermore, a recent article highlighted the impact of social media on young adults stating, "girls and young women are experiencing a "gathering crisis" in their mental health linked to conflict with friends, fears about their body image and pressures created by social media, experts have warned." We want to educate students about the safe and appropriate use of social media in lessons but recognise the value in also helping them to develop positive, fulfilling and emotionally intelligent relationships with their peers. The temptation to engage negative and potentially damaging social media conversations will be vastly reduced if none of the students are allowed to use their phones during the school day. Teachers across the country recognise the need to do all we can to support the mental health of our students and Bradfield School believes this decision will play a crucial role in improving the emotional wellbeing of all students.

Finally, following these recent studies, it was suggested, 'one of the best actions to protect young people's mental health is to ban mobile phones in schools. Progressive schools have already done so, recognising the relentless impact that social media and screen time have on the emotional and mental health of their students. Their position is that it gives children six hours of screen-free, and social media-free time, which is desperately needed in an over-saturated digital world.' We agree with this conclusion and have taken this decision for the benefit of all students.

This decision has not been taken lightly but is one the school is now committed to and the rules will be applied to each and every student without exception. I would ask that you speak to your child about this and support us as we strive to improve the education, outcomes and wellbeing of all of the students at Bradfield School.

Yours sincerely,
Chris Wilson
Deputy Headteacher