

Dear parents and carers,

We have been impressed by the start many of our students have made to this first term of the school year. They look smart in their uniform and many of them have really stepped up and shown good focus, attitude and effort.

This year, in line with most schools and best practice, we are making some important changes to our mobile phone policy. During assembly and form times students will be being told and reminded of the new policy. Please read the reasons, guidelines and procedure of how this new policy will work so that you can support your child in following this. We know that our students do best when our big messages, rules and policies are supported and reinforced by you at home.

We understand that mobile phones and technology are now a key part of modern life. Most students own a mobile phone with access to the internet and for safety reasons students will carry a mobile phone to contact home after or before school. However, mobile phones can and often do lead to several problems in school such as bullying, filming, disruption to lessons and inappropriate usage of the internet and social media leading to potential safeguarding issues.

Here at the McKee, we strongly encourage our students to develop socially and emotionally. This development is just as important as any academic progress or examination grades. Improving social skills and emotional development can best be done by talking to each other, interacting and developing real connections at break and lunchtime, as opposed to using their mobile phones.

For these reasons like many other schools our new policy is to completely ban the use of mobile phones on the school site, during school hours. This includes break and lunchtimes. Any student found using their mobile phone during school hours will be dealt with in accordance with our policy and procedure outlined in brief below. Copies of the policy can be found on the school website.

Guidelines and Procedure

1. Mobile phones must remain out of sight and switched off during school hours. **This includes break and lunchtimes.** Phones must not be seen or heard. **On the school site, we are a no phones school.**
2. Any student seen using their mobile phone during school hours, **including break and lunchtimes,** will have their phone confiscated. This is for any reason. Refusal to hand over the mobile phone will result in exclusion.
3. Confiscated phones must be taken to reception where the phone will be stored and the name of the student will be recorded. In the first instance the phone may be returned to the student at the end of the school day by our behaviour manager.
4. For any further breaches of the policy by the same student will require parents or carers to collect the mobile phone from school. Further sanctions will be applied which are proportionate to the level of disruption caused.
5. We appreciate that there are sometimes life events or situations where a student may feel they need contact with home during the day. We ask parents and carers to inform us of this as soon as possible and students will be allowed to use the school phone to speak to home. The mobile phone ban will remain in place.

The policy and new procedures will come into effect on Monday 8th October 2018.

Thank you as always for your support,

