

June 2022

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Dear Parents/Carers

### Parent Survey update

Firstly, I would like to thank everyone who completed our parent survey in May. This information is highly useful, allowing us to continue developing our school.

We are pleased that the following areas continue to be seen as strengths;

- High academic expectations
- High expectations of behaviour
- Good quality and consistent teaching
- Wide ranging clubs and trips
- Student opportunities for leadership
- Strong whole school communication, including use of social media
- Smooth and effective induction
- Very strong pastoral care, with caring and supportive staff

As would be expected there were some areas we can continue to work on. In line with these we are making the following changes;

- Appointment of an Assistant SENCO, SEN administrator and an ESL receptionist, allowing us capacity to respond more efficiently on SEN and pastoral matters.
- We paused school newsletters during Covid, concentrating on the use of social media. On request these will be restarting from the end of this term.
- A review of the student reports so that it is clear how parents can support at home.
- Investing in new student tracking software which, as it develops, will give more regular updates on student progress and how they can improve.
- Following the positive feedback, we will be continuing with the use of online parents evenings next year, however we will be looking to increase the opportunities for parents to visit site. This will include celebration events, student performances and parent forum events.
- We very much recognise the current cost of living crisis and are seeking to support where we can, including;
  - NSfG catering is managed by our school as compared to an external contract. Despite considerable increases in costs, we have taken the decision not to increase our prices again this year, with increased material costs being absorbed by the school.
  - We have started and will continue to develop a second-hand uniform service.
  - We have purchased an additional school minibus (3 in total from September), allowing us to operate more trips without the use of coaches and thereby reducing costs.
  - We have kept our costs for the e-learning scheme to an absolute minimum and not increased this through economies of scale in our purchasing.

## Mobile Phone policy

In the parent survey we consulted on a policy change, this would mean that students would not be able to use mobile phones in school. The proposal is based on creating a safe space where students can escape social media pressures, concentrate on their studies, and develop healthy relationships in person.

This policy was supported by 64% of parents. Those in favour were mainly for the reasons stated above, any concerns focussed on two key areas;

- Parents ability to contact their child during the school day
- Students who use their phone for relaxing or as something to do when not with friends

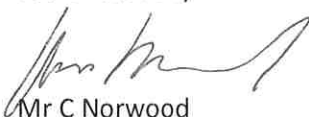
We have taken the above into account and would like to confirm that we are implementing the following policy from 1 July 2022;

- Students will be able to bring phones to school (for use when travelling to/from school), however they must be turned off or on silent and out of sight when on the school site.
- Any student wearing a smart watch must ensure it is in 'school mode' when on site.
- If a parent needs to pass a message to their child, they can use any of the following methods;
  - Contact the school for a message to be passed on via the pastoral team
  - Students will be given a safe space in the ESL area to check their phones at break/lunch time. This is the only area they can check their phones
  - Students will still have access to their emails via their school laptops and can check these through the day
- To support students during social times we are undertaking the following;
  - Investing in a range of activities, including outside table tennis, board/card games and encouraging the use of reading where students wish to have time to themselves (with a further investment in library books)
  - Students who arrive at school early are encouraged to use this time for reading, completing homework and undertaking additional leadership/volunteering activities
  - Increasing the range of clubs at lunchtime
- Students who are seen with a mobile phone will have it confiscated and taken to student reception. They will be able to collect the phone after a 15 minute after school detention.
- If a student is seen with their phone more than once within a term we will ask parents to collect the device from main reception.
- Sixth Form students will be able to use their phone in the Sixth Form block only, in recognition of their transition into university/workplace practices

We are excited about this change as we feel it will have a positive impact on students personal and academic development.

Finally, I would like to thank all students and parents for your support during this recent exam season. Despite the difficulties caused by the recent pandemic our students have responded with an extremely high level of maturity and engagement with their teachers. It has been a pleasure to see how they have worked with us as one team, I look forward to what I am sure will be some very impressive results in the summer.

Yours faithfully



Mr C Norwood  
Headteacher