

1 July 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian

Mobile Phone Ban

We have recently been in the process of reviewing our mobile phone policy here at Maiden Erlegh School. We have carried out extensive research to enable us to make well-informed decisions about mobile phones and their use at our school.

At Maiden Erlegh School we strive to provide our students with the skills and attributes that they need in order to succeed in a modern society. Not only this, but the safety, wellbeing and happiness of our students is our absolute priority. **Therefore, we have decided that as of 1 September 2019, students will no longer be permitted to use their mobile phones throughout the duration of the school day.** Please note that this includes other electronic devices such as iPads, smart watches and any other electronic device that has access to the internet.

In practice this will mean that students who wish to bring their mobile phone to school, will need to switch them off before they enter the school gates in the morning and put it in their bag. They will then be expected to keep the device switched off until they exit the school gates at the end of the school day. In the case of an emergency, they can see their Head of Year or go to reception and make a call.

This decision has largely been made due to two concerns, the first being the time students are spending in front of screens and devices. Research carried out by another secondary school has shown that on average, **many students are spending up to 40 hours per week on their devices.** To put this into context, this time equates to:

- **Almost 2 full days out of a 7-day week.**
- **Approximately 7 full days out of a month.**
- **Approximately 80 full days out of a year.**
- **1 year out of a 5 year period.**

These figures are concerning. This is the amount of time the average secondary school student could be spending on their device. This has proven to become a major source of distraction for many of our students, potentially causing them to fall short on achieving their target GCSE grades. Students need to be able to concentrate whilst being separated from their devices. Students need to practise and develop this skill. By not giving our students extended periods of time away from their devices to really engage with their learning, we are robbing them of this opportunity.

Secondly, we are concerned by, in some instances, the inappropriate and unnecessary use of smartphones and social media during the school day and the impact this is having on the well-being and safety of our students as well as their general ability to engage with their studies and achieve their potential.

Sixth Form students are permitted to bring their mobile telephones and iPods into school and can use these in the common room, study area and tutor and teaching rooms when directed by a teacher. When walking around the school site they must not use their devices or have them visible; this includes earphones which should not be visible or used whilst walking around the school site. Failure to comply with these rules, could result in students' phones being confiscated for a period of time.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



Mr P Gibson
Headteacher