

7th May 2019

Dear Parents & Carers

MOBILE PHONES IN SCHOOL

I am sure that you will all appreciate how contentious an issue mobile phones in school is? Indeed, I am sure they can often be a bone of contention in your own family lives?

At the college, we seek to ensure that every child, is given every opportunity, to learn and be successful in stimulating and supported ways and in a safe environment. On the one hand, mobile technology can be augmentative and enabling but on the other, it can be irksome and obstructive for some children and young people.

Research (compiled by my colleague, Mark Roberts) indicates that schools that ban mobile phones have seen test scores improve by 6.4% on average (or the equivalent of adding five days' of teaching to each child's school year) but equally, 41% of students feel moderately to highly anxious if they cannot check their text messages and one in five children felt the same if they could not check their social networks. I also appreciate that there are logical and sensible assumptions and assertions related to safeguarding that would mitigate against a phone ban but that an American study has revealed that 1.1 million students who spent time on electronic devices had lower levels of psychological well-being than peers who had little comparative engagement with such technology. Additionally, 45% of students in another study reported that they had received "sexts" via their smartphones. I do not have time in this short communication to expound "pro's" and "con's" arguments in relation to bullying. You will almost certainly have your own views.

I would therefore like to invite you to engage with the college as we consult all stakeholders, students included, about whether we should take the step to bar students from having mobile phones in school.

We have created a temporary e-mail address; parentphone@tavistockcollege.org I invite you most warmly to send your views and thoughts about student mobile phone being brought into the college to this address by Friday 17 May 2019 at the latest. This feedback will then contribute towards the decision making process in relation to this issue.

May I thank you most sincerely, in anticipation, for your much appreciated response to this letter.

Warm regards.

Yours sincerely



Barbara Manning

Vice Principal

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

Together; we care, we challenge, we excel