

9th February 2024

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

I hope this letter finds you well, I am writing to update you regarding mobile phones and electronic devices in the Academy. At Media City we want to support our pupils to achieve their dream job and become good people and we know that great learning underpins this. We have noticed that for some pupils mobile phones have become a distraction to learning and a negative influence upon mental health and well-being. Due to this we feel strongly as a school community that the *use* of electronic devices and mobile phones (other than Academy devices to support learning) are to be banned during the school day. Research tells us that schools that have banned the use of mobile phones are seeing a significant rise in outcomes, improved mental health and social interaction skills. This for us, gives a strong rationale for banning their use.

Next Steps

Monday 12th February 2024 – share new approach with pupils.

Wednesday 14th February 2024 – daily reminders to pupils about the ban on electronic devices.

Monday 26th February 2024 – Mobile phone/electronic device ban implemented.

FAQs

What will happen if my child is using their phone on the school premises or during the school day?

Staff will request that pupils hand their device(s) in, these will be stored in a secure place and will be clearly labelled ready for collection at the end of the same day. In an attempt to discourage use of electronic devices we will operate an escalated approach:

- First offence – Device handed-in, pupil can collect at the end of the same day. Parent/Carer informed.
- Second offence – Device handed-in, parent/carers must collect.
- Third offence – Device handed-in, parent/carers must collect. Parent/carers to attend a meeting.

Can my child bring their phone/electronic device to school?

Yes of course, we ask that they are switched off and out of sight during the school day and when on the school premises.

What if I can't collect my child's phone/electronic device?

That's ok, we will keep any devices secured at the Academy and keep until it is convenient for you to collect.

What will happen if my child refuses to hand in their electronic device/mobile phone?

This is something we all want to avoid and as such we will also have an escalated approach to this:

Subject restorative>reflection room>suspension

Please encourage your child to not use their device in school to avoid the above escalation, we are giving lots of advance warning to avoid this.

What happens if I need to speak to my child during the school day?

There are rare occasions whereby you may need to speak with your child for emergency reasons, if this is the case, please contact the academy via the main number and we will endeavour to pass on messages or collect your child to use an Academy phone. If we feel that your child needs to speak with you we will provide a private space using an academy phone to contact you.

Can devices be used during breaks/lunches?

No, we want pupils to communicate with their friends, develop their social skills and be present with each other.

I really find it hard to separate my child from their phone, can you help?

Yes, absolutely, we want our pupils to use their electronic devices responsibly and in moderation. We can work with you to put in place plans to avoid overuse and misuse and will support you in ensuring your child is meeting the Academy expectations. We will also be educating pupils on how to use devices responsibly and sharing further information on how parents/carers can monitor their child's use.

We are really looking forward to working together with you and your child(ren) on this new and important change and we know that we can rely on your support in the coming days and weeks.

I would ask that you discuss this important and permanent change with your child to ensure a smooth transition.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Mrs J Copeland
Assistant Principal

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