

Ref: SAF/SLT/tlb

Friday 16th June 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

'An estimated 1 in 4 children and young people have problematic smartphone usage'

Problematic smartphone usage is associated with poor mental health, poor behaviours and poor educational attainment.

At Newquay Tretherras, we have made the decision to **ban mobile phones at school from September 2023**. The only exception will be any students who need their phones for medical purposes.

We are making this move in line with many schools across the country. The reality is, that phones in schools have a far more negative impact than they do positive. **This new expectation will be included in the Home – School Agreement that you sign as parents**, and so a new form will be emailed to you at the end of term, in readiness for September.

As a school, we cannot ignore the research (from Kings College, London, among others) around phone use in young people:

- Persistent or dysfunctional phone use in young people can lead to poor social skills, addictive behaviours, aggression and poor sleeping habits
- There is a strong link between persistent social media use and depression in young people
- 'Absent phone anxiety' is increasing (where young people become 'panicky' or 'upset' when denied access to their phones)
- Phones in schools can be misused and create incidents of bullying or off task behavior
- Banning phones in school improves students' academic performance

Currently phones are banned for Year 7 but other students are allowed access to their phones during break and lunch outside of the school building. However, after carefully considering the research evidence, our own observations of students' phone use, and government advice on clearer guidelines around phones in schools, we have made the decision that students will not be allowed phones on site at any time.

Our priority is the **safety and well-being** of our students, and sadly, we are seeing increasingly poor use of phones during social times.

Should students break these rules, the following will be actioned:

- **The phone will be confiscated, to be collected by the student at the end of the school day**

- **Persistent breaking of the rules will result in the school issuing an after-school detention. In addition, the student will be required to hand the phone into reception on entering school site, to be collected as they leave.**

Should students need to contact home for any reason, they can use Student Services, who will be happy to help.

As parents, the idea that your children are not on phones during social times and arrival to / from school (which could be as much as 3 hours of additional screen time per day, 15 hours a week) may well be a welcomed statistic for you as families.

For our young people to be successful citizens, they need to be able to look people in the eye; communicate with confidence; and form positive relationships away from a screen – we are committed to developing happy, healthy young people who contribute to make society well.

We are asking for your absolute support in this – working together will make a real difference.

Yours sincerely



MRS S FAIRBAIRN
Executive Headteacher