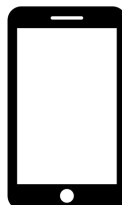


The Use of Mobile Phones

IT Advice Sheets, Information Technology, ICHK Secondary



Looking beyond the school laptop, it is useful to consider smartphones and other mobile devices.

Mobile phone use in school is strongly discouraged, and **we advise parents to avoid giving their children smartphones until the age of 14 at the earliest**. In our experience smartphones tend to give rise to many of the problems commonly associated with the use of digital technology, but in a more portable, insistent and inescapable package. Behaviour around these devices can rapidly become hard to manage if early steps are not taken to create routine expectations around their use. Even then, for many students, these devices are simply too compelling to be used in moderation.

Those students in Years 7-11 who do bring a phone to school are required to power the phone off during the school day and place it in a phone pouch each morning. Students may occasionally use a phone, with prior teacher permission, for purposes that further learning, but this is never required.

Students seen using a phone during the school day will be politely approached by a member of staff and given an opportunity to explain its purpose and their permission to use it. Should students need to contact their parents, or vice versa, they can do so via the phone at our Reception (2655 9018). For parents and students who enjoy the security provided by being able to call their children on the way to and from school, we find that a [feature phone](#) can be useful for student independence, offering the ability to call and direct message, without the many trappings of a smartphone.

Whether or not your child has a smartphone, we recommend that you discuss your expectations for phone use as a family. Even if your child does not have a smartphone, it is likely that many of their friends will, and unhelpful habits can take root if early steps are not taken to manage expectations and usage. As adults, we can encourage our children to use mobile phones responsibly by modelling healthy and responsible phone use ourselves.

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