

**An Ashmole Trust School**

CEO: Mr Tim Sullivan
Head Teacher: Mr Balbinder Dhinsa
'Excellence, Aspiration and Care'

18th September 2024

Dear Parent/Carer(s)

Re: Use of Mobile Phones in Schools

You may be aware that mobile use in schools has been in the media this week following the guidance issued to schools in February on the use of mobile phones. We strongly agree that schools have a duty of care to create an environment that is calm and safe for students to learn, and at Ashmole we are pleased that we already have an established practice of being a phone-free school.

Not only does the implementation of this policy help reduce the impact of a student becoming distracted in lessons but it also makes a safe space where pupils are protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media and cyber-bullying, as well as the peer pressure and possible stigma associated with having what are often expensive devices. We recognise the benefit that reducing screen time has on young people's mental health and know that by not allowing mobile phones at Ashmole, students and young people can spend more time socialising face to face and staying active, activities which have a positive impact on their welfare. We are also aware of the many reported incidents of young people who are in possession of a mobile phone being targeted victims of crime on their way to and from school; another reason why we feel strongly that students should not be in possession of a phone.

In exceptional circumstances mobile phones are permitted for medical reasons such as tracking diabetes and blood sugars. Furthermore, permission may also be granted for those students who travel a longer distance from the school independently. In such instances, the student must hand their phone in at reception and then collect it at the end of the day. In these highly exceptional circumstances, prior permission must be given by the school.

We regularly educate students on the reasons why we have always taken this standpoint and remind students of our school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones. We also remind students that if they are found with a mobile phone, they will serve a 45-minute Leadership Detention and will have the phone confiscated for a period of one week. This will then be returned to the parent/carers.

Regular random bag searches will be conducted across all year groups to check for mobile phones and banned items by the pastoral teams to support us in maintaining our high standards for behaviour.

As parents/carers, we fully recognise the important role you have in supporting our school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones at Ashmole and thank you for your continued support in reinforcing this policy. We also encourage you to discuss some of the potential risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment with your child.

Yours faithfully

Miss V Clarke
Assistant Head Teacher

Cecil Road, Southgate, London N14 5RJ • Tel: 020 8361 2703
E-mail: office@ashmoleacademy.org • Website: www.ashmoleacademy.org

Ashmole Trust Registered in England & Wales. Registered address: Cecil Road, Southgate, London N14 5RJ. Company Reg. No. 07375627

