



15th July 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Online Safety and Mobile Phones – A Message to Parents

As technology continues to play a significant role in young people's lives, we would like to take this opportunity to remind families about the importance of online safety, responsible use of social media, and our expectations regarding mobile phones in school.

Deepfakes and Artificial Intelligence

Recent advances in artificial intelligence (AI) have made it increasingly easy to create convincing images, videos and audio recordings that appear to show someone saying or doing something they never actually did. These are often referred to as "**deepfakes**."

Unfortunately, young people can encounter or share this content without fully understanding the impact it may have. Deepfakes can lead to bullying, reputational damage, misinformation and, in some cases, serious safeguarding concerns.

We have shared a very simple message with students in our safeguarding assemblies **-they do not have permission to use the personal data (images, names, information) about any member of staff or students**. They include any loopholes such as using a similar name or photo. They should not be discussing the school or teachers or students on social media platforms. The school will report any accounts using deepfake or misuse of social media to the police.

We encourage families to speak with their children about:

- Questioning whether online content is genuine before sharing it.
- Reporting inappropriate or harmful content immediately.
- Understanding that creating, sharing or editing images of others without permission can have serious consequences.
- Treating online interactions with the same respect and kindness expected in person.

We strongly advise you to check your children's phone regularly as there could be serious consequences if they are linked to these accounts or creating 'deepfake' content. We are a 'telling' school where we encourage our young people to be 'upstanders' not 'bystanders'.

Social Media, Harassment and Online Bullying

We have also seen an increase nationally in students taking photographs, screenshots and videos of others and sharing them through social media platforms without consent.

Students must not:

- Take photographs or videos of staff or other students without permission.
- Share images, videos or recordings of staff or students online.
- Create, edit or distribute content designed to embarrass, ridicule or target others.
- Use AI tools to alter images or recordings of members of the school community.

The safety and privacy of all members of our school community are paramount. Any misuse of images, recordings or social media may result in sanctions and, where appropriate, involvement from external agencies.

Parents can support us by regularly discussing social media use with their child and checking privacy settings on any platforms they access.

Mobile Phones During the School Day

To support learning and minimise distractions, **mobile phones must not be used at any point during the school day.**

Students should:

- Switch phones off before arriving at school.
- Keep phones out of sight throughout the day -in their bags.
- Not use phones during lessons, social times, break times, lunchtime or while moving around the school site.

Our expectation is simple: **phones should not be seen or used during the school day. Government guidance changed on the 29th of June and this is now a legal requirement in schools and the guidance clearly states for no exceptions to this.** Please speak to your child and make sure they are aware that phone use is not allowed under any circumstances. Phone use will result in escalated sanctions such as students being banned from bringing a phone to site. We will be sharing our updated policy in September.

This approach helps students to:

- Focus on learning.
- Engage positively with peers.
- Reduce opportunities for online conflict and cyberbullying during the school day.
- Maintain a safe and productive school environment.

Student Voice

We have shared all of these messages with students in our safeguarding assembly. We think student voice is really important when reviewing our safeguarding policies. Students have all been sent **an optional online survey so they can give feedback about:** online safety, safety in school, being

safe on their way to and from school, and the effectiveness of the anti-bullying policy. This survey has been sent via email to students on Monday 13th July 2026 and will be open for one week. We encourage all students to take part and share their voice. This will help us to evaluate our policies and shape next steps.

Working Together

Online safety is most effective when schools and families work in partnership. We encourage all parents and carers to maintain open conversations with their children about their online activity, social media use and digital behaviour.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us create a safe, respectful and focused environment for all students.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Smith', written over a horizontal line.

Senior Vice Principal
Designated Safeguarding Leader