



Bluecoat Beechdale  
Academy  
Belong, Believe, Achieve

Friday 8th June 2018

Dear Parent / Carer,

I am writing to inform you of a change to the academy's rules regarding mobile phones.

In recent years the use of mobile phones has increased dramatically, and in particular social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. Whilst we appreciate that these are now a part of everyday life, most incidents of bullying and friendship issues in school are related to social media.

Mobile phones and social media have also been linked to an increase in mental health issues amongst children, as they feel constant pressure to remain in contact with friends, and conform to expectations that other people place on them.

With this in mind, we have taken the decision to **ban mobile phones and earphones within the academy**. This means that if your child's mobile phone is seen or heard anywhere on the academy site at any time of day it will be confiscated. No warnings will be given. It will be placed in the safe, and can only be collected by a parent/carer at the end of the day.

Much research has been done which supports the banning of mobile phones in school. If you'd like to read an example of this research, it can be found at <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1350.pdf> or alternatively, on our website. Some of the key points of this research tell us that banning mobile phones in school:

- Improves the test scores of students aged 16 by 6.4%. This is the equivalent of adding five days to the school year.
- Ensures the lowest-achieving students gain twice as much as average students.
- Has a greater positive impact on students with special education needs and those eligible for free school meals.
- By banning mobile phones in school, we will also impact positively on the emotional well-being and mental health of students by allowing them at least six hours a day without 'screen-time', and the pressures of social media. This will also impact positively on students' social skills, as they will use their free time during the day to interact with their friends, rather than using their phones.

We recognise fully that for many students and their parents/carers, mobile phones provide an element of safety whilst travelling to and from school, therefore we understand that many students will choose to bring them to school for this reason. However, it is the student's responsibility to ensure their phone is off and stored safely in their bag before they enter the school site. The phone remains their responsibility throughout the day.

This will be a big change for a number of our students, and we will be introducing the ban to students before it comes into force, to ensure they understand the reasoning and consequences should their phone be seen or heard. The ban will come into force **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018**.

If you wish to discuss this matter, please do not hesitate to contact your child's year leader.  
Thank you in anticipation of your continued support.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs S Bailey



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