



Tuesday 21st July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to explain what the rules will be for children and mobile phone use at St Mary's from September. We know that your child may be leaving the site independently and you may wish for them to have a phone with them on their journey home/to meet you. Pay as you go phones can be purchased for as little as £10 – and would allow you to text your child to remind them where to go at the end of the day, or tell them where to meet you which is essentially all they need! The school office is still able to relay messages to pupils during the day about changes to home time arrangements.

For a number of reasons – most importantly your child's safety, mental health and well-being – we are asking that **children do not bring Smart phones to school**. Unfortunately, storing phones in the office will no longer be a safe option which means the devices themselves will be more at risk of being stolen or damaged. More importantly, from previous experience, Smart phones at school are a distraction (even whilst switched off in bags where they must stay!), create pressure on some families to keep up with the latest gadget and make it difficult for children to maintain a social distance – once phones are switched on at the gate children are crowded together to stare at screens!

Children are already under immense pressure within the digital world and as Smart phones become more popular with this age group we are noticing a decline in mental health and children's inability to switch off from fall outs with friends etc due to group chats and social media platforms. We don't want to further aggravate this by increasing the time they spend with their devices. Thank you for your understanding.

Yours sincerely
Miss K Greenwood & Mr S Collins
Year 5 and 6 co-ordinators

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