



St Joseph's Specialist School & College

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Executive Principal: Annie Sutton

'Specialists in Communication & Interaction and the Arts'

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Dear Families and Carers,

Many of you will know that for some of our students at St Joseph's mobile technology such as iPads and mobile phones cause anxiety and can trigger unwanted behaviour responses.

During the school day we are careful to consider these potential triggers and staff working with students who have these anxieties are very mindful to use these technologies in a carefully controlled way.

Increasingly young people are being given access to their own mobile devices to enable them greater freedom and independence. The use of communication aids in the modern landscape can be a positive life changing force for good, and as such staff working with our young people assist them to ensure that they maximise the positive aspects these devices can offer them. Our staff are trained in the implications of breaches of data protection rights and the capture of images during the education day and residential time is carefully managed to support evidence gathering for progress reports. They are very aware that they must not use the images captured inappropriately.

However, the uncontrolled use of mobile phones during the education day has the potential to cause all sorts of difficulties. These range from the uncensored capture and publishing on the internet of images of young people whose families have not given permission for their image to be published, right through to the sight of someone using a mobile phone creating a totally unnecessary behaviour management crisis.

I know that you will support us as we address this. We request that from the new half term onwards all students who have access to a personal mobile device, either leave these items at home or in their on-site House during the education day. If travelling with it daily, students will need to hand them in to reception when they arrive to be collected at the end of the day.

In order to preserve the data protection rights of all of our students and staff I will be insisting that this basic minimum requirement is upheld and adhered to at all times.

Please would you take time over the half term break to speak to your child or young person about this requirement. Reassure them that items left in reception will be locked securely in the safe so that no one can take them, and that they will be clearly labelled so that they cannot be muddled up with another device. Also let them know that if you need to contact them urgently during the education day that you will call reception who will ensure that your message is passed to them.

Many thanks in advance for your help with this matter.

Yours sincerely

Annie Sutton

Executive Principal

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