



## Hall Green School An Academy

21 June 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Now that we have said farewell to our wonderful Year 11 cohort, our planning for next academic year begins in earnest. All school policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and stakeholder voice is an important part of this process. There has been much written in the press in recent weeks about mobile phones in school, including the Schools Minister, Nick Gibb, stating there is evidence of schools who restrict the use of mobile phones seeing “higher test scores and higher attainment as a consequence”.

Further to the impact mobile phone usage can have on progress and attainment, they can, if not managed effectively, add to the risk of peer on peer abuse (bullying) and sexual exploitation. Whilst our curriculum covers these aspects, it is also important to try to reduce the risk through our policies and ensuring parents/carers are equipped to support safe mobile phone usage.

Steps you can take as a parent/carers to ensure safe use of mobile phones/social media:

- Ensure your child understands and follows the attached mobile phone policy
- Ensure your child keeps their phone out of sight on the way to and from school
- Ensure your child only accesses age specific apps and websites
- Monitor your child’s social media accounts
- Ensure your child has appropriate privacy settings if they use social media
- Visit the NSPCC website for further advice and help guides: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Social media and phone use can feel like a minefield to parents/carers, particularly as children can often be or seem far more technologically minded. For this reason, we are keen to support parents/carers in understanding how they can apply the above. There is an option on the survey to let us know if you would be interested in a parent/carers workshop.

It is important to note as Headteacher, it is my responsibility to set the policies at school level, but it is obviously important I do this within both the national and local context. In other words, what is national guidance alongside what is best for Hall Green School and its pupils. My central premise is that we must do everything we can to help pupils be successful and happy. Mobile phones can be a distraction hence why they are not allowed to be used at all in lessons at Hall Green, and in fact, must not be seen or heard at all in the building. We do allow pupils to listen to music at break and lunchtimes in the playground via in-ear headphones if they choose.

Please note that parents/carers should not be contacting pupils, and vice versa, on their mobile phones during the school day. In an emergency, parents/carers should contact the school office who will pass a message on.

We have had increasing incidences lately of pupils using mobile phones for reasons other than this. In particular, the pastoral team spend a significant amount of time dealing with incidents involving social media accounts. It is for this reason, therefore, that we are seeking stakeholder views on our current policy. Pupils, parents, and staff are invited to complete the following survey:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/DesignPage.aspx?fragment=FormId%3DnYINQEOwWEupulxNhpHZ3GXy8dVMV9KonVkc7f1FetUQ0oxTUJCNTdSUKILNjVaNE5NVjk0NkICMy4u>

Whilst the majority of the survey is focused on mobile phone policy and procedures, there are also some general questions to help inform leaders of views to continue to strive for better in everything we do.

### Key dates

- Friday 25 June: Teacher INSET day. Pupils should not attend school.
- Friday 16 July: Break up for summer holiday at lunchtime. Specific timings will be shared soon.

May I take this opportunity to thank parents/carers for your continued support in helping us keep the school community as safe as possible. Frustratingly, there has been an increase in COVID cases in schools and wider communities across the country. The wearing of face masks, twice weekly home testing, remaining at home if symptomatic, and isolating when needed to are all key parts of our safety strategy. We are hoping to be able to return to many of our 'normal' practices in September but until then, will remain working in zones and bubbles.

I hope that you and your family remain safe and well.

Yours faithfully



Miss K Slater  
Headteacher

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Registered Office: Southam Road, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 0AA Headteacher: Miss K Slater Tel: 0121 628 8787  
Fax: 0121 702 2182 Email: [enquiry@hallgreen.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@hallgreen.bham.sch.uk) [www.hallgreen.bham.sch.uk](http://www.hallgreen.bham.sch.uk)



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### MOBILE PHONE POLICY 2021-2022

We understand that pupils may bring a mobile phone in for safety purposes but must stress these are brought on site at the pupil's own risk. They should be turned off and stored in the pupil's school bag out of sight. Pupils may listen to music using in-ear headphones in the school playground during break and lunchtimes. At all other times, and throughout the building at all times, the phone should be turned off and stored in the pupil's bag out of sight.

If pupils are not complying with this rule:

- The phone and/or headphones will be confiscated and stored safely by the Head of House from where they may be collected at the end of the school day.
- A lunchtime detention will be issued.
- If confiscated for a 2nd time, a week of lunchtime detentions will be issued.
- Further confiscation will lead to a meeting with parents and the pupil losing the privilege of having their phone in school.

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Registered Office: Southam Road, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 0AA Headteacher: Miss K Slater Tel: 0121 628 8787  
Fax: 0121 702 2182 Email: enquiry@hallgreen.bham.sch.uk www.hallgreen.bham.sch.uk