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Dear Parents and Carers

Last year we worked closely with the Smartphone Free Childhood movement and other local schools to better understand the impact that smartphones are having on our children and start the process of updating our policy to better protect our young people from the risks smartphones pose.

After extensive feedback from students, staff and families as well as looking at the global research into the impact of smartphones on young people, we are currently revising our Mobile Phone Policy.

The biggest change is that we will be banning smartphones for all students in Years 7-11 from September 2026. The policy will set out the evidence and reasoning behind this as well as the consequences for students who bring a smartphone to school.

In the Sixth Form, our students will be allowed to bring a smartphone to school and there will be a consultation with our girls in Years 11, 12 and 13 in the coming weeks to make collective decisions about phone use for them involving student voice, something we pride ourselves on.

Students will still be able to bring a basic phone with no internet connectivity; better known as a brick phone if parents wish. Our revised Mobile Phone Policy will reflect this, and will clarify the differences between smartphones and brick phones.

This decision is supported by:

- Clear evidence that removing smartphones improves focus, behaviour and learning as well as dramatically improving wellbeing.
- Strong feedback from our community about the pressures of constant online access and the rise in social media related issues.
- Our work with the Smartphone Free Childhood movement and the growing number of schools making the same change.
- The Government's ongoing consultation and new guidance for schools regarding restricting both phone use in school and social media for under 16s, reflecting wider concern across the country.

We realise that for some parents, families and students, there will be lots of questions and concerns around this decision.

Later this year we will be hosting a Parents' Information Evening and releasing more information about practical arrangements so do look out for this. We will also include measures parents can take to ensure their daughter is safe, as well as addressing frequently asked questions.

Thank you for your support as we take this important step to improve student wellbeing and learning at Newlands.

Kind regards



Miss Jo Capon  
Headteacher

