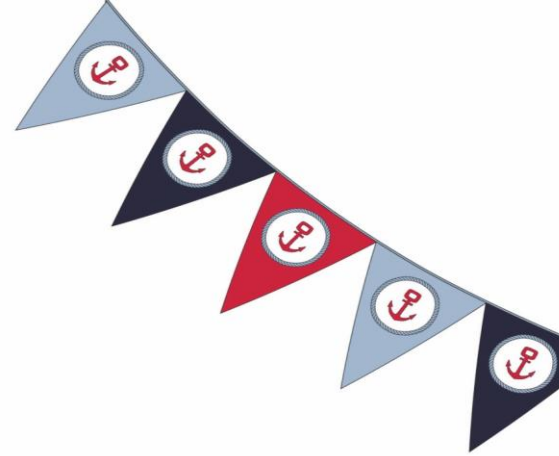




MERIDIAN COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Learning for Life



Thursday 21st March 2024

Mobile Phones in School

Dear Parents and Carers

Following a serious breach of our behavior policy this week by a few of our older pupils, I am writing to ask all parents and carers of children in Years 5 and 6 to speak to your children about our school expectations around bringing a mobile phone into school.

We currently allow children to bring in their mobile phones in Years 5 and 6 to support those who are walking to and from school independently.

However, in line with our Online Safety Policy, we expect all mobile phones to be:

- *Switched off on school grounds, including at the beginning and end of the school day*
- *Kept securely in either a coat pocket or bag when on school grounds*
- *Switched off and stored in the school office throughout the school day*

Going forward, if we find out that children are using their mobile phones on the school premises, we will immediately confiscate the phone and keep it securely in either the Headteacher's or Deputy Headteacher's offices until the child's parents collect it in person. We will issue a temporary ban for that child to bring their phone to school. If children persist in not abiding by our mobile phone expectations, we may take the decision to permanently ban them from bringing their phone into school.

As a school, it is vital that we keep children safe at all times and this safeguarding incident has raised serious concerns about children bringing smart phones into school.

The Governors and Leadership Team recognise that for some children walking to and from school independently, a mobile phone is one way to keep them safe so that they can contact you in an emergency. As a school we obviously want to support your decision to do this.

However, one option could be that the school only allows children to bring mobile phones on to the premises that have the basic capacity for making calls or sending texts, also known as 'brick phones' – no smart phones with cameras or internet access would be permitted. This would then support

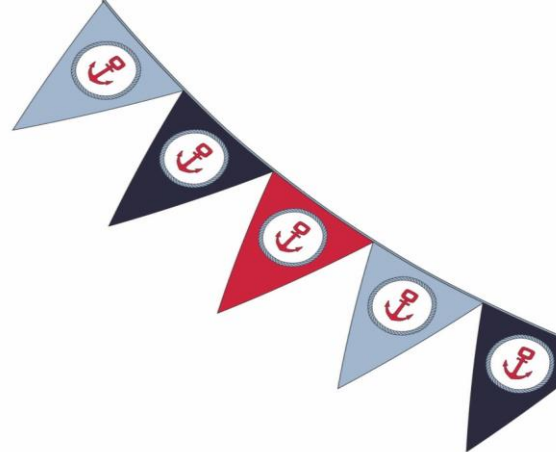
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keeping children safe when walking to and from school as they would still be able to text and call you in an emergency and would also support the school in preventing unsafe use of camera phones and online messaging on the school site or indeed when walking to and from school.

I will be raising this as a possible solution with Governors at our next meeting. If we decide to change our policy in this respect, we would let you know in the summer term and it would come into force from September 2024 to allow parents and carers to accommodate any new expectations.

In the meantime, please can everyone support the school to keep all children safe by speaking to your children about our current mobile phone expectations.

I will also be sending out Acceptable Use Agreements from our updated Online Safety Policy today which includes use of mobile phones in school.

Thank you for your support in keeping all the children safe at Meridian.

Yours sincerely

Claire Westcott

Ms. Claire Westcott
Headteacher

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