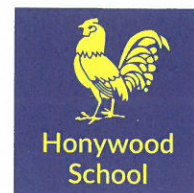


22nd July 2019



Dear Parent/Carer

As a school we have always been proud of our learners regarding their conduct and behaviour in meeting our Respect Code; this is a code which encompasses how every member of our school community is expected to conduct themselves. Our school thrives on positive relationships and trust and visitors often comment on how rare this is in a secondary school setting. Many schools operate a compliance rule model, which is one we have intentionally avoided over the years and have instead created our Respect Code. At its simplest it involves learners respecting themselves, others and the environment around them. This Respect Code has been one of a number of areas that have been under review this year. Some of the questions we have asked ourselves have been whether it is fully effective, whether learners know and understand what is expected of them in following it and whether families understand it and are able to fully support the school with it.

As part of this process we have undertaken an independent review of our behaviour and pastoral systems which involved observations, discussions with staff and learners and evaluating school systems which support these areas. The review indicated a need for greater clarity regarding specific behaviours and consequences. Therefore we have spent time discussing this and have made some decisions which we will share in more detail with learners and families early in the Autumn term, alongside updating the Behaviour Management policy.

However, one aspect that I want to communicate now to learners and families was a change that will be implemented at the beginning of the new term. Learners will **no longer be able to use or access their mobile phones during the entire school day, including break and lunch times**. Phones can be used outside of the school building before 8.40am and after 3.20pm. You will be aware that in September 2018 we moved to a system whereby learners were no longer allowed to use their phones in learning sessions and this was welcomed by families. Learners have actually also felt they have benefitted from having this expectation in place. We are now taking the next step to aid learners with being able to fully focus on their learning and their face to face social interactions/communication and to support them with their mental health and welfare. There have recently been a number of studies which are in support of assisting young people with the pressures of constant digital communication.

We would really value the support of families with the implementation of this. Learners will continue to be able to communicate home in an emergency by visiting Learner Reception or going to see their Cohort Leader who will assist them in making this communication. We would appreciate it if parents/carers contact Learner Reception, your child's Learning Group Leader or their Cohort Leader if you need to get a message to your youngster; this can be done via phone or email. Please do not expect your child to be able to respond to any messages which you may choose to send to them during the school day.

If learners are seen with their phones out during the day, they will be asked to hand it to the member of staff who has seen it; it will then be kept securely for the learner to collect from Learner Reception at the end of the school day. We appreciate that many parents/carers have bought their youngster a mobile phone so that they can communicate with home if there are any issues before or after school, particularly around transport, therefore they will be able to collect it before they head home.

In addition to this change we have also added some clarity around the use of headphones. These are only to be used through iPads and at the direction of the teacher for curriculum purposes or to support learning. Learners are able to use them during break and lunchtimes but only with their iPads.

One other area which has caused some concern this year is that on the occasion that we have needed to send a learner home during the school day, we have sometimes either not had up to date contact details or parents/carers have been unable to come and collect their child. We only send a learner home for a medical reason or on a very rare occasion as a result of their behaviour; it is imperative that there is always someone contactable on the school's database to enable collection of the child. Parents/carers can update their contact details easily by using the SIMS parent app or by contacting the school office directly.

Thank you for your continued support with helping our learners to meet the high expectations we have of them in regards to behaviour and conduct. We will share further details around the Respect Code early in the Autumn term.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Saunders', written in a cursive style.

James Saunders
Headteacher