



# St Augustine's Catholic College

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Dear Parents and Guardians of Year 7 Pupils

## Clarification of School Policy on Mobile Phones

Your children have now done a term at St Augustine's – the time has flown past. On the whole they are a really nice group of pupils, with great potential both academically and personally. I look forward to seeing their further development as they progress through the College.

I am writing to you about one matter, which I know is of concern to many of you, and that is mobile phones. As you know, the college policy is that pupils may bring in and possess mobile phones, but they must look after them securely, and they should be "off and out of sight" during the school working day, apart from emergencies. I know that many of you – especially those who live some distance from College – are keen for your children to possess phones for these situations. Others are not so keen – that is your choice as parents. There is no change proposed to this position.

The change is as follows. At present, we allow (but don't necessarily encourage) the use of mobile phones and similar devices in lessons, for educational purposes, at the request of the teacher. We have decided, after much consideration, that from 5 November 2018 this will no longer be permitted for Year 7. All the teachers know about this change, and the majority are fully supportive.

There are a number of reasons for this change. We recognise the educational value of mobile technology, and its potential for research at a later stage of studies. However, for Year 7 it is felt that this distracts from what we are trying to do at that stage – to build key skills, literacy, discussion, and the other building blocks that will support the students through their secondary education.

There is also the issue that a number of parents do not wish their children to have access to mobile phones until a later age, for a variety of reasons – financial, ethical, issues of e-safety. This is a parental choice, but at school we believe we should support those parents who wish to take a more protective stance at this age, rather than undermine you. We will be educating our pupils in e-safety, and encouraging safe behaviour on-line, but in the meantime we wish to adopt a more cautious policy.

This tightening of policy has the unanimous and strong support of the College's Senior Leadership team and other senior colleagues. I would ask you, as parents, to support our line on this, and other matters of school expectations – all of our rules and procedures are adopted after careful thought, and are ultimately decided in the interests of the pupils.

Yours sincerely

**David Forster**  
Headmaster