

**MOBILE PHONE USE AND CHILDREN**  
**Meeting for Parents of Y4-Y6**  
**Led by Mr Albrighton**  
**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

**What was the purpose of this meeting?**

Mr Albrighton, Head Teacher of Burford Secondary School, visited Burford Primary to discuss children's mobile phone use (smart phones) and school; he also provided the opportunity for parents to express their own opinions about this and ask questions.

**Summary of Mr Albrighton's initial discussion points**

- Burford Secondary School have surveyed parents about their views on children's use of mobile phones. From the number of responses, it is clear that this is **a topic which is important to parents.**
- Early survey indications show that **90% of parents want greater control measures from schools.**
- Mr Albrighton explained that **whilst schools are indeed part of the picture, what happens at home is critical in terms of how children use their mobile phones.**
- He outlined **benefits** of mobile phones for children - technological advances and communications - as well as **disadvantages** - social media (the potential for bullying, peer pressure), exposure to age-inappropriate material and online safety, cognitive load.
- Use of **mobile phones is a nuanced topic.** There is currently momentum in terms of acting to address some of the dangers - Dr Jonathan Haidt 'The Anxious Generation' and [smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk](http://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk). However, some research is inconclusive; there are counter arguments.

**Parent questions / opinions and responses from Mr Albrighton**

- Do children need to have a mobile phone for Burford Secondary School?  
*No.*
- Are children allowed phones at Burford Secondary School?  
*Currently children are allowed to bring phones to school, but they must be switched off and may not be used during the school day.*
- It would be good if school put phones in cupboards so that children couldn't use them.  
*This would involve logistics that aren't necessarily available at this point.*
- Do children need a mobile phone to do their homework?  
*Children do not need a mobile phone, but some homework is set online (eg Sparx Maths), so children do need access to a computer or tablet or phone.*

- Do the secondary school educate children about smartphone use and communications, and encourage them to think about risks and benefits?  
Yes.

### **Key Messages**

Children starting at Burford Secondary School **DO NOT need a mobile phone.**

**Parents may choose to ensure they are fully informed of the risks / benefits** before deciding to give their child access to a smartphone, and consider how to manage safely / maintain parental control, particularly **social media.**

Children at Burford Secondary School **do need online access** for certain homework activities.

If you give your child a mobile phone, please **do not use it to communicate with your child during the school day;** the phone must be switched off at school.

Mr Albrighton and the Senior Leadership Team at Burford Secondary School are currently considering how mobile phones and technology intersect with school. They are interested in what parents think. They may adapt future policies.

**School policy about children's use of mobile phones is only one part of the picture: parents and carers play a key role, so think about what you want for your child.**

Thank you to all parents who attended, and in particular, to Mr Albrighton for his time and expertise.

We would be interested to know whether parents in other years / parents who were unable to attend would welcome further opportunities to discuss mobile phone use for children. Please email via the office.

Hannah Lake  
Chair of Burford LGB  
[chair@burford-pri.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:chair@burford-pri.oxon.sch.uk)