



THE BUCKINGHAM SCHOOL

A SPECIALIST SPORTS COLLEGE

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Dear Parent/Carer

Technology is an essential part of our society and when used appropriately can really enhance our everyday lives. Yet, excessive use of mobile phones and many hours in front of screens can have a damaging effect on mental health and also distort children's views on key societal issues.

The School recently conducted a survey across a cross section of students around sleep, eating habits and screen exposure. The results were concerning as it illustrated the high number of hours students spend on their phones, often until the early hours of the morning. This leads to a lack of quality in their sleep and in turn decreases academic performance.

Latest research shows that the average primary school child increased their screen time by nearly 90 minutes during lockdown, and we can only assume this number is higher in children of secondary school age. In addition the school has seen an increase in social media activity between peers in the early hours of the morning and a rise in safeguarding issues as a result of this.

Mobile phones are an essential part of our day to day lives, but can cause young people to encounter risky situations. Online behaviour can often lead to negative behaviours and even exploitation. A recent national survey of 5000 teenagers found that under 13's were facing growing pressure to send explicit photographs to their peers.

<https://www.revealingreality.co.uk/2022/06/23/not-just-flirting/>

We strongly encourage all parents and carers to closely monitor their children's screen exposure and have open and honest conversations about their safety online. We also understand this is not an easy task (as I know with my own children) but at times it feels that students are heavily influenced by their phones and what they see and do on them. The attached link provides some guidance on approaching these issues.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers/phones>

We all want our children to grow up feeling confident using technology, but also want to ensure they learn to do so safely. The school will continue to educate and guide students through safer online behaviours and we look forward to working collaboratively to ensure our children remain informed and understand how to keep themselves safe.

Yours faithfully,

Matt Wardle

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Deputy Headteacher

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Buckingham School is concerned that every student should have the opportunity to attend school activities/obtain equipment, regardless of their financial circumstances. As such, it may be possible to subsidise those students who would otherwise be unable to attend trips/purchase items. Please feel free to write in confidence to finance@buckinghamschool.org, if you wish to seek assistance, or obtain more information about Pupil Premium funding.

