

CELL PHONE POLICY

The Cell Phone Policy at Wendywood has been endorsed by the Governing Body and has their full support. The Governing Body was elected by parents to represent them in all matters pertaining to school governance and thus they speak on behalf of parents. Although this policy is frequently relayed to pupils in assemblies, has been recorded in previous newsletters and is in our Code of Conduct, adherence to the policy is being more honoured in the breach.

The issue of cell phones in schools is a contentious one. In the hands of responsible, mature students they do no harm. They are turned off during lesson time, kept out of sight and used only in emergencies at the end of the school day. Sadly there are very few such students in schools. Very often these phones are used to communicate with friends during lessons, to photograph other children and teachers in uncompromising positions, to pass on information during tests and even to surf porn sites. So bad is the situation country wide that the Federation of Governing Bodies has recommended a blanket ban on all cell phones in schools.

We have thought long and hard about the use of cell phones at school. We are appreciative of the fact that in time, as internet access widens and strengthens in South Africa cell phones can become useful educational tools in the classroom. Unfortunately we have not reached that stage yet. Currently they are doing a great deal more harm than good, both here and in most schools throughout the country. Thus it became necessary for us to institute a practical and reasonable school policy.

We are mindful of the fact that parents are deeply concerned about the safety and security of their children and want to be able to contact them when necessary. Thus we have a pay phone available for pupils to use during breaks and after school and a telephone in the office which is manned every day from 07:30 – 15:30. Should parents wish to leave messages for their children or vice versa, this phone is available (011 802 4160) No pupil may be on the property without a teacher present so there will always be a way for children to contact their parents after school hours.

Our current policy states that should a pupil be caught in possession of a phone it will be confiscated and locked in the safe until the end of the year when it may be claimed by a parent on payment of a R100 fine. This money goes into our poverty alleviation fund, used to assist disadvantaged learners.

We urge parents to help us in our effort to protect pupils and teachers from unscrupulous people within the school, intent on smearing the reputations of their fellows, disrupting lessons or compromising the security of tests and exams. Encourage your children to abide by our cell phone policy in the interest of the entire Wendywood community.