

# NEWSLETTER

21st DECEMBER 2022



## Ysgol Calon Cymru's New Approach to Mobile Phones

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to inform you of our school's new approach to mobile phone use. When we return to school for the Spring Term in January, **pupils in Years 7 to 11 will no longer be allowed to use mobile phones in school**. In addition to this, Sixth Form pupils will only be able to use mobile phones in common room spaces.

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2022-2025

Our primary aim in this change is to promote pupil wellbeing and to ensure that we maximise all opportunities for Teaching and Learning. Increasingly, we are finding mobile phone usage a challenge in school. We are not alone in this and schools across Wales report that since the pandemic mobile phones have become increasingly difficult to manage in a learning environment.

In this letter, I will explain why this decision has been taken, how we intend to address common concerns, and how you can help us. This is not a decision that has been made in haste, it follows research and feedback from the pastoral team and representatives of stakeholder groups.

### **Why are Mobile Phones Being Prohibited in Years 7–11?**

The following research and critical thinking has contributed to our decision to not allow mobile phones at Ysgol Calon Cymru during the school day:

<b>Research</b>	A study by the London School of Economics (which you can read by following <a href="#">this link</a> ) found that having a no phone rule during the school day had the effect of giving pupils an extra week's education over the course of an academic year. Indeed, in our classrooms we see how phones can negatively impact on learning and often lead to our pupils becoming distracted.
<b>Relationships</b>	The pandemic has driven many of our children into an unhealthy dependence on a virtual world for their social interaction. We would like your child's time in school to be spent forming healthy, respectful, face-to-face friendships. We want to encourage more discussion and debate, and more real social interaction.
<b>Reliance</b>	An increasing number of pupils appear to be addicted to social media and gaming on their mobile phones. During downtime, many pupils spend a considerable amount of time on their phones, and a few display extreme reactions to having their phones confiscated. We feel that school need to be a place where the focus is learning, extra-curricular activities and friendships.
<b>Link to Bullying</b>	Cyber-bullying takes many forms and can have serious consequences. Recently our pastoral team has had to hold restorative justice meetings

	following damaging, unkind posts on social media. Similarly, images and videos taken without the permission of the subject are sometimes used to ridicule others and can compound wellbeing issues. We are finding that mobile phone use is in many cases escalating problems.
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**FAQs: Common Concerns about the Removal of Mobile Phones**

Below we will answer some frequently-asked questions surrounding the removal of mobile phones from school. If you have a question that isn't addressed below please do not hesitate to contact us: [www.ysgolcalon.cymru/contact](http://www.ysgolcalon.cymru/contact)

*For safeguarding reasons, I would like my child to have a phone on their journey to and from school. Will this no longer be allowed?*

Your child will still be able to have a phone on their way to and from school. However, they will need to switch it off and store it in their bag once they reach campus for the duration of the school day. Mobile phones can be switched back on and used at the end of the school day.

*In the digital era, surely mobile phones have great educational value?*

In school, your child has access to several IT suites throughout the day, and a range of mobile devices. Our filters detect misuse and prevent students from accessing inappropriate information. Since not all pupils have mobile phones, no lesson requires their use to fulfil learning objectives. We also have mobile suites of ipads and laptops that our pupils can use.

*I would like my child to have contact with me throughout the day, how can this happen without a mobile phone?*

You and your child will still be able to contact each other during the day via the school office. Both our campuses have office staff who are able to support you.

**How You Can Help Us**

From our return to school in January, if your child is in Years 7–11, **please ensure they know their phone must remain switched off and stored in their bag** during the school day.

We are aware that some pupils will seek to push the boundaries of this policy. This will result in their phone being confiscated and the following actions taking place:

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### **First Confiscation**

Pupil phone to be confiscated and stored securely in reception until the end of the school day. At the end of the school day your child can collect their phone and a text will be sent home to notify you that your child's phone was confiscated.

### **Second Confiscation**

Pupil phone to be confiscated and stored securely in reception until the end of the school day. During the school day you will be sent a text message notifying you that your child's phone has been confiscated for a second time, and we will ask you to contact the school to give permission for us to return your child's phone at the end of the school day.

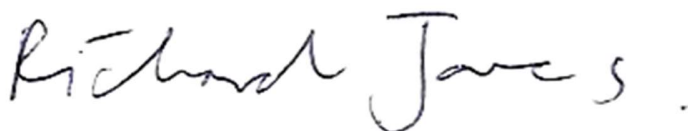
### **Third Confiscation**

Pupil phone to be confiscated and stored securely in reception until the end of the school day. At the end of the school day you will be sent a text message to notify you that your child's phone has been confiscated for a third time, and you will need to collect the phone from the school reception.

We would value your support on these occasions.

Thank you for your ongoing support. As always, please do not hesitate to get in contact if you have any questions or concerns about this change to our mobile phone policy or anything else we do at Ysgol Calon Cymru. The best way to contact the school is via the details listed on our website: [www.ysgolcalon.cymru/contact](http://www.ysgolcalon.cymru/contact)

Cofion Cynnes,



Dr. Richard Jones  
Headteacher, Ysgol Calon Cymru



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