Meeting started with an introduction by Mark Wignall, Headteacher and Jamie Chandler, Assistant Headteacher.

Mobile technology – a Brexit like issue in that everyone has an opinion but we need to find consensus.

A lot of discussion has already taken place at Downlands with the Senior Leadership Team and with all staff. Our next step is to consult parents, governors and then the student School Council.

There are many options for a Mobile Technology Policy – each option has its strengths and weaknesses. All options should be considered in context i.e. Downlands has a limited budget and therefore limited resources to carry out some of the options listed below.

Option 1	Total ban of mobile technology on the school site.
Option 2	Phones are collected as students enter school and returned to them at the end of the day.
Option 3	Allowed in school but kept in bag and switched off.
Option 4	Allowed to be used in class with the permission of the class teacher.
Option 5	Current situation at Downlands. Acceptable Use of Technology policy enforced. No social networks allowed; no video streaming allowed; no phone calls allowed. No headphones allowed. Students able to use phones at break and lunch for gaming/research.
Option 6	No restrictions.

Discussion Points Raised:

Parent's views:

- Come into Year 7 having not had a mobile phone at primary school. At break time, they are on the phone instead of integrating with other students.
- Just for year 7 there could be a collection point so that they can choose to hand their phones in. Removes the temptation of just getting their phone out quick. By Year 8 they have learnt better habits.
- Could there be a zone for acceptable mobile use.
- Please recognise that it is an addiction.
- If nothing is done to restrict use, we are perpetuating the problem.
- If phone use becomes a habit now it will have a negative impact on employability.
- School has a responsibility for students minds in the 6 hours that they are at school.
- Any action by the school will help reduce their use.
- Schools that have banned phones have anecdotally had a very positive experience.
- We should allow the students to relax and chat – need guidance on how to socialise – remove phones.

School's view:

- We need to choose an option that we can enforce/police.
- Students are so good at texting that they can get their device out, text and return to their pocket without the teacher noticing.

- Is it feasible to stop them going on their phones?
- No staffing/resources for Option 2.
- Pastoral Support Officers (PSOs) are at the sharp end with issues around bullying and stress on social media.
- Many staff hate that students are only on their phones at social times.
- Vulnerable/socially isolated students find solace in their phones – googling interesting subjects/ interacting with others through games.
- School needs to educate students about safe use of mobile technology/ about dangers of addiction.
- Vast majority of the students are compliant.
- Schools cannot deal with all the issues of society.

Morning Session Vote:

Option 1	2
Option 2	0
Option 3	2
Option 4	4
Option 5	6
Option 6	0

Comments:

- Option 3/4 - Education on self-discipline. Specific times on phone. Mindfulness. No distraction. Social Integration. Coincidence means you sometimes find yourself sat on a bus beside someone who you strike up a conversation with and it is a useful exchange. Risk of missing that on phone.
- Option 4/5 – only use for educational use in class. Education on phone use for children and any useful information filtered down to the children.
- Option 5 – education!
- Option 5 – acceptable use with education re acceptable use.
- Option 5 – with more education

Evening Session Vote:

Option 1	1
Option 2	0
Option 3	10
Option 4	1
Option 5	1
Option 6	0

Comments:

- Option 1 – other schools who have banned phones would not go back due to the positive impact. Numerous studies show how phones affect cognition, ability to learn, retention, etc. Children learn at school how to interact with peers, which is essential going forward into the workplace.
- Option 3 – for the sake of our children's mental health now and in the future – and I think it would be easier for teachers to implement option 3 than option 4.
- Option 3 – feel very strongly that phones should be banned at school. Happy for her to have her phone in her bag for the journey home – in case she needs to contact me.
- Option 3 – kids should ask or be given permission to use it.
- Option 3 – the sooner the better.
- Option 3 – with strict ban on social media policy.

- Option 3 – please –support to help children and their social skills and encouraging them to do other activities at break and lunch.
- Option 3 – give young minds a break. Habit forming if kept how it is. PLEASE change. Bad for posture too. Speak to other schools who have done it.
- Option 3 – I am also worried about all the radiation that is about when all these phones are on and the affect it may have on my children's health.
- Option 3 – I would like to see the pupils educated in the use of the phones. Health effects. Strict social media ban. The antisocial aspect of using them and how it affects other people. Use their mind more.
- Option 5 – very useful tool for research in class. Also, contact if plans change e.g. clubs on/off pick up changes.

Comments received via email from parent/carers who were unable to attend:

1. "As a parent, my children walk to school and home, often in the dark and after classes - I have to ensure I keep in touch and can track them on their phones (slightly big brother but it's a modern day work around)
   In school, I have a child with a visual impairment/dyspraxia. We have tried an iPad but she hates being different, her phone allows her to be normal whilst providing her with the tools to minimise her disability.
   So my advice is embrace the phone but give kids the skills to use them appropriately like my generation was with the computer. This is really not a company plug but we offered to run free training around social media / relationship issues and respect for the year group for free - we run these for a lot of independent schools nationally.. After an initial meeting we never heard anything back!"

2. "I work in the IT department of a major enterprise with around 16,000 Office 365 Users and I'd like to express my opinion that the use of mobile technology in the workplace is becoming more and more prevalent, and that those skills should be honed during school years.
   Mobile phones like any object can be used for good or bad, for every misuse of a mobile phone there is an example of a positive application.
   By simply banning them we are sweeping the problem under the carpet, instead we should be showing how they can be used in a beneficial way. Take the enthusiasm that children have for mobile devices and show them how to channel that.
   I was really encouraged when I saw that my son would be getting an Office 365 account and I hope that it will give him a good grounding in how mobile technology is used in a modern workplace. Everything from checking your calendar, replying to an email, taking a call in Skype or MS Teams, using MS Power Apps to fill out an expenses form, with Flow providing a notification workflow – the possibilities are nearly endless."

3. "Our boys were desperate to get a smart phone for their birthday but we've noticed their behaviour has been affected in a negative way since they started to use these phones. They have a tendency to be drawn to play games and be in chat rooms with their friends when they should be getting on with their homework. We often have to take the phone away from them, turn it off and hide it so that they can't find it again in order to take this distraction away. We've bought them laptops for their school work but again they are often distracted by games they can play such as "Fortnite". They can become very upset and moody when their phone is confiscated. It can't be good for them and I dont think smart phones for under 18s are a great idea on reflection.
   In honesty, the phones are more of a hindrance than a help and sometimes we struggle to get their cooperation to crack on with their work unless we sit with them and help even when their phones are removed. I think too much technology creates a dependency and erodes the ability to use one's imagination and creativity. I think this is particularly true for children.
   I would imagine that you face the same issues at school and that the phone has become more of a distraction than a help.
   There is also the matter of health and how wifi and mobile phones may cause dangerous levels of EMF radiation.
   In summary I would support a ban on mobile phone use between school hours. Our boys travel from Brighton every day by train to and from school so I wouldn't want to leave them to travel without a phone to communicate but they should not be using them once at school."

4. *"I feel very strongly about mobiles in school … ……. that they shouldn't have them in school as they miss out on playing and all the wonderful clubs by standing in courtyard looking at silly and sometimes age appropriate games on phones, if they have own data on phones they can still access unsuitable sites . I know it's difficult to monitor if they are banned but couldn't they go into locker and if child caught on it at school then a suitable punishment? I understand they need them to contact parent on way to school or home from school. "*