

3rd April 2025

Dear Parent/Guardian

Today, by the age of 12, 97% of students own a mobile phone. Three in ten young people cite making and maintaining friendships and their mental health as a cause for worry. Mobile phones and other technologies such as tablets and laptops are a necessary part of both our personal and professional lives. However, these devices risk unnecessary distraction, disruption and diversion. By removing access to devices, they can spend more time staying active, socialising face to face with their peers and take part in activities that have a positive impact on their wellbeing.

We know that even with parental controls and as much encouragement as possible from all the adults in our boarders' lives, the draw to devices remains strong. Within boarding at Brymore, we want to support you and the young people in our care, to make positive decisions surrounding their devices. We hope that by introducing a 'device downtime' that this will help boarders develop positive habits that can be replicated at home but also assist them to thrive later in life by enabling them to feel confident to manage their device time on their own.

Starting after the Easter break, boarders in Years 7, 8 & 9 will be handing in their devices after school by 4.00pm, for an hour of device downtime Monday - Thursday. This includes the boarding house's devices such as desktop computers and game consoles. We have chosen this time specifically as our extra-curricular programme has a variety of free activities during this hour which boys will be encouraged to try. If you need to speak to your son in an emergency, please contact the boarding house.

The device downtime will not include Years 10 & 11 as we would like them to be independent by this time in managing their device time. We will of course support and encourage the use of device downtime for these age groups.

Devices will be available again after 5.00pm so that calls home can be made and prep accessed. Devices will continue to be handed in 30 minutes prior to bedtime as per the usual night-time routine.

For those boarders who are full time, a device downtime will take place between 1.00pm - 3.00pm on both Saturday and Sunday for all year groups.

Thank you for your support with this initiative.

Yours faithfully

Mr Watts & Mrs Featherstone
Head of Boarding & Deputy Head of Boarding