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21.10.19

Dear parents

Following an eventful few days and many discussions around the reasons for parents wanting children to bring mobile phones to school, I would like to make you aware of our new policy regarding 'safe arrival and collection from school' and our thinking behind it.

Lately I have become very aware of children's safety when walking to and from school. There have been a number of reported incidents, for example;

Near misses with traffic because children are looking at their phones

Children regularly going home to an empty house

Children getting lost on the way home

Children in charge of younger children on the journey home

Children who are meant to be walking with a friend but have been left behind

All of these incidents have led me to consider how we can try to improve safety for our children. In banning mobile phones, one of my reasons was to hope to persuade parents that collecting their child in person, rather than relying on a phone is a much safer option. I do accept however, that as Year 6 children are approaching senior school age, parents might wish to foster their independence. In accepting this, I still want to ensure that these children are as safe as we can make them. I also want to consider our younger children and how we are ensuring their safety.

I have done a good deal of research into this; reading other schools' policies and looking at NSPCC and Government guidelines around child safety. The new policy considers all guidelines as well as considering parent's everyday busy lives but focuses on the welfare of the children.

The new policy is available on the school website - <https://partonmanorfed.co.uk/key-information-policies/> - but a summary of the main points is as follows:

- Children at the Infant school should be accompanied to school by a parent/ agreed adult.
- Children from EYFS through to Year 5 must be collected by an adult. This adult should be on the 'authorised collection' list for the child.
- Children in Year 6 will be allowed to walk home alone at 3.10pm although we would prefer they are collected whenever possible.
- Parents who are allowing their child to walk home alone must sign a permission slip before school will allow this (available from the office).
- Year 6 children who are attending an after school club must be collected by an adult.
- Year 6 children who have a signed permission slip to walk home alone will be allowed a phone in school on those days. It must be given in to the office in the morning and can be collected at the end of the day.

I am sure that, as parents, you understand that we are striving to ensure child welfare and safety and that you will support us in making your child's arrival and collection from school as safe as we possibly can.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Green', with a stylized flourish at the end.