

Tuesday 24th June 2025

Dear Parents, Carers and Families,

SAFEGUARDING NOTICE: Technology on trips, visits, residentials and in school

I am aware that we are knee deep in that wonderful time of year when classes have been or are gearing up to take children on their residential experiences, 'camps' and other exciting opportunities. We believe wholeheartedly that these experiences are so important for your children, essential in supporting their social and emotional development, learning new skills, building self-esteem and helping to make memories that will last well beyond their school years.

Please believe me when I say that organising these trips is a challenge, organisation that takes place alongside the normal busyness of the school day incorporating a great deal of information, variables and of course risk management. Challenges associated with logistics, cost and therefore accessibility are significant but so are those aspects linked to safety too. One of our three school rules is 'Safe' and it is with this rule in mind that I need to draw your attention to some very important information.

Relational and Safeguarding policies are clear that technology can be an issue if not managed pro-actively. Therefore, **children are not allowed to have mobile phones, smartwatches OR AirTag trackers on them either at school or on any school trip under any circumstances.**

On AirTag specifically, there are several reasons for this. Firstly, we have children who may have Safeguarding or child protection concerns. The technology described above is not secure and so it is very easy for people we don't know to track the signal from an AirTag and other technology, meaning their whereabouts and previous locations are **broadcast for all**. An AirTag can allow an unknown Apple device to 'claim' the tracker so all information can be seen or even acquired by a nefarious party. In cases where a child routinely wears a tracker this could provide a 'pattern of life'; where they live, go to school, places they play, what time they might go to the shops or a friend's house etc. By putting a tracking device on your child's person or possession, you may inadvertently be putting **all** other children in the group at **significant risk of harm.** Many wearable trackers and phone tracker apps also have the facility to remotely activate cameras and microphones, significant risk as photographs may contain children, staff or volunteer helpers who cannot have their personal details on social media sites as an example. Worryingly, tracking devices such as AirTags contain data showing exactly where the child has been in the past posing potential and real danger for the whole group as the location of the base for the

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group can be easily followed by anyone in the street or who walks by. Finally, AirTag, Smartphone and Smartwatch technology **track everyone in a group** as explained above and this includes our staff personal devices. Believe me when I say that this is deeply concerning, I have been on a trip where my own mobile phone was repeatedly 'pinged' by one of these technologies. The notification informed and warned me that I was being tracked, desperately worrying when in charge of your child's safety.

It is wholly unacceptable for staff and children to be tracked in this way. Staff and children have a right to be safeguarded and for their privacy to be respected. There are also ethical implications around permission from other parent's children (and staff) of tracking. It is for these reasons that if any of these technologies are found or indeed come on trips with your child (whether they are aware or not) I will have no choice but to consider preventing that child from taking part in future trips including residential experiences. This would be determined through the process of risk assessment. I know this is serious, but please do understand that Safeguarding is of paramount importance.

Schools across the country are seeing an increase in these devices and the local authority has now given us strict guidance with which to follow. Therefore, I need to stress again that **children are not allowed to have mobile phones, smartwatches OR AirTag trackers on them either at school or on any school trip under any circumstances.**

I am a parent too; I honestly do understand this can be scary and especially if your child doesn't often stay away from home or has never been to some of the experiences we offer such as Porthpean or residential to camps in places like North Wales or Penryn. However, we are very experienced in running these trips and I would ask that you **trust in me, my staff team and in the school that you have chosen for your child's education.** I can not state enough how much detailed planning, preparation and risk assessing goes into day trips, school visits and residential experiences involving colleagues with years of experience and knowledge. We use a very clear procedure, a step-by-step checklist so that nothing is missed. We don't just rely on that though; we upload all information involving each experience to a portal managed by our partners at Cornwall Outdoors who then critique plans, itineraries, risk assessments and staffing ratios before signing off themselves on the trip. We consider carefully and plan for every eventuality but school experiences like this have many moving parts so we also carry out dynamic, in the moment risk assessment, making decisions in real time and with confidence.

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If you are worried and anxious and feel that you cannot send your child on experiences such as this without the use of technologies outlined above, I would ask you please to come and talk to me. I will do my absolute best to support you.

We are here to support your child to learn and have the very best educational experiences including with trips and visits, every decision we make is based on what is best for your children and their wellbeing, this has been the case for many years now and will not change.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely



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