

17th July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers of all children in our Fleet schools,

In recent months there has been growing awareness of the harmful effects of smartphones on children's mental, physical and overall well-being and social development. This important safeguarding issue has received extensive media coverage and thousands of parents have joined national campaigns such as [Smartphone Free Childhood](#), which are committed to changing the 'social norm' of children having a personal smartphone at increasingly young ages.

The analysis of our recent parent survey in Fleet also highlighted significant concern from our parents/carers over children's extensive screen time use and the arguments this can cause at home, along with children's disengagement from hobbies, family activities and in-person social interaction over time.

In our schools, we have seen first-hand how smartphone use is increasingly having a negative impact on children's happiness, well-being and safety; and this is filtering down to younger ages each year. This includes our concerns around:

- Cyberbullying and inappropriate content shared via social media (including WhatsApp),
- Exposure harmful material and online exploitation, including grooming and scamming, and
- Children presenting with lack of sleep, reduced concentration and social communication difficulties.

Therefore, in line with schools in Basingstoke and other areas of the county and country, we will be introducing a new, phased, smartphone policy across all Fleet schools as follows:

From 1 January 2026 children in primary, infant and junior schools (Year R to Year 6) will not be permitted to bring a smartphone to school. This also applies to smartwatches.

From 1 September 2026 students entering Year 7 from that date will not be permitted to bring smartphones onto school premises. With each successive academic year, one more cohort of secondary school students will not be allowed to bring a smartphone to school.

By 1 September 2030 all Fleet schools will be smartphone-free.

Every decision we make in schools is based on what we, as professionals, believe is in the children's best interests. All fourteen schools have been working together to agree how we can play an active part in reducing children's exposure to potential online risks. We recognise that parents/carers may have some questions regarding these changes and so we have put together some FAQs along with some information below which we hope will reassure you and also address some of the questions/views many of you shared in the recent survey.

We appreciate that change is not easy but are confident that this is the right decision for all our schools and, most importantly, for the future wellbeing of all the children in our community.

Yours sincerely,

Mr K John
Headteacher

Together with:

Mrs. T. Brunton, Headteacher, All Saints CoE Junior School
Miss. P. Meek, Headteacher, Church Crookham Junior School
Mrs. C. Beattie, Headteacher, Court Moor School
Mrs. J. Leatham, Headteacher, Crondall Primary School
Mrs. H. Inglis, Headteacher, Crookham CoE Infant School
Mrs. D. Nicholass, Headteacher, Dogmersfield CoE Primary School
Mrs. M. Robinson, Headteacher, Elvetham Heath Primary School
Mrs. M. Clark, Headteacher, Fleet Infant School
Miss. L. Norris, Acting Headteacher, Heatherside Infant School
Mrs. H. Dunn, Headteacher, Heatherside Junior School
Mrs. J. O'Connor, Headteacher, Tavistock Infant School
Mrs. K. Tottem, Headteacher, Tweseldown Infant School
Mrs J. Westhead, Acting Headteacher, Velmead Junior School

FAQs

My child has a medical condition that requires a smartphone to manage this. Can they still bring their smartphone to school?

Yes, this will form part of your child's Medical Plan and be part of your partnership work with the school to support your child's specific medical condition.

I am concerned about my child walking to and from school independently in case they need to contact me, or I need to contact them. How can I manage this?

Children starting at secondary school from September 2026 and older Key Stage 2 children (subject to each school's own policy) will be permitted to bring a 'brick' phone to school. 'Brick' phones are devices that do not have internet access and do not have a camera. Please see some examples of accepted phones below, which will need to be used with a non-data SIM card:

Nokia 105

Samsung E1200

Alcatel 10.16G

All schools contact parents/carers if a child is absent at morning registration without the school having been informed.

Some other solutions for parents/carers shared by the Smartphone Free Childhood charity include:

- Organising for your child to walk with a group of other children/meeting place,
- Organising a 'walking school bus' with other trusted adults who take turns supervising the walk,
- Using a smart video doorbell (e.g. Ring, Eufy etc.) to see times in/out of the house,
- Using a [bluetooth tracker](#) if you wish to track your child (e.g. Apple Airtag, Tile Mate etc.)
- Sharing the [Clever Never Goes](#) resources at home with your child before they walk independently.

What if I need to contact my child in the school day?

If you need to get a message to your child during the day or they need to contact you, this will be done via the school office. This also helps support school safeguarding procedures and ensures that the right messages are passed on.

My child needs a smartphone to access and complete their homework. How will they engage with homework if they don't have one?

For Primary, Infant and Junior schools, children do not require a smartphone for homework. Both secondary schools are currently reviewing their policies and procedures (for homework, timetables etc.) in light of this decision and will communicate changes with parents/carers before September 2026.