

Smartphone Free Childhood Survey: Parent Summary and School Adoption Proposal

Following our survey last year in relation to 'Smartphone Free Childhood', it is clear that the vast majority of parents support delaying smartphone ownership and would welcome school support in doing so. As a school, we recognise both the opportunities and challenges technology presents. We are therefore proud to support the Smartphone Free Childhood movement, encouraging families to delay smartphone ownership where possible and helping children develop healthy digital habits. By working together, we can reduce peer pressure, improve wellbeing and allow children to enjoy a richer, healthier childhood.

Together, we can create a culture where childhood comes before smartphones.

Summary of Consultation with Parents

Based on responses from 78 families in Smartphone Free Childhood, there is overwhelming support for delaying smartphone ownership and for schools playing a role in supporting children and families.

Key Findings from Parents

I. Parents are highly concerned about smartphones

The vast majority of parents described themselves as "very concerned" about the impact of smartphones on children. The most common concerns were:

- Social media pressure
- Screen addiction
- Online safety risks
- Cyberbullying
- Mental health impacts
- Sleep disruption
- Reduced physical activity

Many parents also expressed concerns about:

- Reduced attention and concentration

- Addiction-like behaviours
- Impact on friendships and social development
- Exposure to inappropriate content

2. Strong support for delaying smartphone ownership

Almost every respondent supported delaying smartphone ownership.

The most commonly suggested ages for a first smartphone were:

- 14+ years (most frequent response)
- 13-14 years
- 12-13 years

Only a very small number felt smartphones should be given before secondary school age.

3. Parents want to act together

One of the strongest survey themes was that families find it easier to delay smartphones when:

- Other parents do the same
- Schools support the approach
- Children are not singled out
- Peer pressure is reduced

Many comments referred to a desire for:

- A collective parent pledge
- A shared community approach
- Greater awareness of the risks of smartphones

4. Schools are expected to help

There was overwhelming support for schools playing a role in promoting healthier digital habits and supporting Smartphone Free Childhood initiatives.

Parents repeatedly stated that schools can:

- Reduce peer pressure
- Educate children about online safety
- Support families with consistent messaging
- Help create a shared culture that prioritises childhood over smartphones

5. Parents recognise some benefits

Parents acknowledged some benefits of phones, including:

- Keeping in touch with family
- Safety and emergency contact
- Location tracking
- Educational uses

However, many parents felt these benefits could be achieved through:

- Basic phones
- Call-and-text-only devices
- Alternative technology without access to social media and the wider internet

Why Our School Is Supporting Smartphone Free Childhood

- As a school, our priority is to help children thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

The survey demonstrates that families share concerns around:

- Mental wellbeing
- Online safety
- Cyberbullying
- Excessive screen time
- Social media pressures
- The impact of smartphones on childhood experiences

Parents have told us clearly that they would welcome support from school in helping children enjoy a more balanced childhood, with more opportunities for:

- Play
- Reading
- Physical activity
- Face-to-face friendships
- Creativity
- Learning without digital distraction

By supporting the Smartphone Free Childhood movement, we are responding directly to the views of our parent community.

How We Will Adopt This as a School

1. Promote informed choices - we will provide information and guidance for parents about:

- Smartphone use
- Social media
- Online safety
- Healthy digital habits

2. Encourage a collective parent approach - we will invite families to consider a voluntary pledge to delay smartphone ownership, helping to reduce peer pressure on children and parents alike.

3. Strengthen digital citizenship education

Children will continue to learn about:

- Staying safe online
- Healthy relationships
- Digital wellbeing
- Responsible technology use

4. Maintain a smartphone-free primary environment

We will continue to promote a school culture where:

- Learning
- Play
- Communication
- Friendships

take place primarily face-to-face rather than through smartphones.

This is not about banning technology. It is about working together to ensure children develop the skills, confidence and maturity needed before being given unrestricted access to smartphones and social media.

