



Marchwood Junior School

Our Learning Family that Inspires you to Dream

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Dear Parents/Carers

In recent months there has been a growing awareness of the harmful effects of smartphones on young people's well-being. New research has received extensive media coverage and thousands of parents have joined national campaigns such as [Smartphone Free Childhood](#), in a bid to delay giving smartphones to their children.

The problem

When children first started to be given smartphones, we didn't understand their impact. Now, there is a growing body of evidence linking smartphone use with an array of harms. Smartphones are correlated with anxiety, depression and loneliness. They are a gateway to extreme content and unwanted communication. Research shows that smartphones affect academic performance and many children show signs of behavioural addiction to their devices.

I urge every parent to look at the [latest evidence](#) of the negative impact smartphones are having on children. This [powerful short film](#) gives a good summary of the problem.

Underpinning all these harms is one that is potentially the most significant of all. Smartphones are experience blockers, distracting children from engaging in the real world. The average UK 12-year-old now spends 29 hours a week – equivalent to a part-time job – on their smartphone. This leaves little time for the real-world activities and relationships that enable us to learn the essential life skills needed for the transition to adulthood.

It is not surprising that new research shows that the younger a child receives their first smartphone, [the worse their mental health](#). And yet, the age children are getting their first smartphone is getting younger and younger. In the UK, a fifth of 3-4 year olds own their own device and 24% of 5-7 year-olds do.

The solution

I do not feel we can ignore the evidence any longer. After careful consideration, we have decided to implement a new policy whereby smart devices are no longer allowed on school premises.

The new policy will be effective from January 2026. Any smart device that is found will be confiscated and will only be returned to the child's parent.

If you would like your child to be contactable on their way to and from school, please provide them with a simple 'brick' phone (without access to the internet). This device will be stored in the office during the school day and children will be able to collect it before leaving at the end of the day.

If there are exceptional circumstances that require your child to bring a smartphone into school each

day, for example if it is used as a medical device, please contact the school office. All requests will be carefully considered, and parents will be informed of the outcome.

Our children's futures are so important, to you and to us. In a world where fast-changing and unregulated technology is actually impacting the development of our children's brains, it is up to us to stand up for them, and their futures.

By working together, we can help our children develop the focus, resilience, and real-world connections they need to thrive in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Hoskins