

Dear Families,

As Derby City school leaders, we have become increasingly concerned by the negative impact of smartphone use by children in our schools. We welcome the actions of the government to increase online safety for the young people in our care.

As many of you will know, the government has already introduced an outright ban on phones in schools and, from September, schools will be legally required to have a phone free school day for pupils. This is being implemented through the Children's Wellbeing and School Bill 2026.

This means that there is NO NEED for your child to have a smartphone; in fact, in every school in Derby City, they will not be permitted to use it during the school day.

In Derby City, headteachers have come together to agree the following statements:

- **Your child does not require a smartphone for transition to secondary school**
- **Your child will not be permitted to use a mobile device during the school day at any Derby City secondary school**

Many parents and carers worry that a smartphone is a way to ensure their child is safe: in fact, exposure to the online world is an unnecessary risk that your child does not need. Options such as 'brick' phones are available if you really feel that you want your child to be able to call you if needed; a smartphone is not a way to ensure that your child is safer.

We encourage families to visit the website below to help you make informed choices about whether to get your child a smartphone and, if so, when to do so. Headteachers in Derby City support the Smartphone Free Childhood campaign to wait until your child is at least 14 years old before giving them this sort of device when they are more ready to navigate the online world it exposes them to. An increasing number of parents are waiting until their child is 14 or 16 years of age and report finding that the young person is less attached to the device and more able to use it as a tool rather than quickly developing the negative, addictive behaviours often seen with smartphone use.

For further information, please visit: [Smartphone Free Childhood](#)

Yours sincerely,

P. Appleton
Andrew G. G. G. G.

Ben JJM

Kids & smartphones - what's the big deal?



Opportunity cost

More scrolling means less time for play, reading and real-life connection.



Addiction

Apps are designed to keep kids scrolling - that's how tech companies make money.



Cyberbullying

Conflicts now follow kids home, with no off switch and no escape.



Harmful content

Extreme, explicit content is just a click away - even when kids aren't looking for it.



Attention

Constant pings and notifications make it harder for kids to concentrate, learn, and focus.



Sleep

Blue light and late-night scrolling disrupt rest and recovery.



Mental health

Since smartphones became widespread, teen anxiety, depression and self-harm have surged.



Family life

Phones can fuel arguments, drain attention, and crowd out real connection.



Grooming

Predators target kids on popular apps like TikTok and Snapchat.



Join the growing movement of parents choosing to delay smartphones and social media.

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CHILDHOOD'S TOO SHORT TO BE SPENT ON A SMARTPHONE

smartphonefreechildhood.org

