

10th September 2025

Dear Parents/Carers/Guardians,

The council is increasingly concerned about the impact of smartphones on our children's development and wellbeing, and we know this concern is shared across many of our school leaders, teachers and school staff.

Smartphones have become an integral part of modern life, with most adults relying on them to access information and stay connected with family and friends.

However, research suggests that smartphones and social media can have negative effects on children and teenagers. Many children receive their first phone while still in primary school, and by the age of 12, the majority already own a smartphone.

- A group of Brighton & Hove schools have come together and committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to make our city schools smartphone-free.
- Most children already cannot use smartphones during the school day: the majority of secondary schools across Brighton & Hove have a smartphone-free policy. Similarly, most primary schools do not allow phones to be used during the school day.

Brighton & Hove City Council fully supports schools in Brighton & Hove which decide to become smartphone free.

We anticipate a shift in the coming years, with fewer children receiving smartphones upon entering secondary school. This expectation is based upon a growing awareness that smartphones are not essential for school attendance and an increasing understanding of the risks associated with early smartphone use.

Several secondary schools have already introduced parent pacts for students in Year 7, and it is expected that participation in such initiatives will continue to increase annually. While exceptions may be made for children with specific medical requirements or those acting as young carers, these cases are few and should be reviewed by the child's school on an individual basis.

A growing number of parents and schools across the country are choosing to take this action. If you need to contact your child while they travel to and from school, a simple 'brick' phone will allow for this. "Brick" phones do not have internet connectivity, and they are inexpensive.

We would like to work together with parents to safeguard children, preserve childhood and continue to develop important transferable life skills. **We would ask that families help us by signing up and agreeing not to provide a smartphone until their child is 14** (unless they have a specific need for one). By doing so, we will protect our children's mental health and wellbeing and set a standard for how communities can come together to challenge the norms that no longer serve our children.

If you would like to find out more about support for parents who want their children to be smartphone free, do please visit [Smartphone Free Childhood.](#)

Yours faithfully,



CLlr Emma Daniel
Cabinet Lead for Children, Families & Youth Services