



3rd October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to inform you of an important change to our school's mobile phone policy, which will come into effect at the start of the new year, in January 2026.

Although this is early, we want to give all families time to act accordingly. After careful consideration within school, parental consultation, pupil voice and discussion, we have made the decision to ban children bringing smartphones to school. This decision has been made in line with Brighton and Hove Council and their recent letter to all families, and as a response to support families and for the well-being of our children.

Three key reasons for this change are:

1. Supporting child well-being and safety: The constant connectivity and social pressures associated with smartphones can sometimes negatively impact children's mental health and well-being. This action will help to reduce times when children are unsupervised with devices that have lots of connectivity to content that may be harmful.

2. Encouraging Positive Social Interaction: We believe that face-to-face interaction is crucial for developing strong social skills and building positive relationships. The presence of smartphones can sometimes hinder these interactions, with children often engaging with their devices rather than with each other.

3. Support families and children: We understand the social pressures families and children face around owning smartphones. We hope that by banning smartphones and creating a smartphone free culture at school, this will reduce pressure for the child to own the 'next big thing' or feel they need to be on social media platforms.

Other primary and secondary schools in the Hove area are also considering making similar changes and four Hove schools have already made the change including Cottesmore, Hangleton, Bilingual and Benfield Primary. We hope this will be the start of a change across Brighton and Hove.

Questions you may have about these changes:

What if I want my child to have a means of communication for their journey to and from school? In such cases, we will allow non-smart mobile phones (often referred to as "brick phones") or the use of air tags. These devices must still be handed in to the class teacher upon arrival at school and can be collected at the end of the school day. This ensures that these devices are used solely for communication outside of school hours and do not have connectivity to materials that are beyond the age regulations of our children.

What will happen if my child brings a smartphone to school? Please note that if a child brings a smartphone into school, it will need to be collected upon arrival by a parent or carer. This includes when smartphones travel with children between parents' homes. What if my child needs access to a smartphone for health reasons? (e.g. diabetes monitoring) Any exceptions to this policy will need to be discussed and agreed with the senior leadership team.

Can my child still own a smartphone at home? We are of course not suggesting that this ban extends further than the school - this is your decision as a family. However we would hope this gives you a chance to reconsider the type of device you may get for your child.

Does my child need a smartphone for secondary school, and if so, does this mean I have to buy a brick phone for independent travel in year 6, and a smartphone for year 7? Significant numbers of parents sent their child to secondary school without a smartphone in September 2024, and even more have done so from September 2025. Secondary-age students are not expected to own a smartphone to be able to access learning and local secondary schools discourage using phones on school premises. We believe this change will have a positive impact on our whole school community. Research, testimonials and case studies we already have in school, show that children who have connectivity to social media platforms find it hard to navigate this virtual world safely. These platforms, including messaging services such as Whatsapp, are rated above a primary school aged child, therefore we would not endorse them being used by our children. These platforms can often lead to exposure to harmful content or inappropriate messaging, which negatively impacts their wellbeing.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in ensuring that this policy is consistently followed. Thank you for your continued support in making Hove Learning Federation the best possible place for our children to learn and grow.

As always, our doors are always open so please do come and talk to us further if you would like to.

Best Wishes,

Maddie Southern
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