



Smartphone Policy at Dulwich Wood

Thursday, 18 December 2025

From the Headteacher & Chair of Governors

Dear Parents/Carers,

We wanted to share something important with you – something we've been thinking hard about as a school, and something we know many of you are thinking about too.

From January 2026, our school will be **smartphone-free** for all children. That means no smartphones on school grounds – for any year group. This isn't about banning or restricting; it's about creating the kind of space we believe our children thrive in. A place where focus, creativity, friendships and real connection come first.

We've all been put in an impossible position, including families, schools – and children themselves – when it comes to smartphones. The pressure to hand one over seems to come earlier and earlier, but the truth is, so many of us feel uneasy about it. We want to let you know: if you've ever felt that tug in your gut – the "is this too soon?" feeling – you're not alone. You're in good company.

That's why we're supporting a growing grassroots movement called Smartphone Free Childhood. It's not a top-down campaign. It's a bottom-up one, driven by families, carers, teachers, and kids – all trying to figure this out together. It's about creating healthier childhoods, and giving kids the chance to learn, grow and thrive, free from the pull of addictive algorithms and 24/7 internet in their pockets.

So, what's changing at Dulwich Wood?

From the 5th January 2026

- **Smartphones will not be allowed on school grounds for any children.**
- Children who travel to or from school independently may bring a simple, non-smart mobile (just calls/texts), with permission. These must be handed to the office on arrival and collected at the end of the day.
- Smart watches will also not be permitted.

This isn't about judgement – it's about finding strength in numbers, and knowing you're not the only one swimming against the tide.

This change predominantly affects children in Years 5 and 6. I understand that many parents value the ability to contact their children, particularly as they become more independent and start walking to and from school. To give you peace of mind while ensuring child safety, it is worth noting that children's phones do not need internet access for emergency communication. Simple "brick phones" or text-and-call devices can serve this purpose effectively.

If you wish your child to have a phone for safety reasons, please consider purchasing one of the alternative options listed here: <https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/alternatives>

We know that there are a very small number of children who need a smartphone so that their medical conditions can be monitored e.g., children with an insulin pump. Children who require this provision are exempt from the smartphone restriction.

If children are found bringing a smartphone onto school premises, it will be confiscated immediately. Parents will be required to attend a meeting with myself or another member of the Senior Leadership Team to collect the phone and reset expectations.

To educate and support children, we are planning to hold talks for children in Years 5 and 6 about the use of smartphones and screen time. We will confirm these dates in the New Year.

We will also be running sessions for parents to help you understand that your children are especially vulnerable to online content, and should inappropriate content be shared, however innocently or accidentally, the parent or carer of that child is, by law, liable.

Thank you for helping us create a school environment where our kids can stay kids just a little bit longer.

Kind regards,

Miss Rowe (Headteacher) & *Ms McLelland* (Chair of Governors)