



Friday 18th July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Smartphone ban in LBBB schools

As some of you with older children may be aware, from September 2025 the new cohort of students joining Year 7 at Secondary Schools in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham will not be allowed to bring a smartphone to school. A smartphone is defined as a phone that allows internet connectivity and the use of Apps. Secondary schools are also asking that parents/carers delay allowing their children to have a smartphone at all until they are aged 14 or older, and to delay access to social media until they are 16.

In support of this borough-wide decision, and because of one of responsibilities is to get children ready for secondary school, Southwood Primary School will also be introducing a **no smartphone policy from 1st September 2025**. Please see below further information shared by LBBB secondary schools explaining the decision, and alternatives, should you wish your child (in Year 5 or 6) to be contactable on the way to and home from school.

Why the decision has been made?

Although there are many benefits, there is increasing evidence that smartphone use has negative effects on the wellbeing & mental health of young people and poses a number of significant safeguarding risks. Smartphone use has been linked to impaired attention and focus, sleep deprivation, mental health issues, online bullying, exposure to harmful online content and people, increased risk of mugging, and increased loneliness and social isolation. We want young people to prioritise in-person interactions and to benefit from the stronger social skills, empathy and sense of community real-world interactions offer.

Whilst the use of phones is banned in school and children are protected from some of the issues outlined above, these risks remain outside of school. We encourage all parents and carers to delay allowing children to have a smartphone at all until they are aged 14 or older, and to delay access to social media until age 16.

If you feel your child needs a device for safety reasons, please consider instead a phone without internet connectivity (a 'brick' phone) and an Airtag. A simple phone and an Airtag can be purchased for much less than a smartphone and will allow communication and address any safety concerns you may have.

We hope that you will support us in our aim to make sure that your children are happy and safeguarded by being smartphone free.

Further Information, research and resources relating to mobile phone use and young people:

Smartphone Free Childhood

[Smartphone Free Childhood](#)

Unesco Report

[To ban or not to ban? | UNESCO](#)

Mobile Phones in Schools Guidance

[Mobile phones in schools - February 2024](#)

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