

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to update you on changes to our mobile phone policy, in line with the Department for Education's 2026 guidance on creating smartphone-free school environments. The DfE expects schools to ensure pupils do not have access to mobile phones during the school day, helping to create calmer, safer and more focused learning environments.

From September 2026, children will not be permitted to bring smartphones to school.

Many schools nationally and locally are also adopting this approach, including The Angmering School and other schools in our locality group. This reflects a shared commitment to reducing online pressures and supporting children's wellbeing. The increasing body of evidence that shows the impact the use of smartphone technology is having on children is significant - and this is felt in school where issues caused online often come into school and impact on learning and pupil well-being.

FAQs

What about my child who travels to school by themselves and they need a phone to contact me if needed and to keep them safe?

We recognise that some of our pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 travel to and from school independently, and that families may wish for them to carry a mobile phone for safety. For these children, and only where written permission for independent travel is in place, families may provide an old-style 'brick phone'. This refers to a basic device with no internet functionality, no apps and no smart features, limited solely to calls and texts. It is possible to buy sim cards for 'brick phones' that can be tracked or families may choose to attach a small tracking device to a school bag if preferred.

If children do bring a 'brick phone' to school, they must follow our existing procedures: The phone must be switched off on arrival to school, handed to the class teacher at the start of the day, and collected again at home time.

What if I need to let my child know about any changes to travel arrangements or other arrangements for after school?

If contact needs to be made between parents and children regarding their travel arrangements the school office can facilitate this.

What if my child needs a smartphone for medical reasons?

The exception to this policy is where a smartphone is required for specific medical reasons, as would be set out in a child's individual health care plan.

My child will need a phone for secondary school, so why can't they have one now?

Secondary schools are also adopting this approach as part of school's safeguarding duties and recognition of the risks posed to children in their use of smartphone technology. Both secondary schools and primary schools follow the same government legislation. The Angmering School and other local secondary schools have already shared with their community that they will not be allowing children to bring smartphones into school.

Thank you for your support as we align with national guidance and continue to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of all pupils.

A large number of parents of our school have joined a network called 'Smartphone Free Childhood' - this group offers parents resources and support to help navigate the digital world with their children - <https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org>. There is a dedicated St Margaret's School Whatsapp group for this network too.

We will also continue to support parents in how to keep children safe online through the regular workshops we host in school.

Warm regards,

Mr Lumley

Headteacher