

Smartphone-Free School Policy



Introduction

At Kings Furlong Junior School, we are committed to providing a safe, focused and inclusive learning environment where every child can thrive. Guided by our core values of Belong, Believe, Aspire and Achieve, we strive to create a community in which children feel valued, develop confidence in themselves, aspire to be their very best and achieve their full potential.

As part of this commitment, we maintain a Smartphone-Free School Policy. We believe that primary-aged children benefit most from meaningful face-to-face interactions, active play, hands-on learning and opportunities to build positive relationships free from digital distractions. By limiting the presence of smartphones and internet-enabled devices on school grounds, we support children's wellbeing, strengthen their social and emotional development, and foster a stronger sense of belonging within our school community. This approach helps children remain focused on learning, build positive relationships and engage fully in school life. We greatly value the support of parents and carers in helping us uphold this important commitment and create the best possible environment for all children.

Expectations

- Children are not permitted to bring a smartphone to school.
- A basic mobile phone (sometimes referred to as a 'brick phone') may be brought to school by children in Years 5 and 6 only.
- Children in Years 3 and 4 are not permitted to bring mobile phones of any type to school.
- Any mobile phone brought to school must be switched off and handed to the class teacher at the start of the school day.
- Mobile phones must remain switched off at all times while on the school site.
- All mobile phones will be stored securely by school staff and returned to children at the end of the school day.
- If there is a specific reason why a child requires a smartphone (for example, a medical need), this must be discussed and agreed with the Headteacher in advance.

Rationale

At Kings Furlong Junior School, we are committed to creating an environment that supports children's wellbeing, learning and personal development. We believe that primary-aged children thrive when they have opportunities to build positive relationships, develop independence and engage in meaningful face-to-face interactions. Our smartphone-free approach helps minimise distractions, reduce online risks and promote a positive school community.

To support this approach:

- We do not support primary-aged children owning or using smartphones due to concerns relating to:
 - ✓ the development of critical thinking, resilience and emotional regulation skills;
 - ✓ the promotion of healthy, real-life social interactions;
 - ✓ the reduction of privacy risks and online harms.
- We maintain a smartphone-free environment to encourage face-to-face interaction and reduce distractions while children are under the school's care, including during the school day, educational visits and residential trips.
- Children are not permitted to have smartphones on school premises unless exceptional arrangements have been agreed in advance by the Headteacher.

- Parents and carers are encouraged to support this policy by ensuring that children do not bring smartphones to school.
- If a child is found to have a smartphone in school without prior permission, the matter will be referred to the Leadership Team and appropriate action will be taken to address any associated risks and concerns.

Potential Risks Associated with Smartphones

Smartphones provide access to a wide range of online services, including the internet, social media and messaging platforms. While these technologies can have benefits, they can also present risks for primary-aged children, including:

- **Cyberbullying:** Smartphones can enable bullying and harassment to continue beyond the school day, making it difficult for children to escape harmful interactions.
- **Exposure to Inappropriate Content:** Internet access may expose children to content that is unsuitable or distressing for their age and stage of development.
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Concerns:** Excessive smartphone and social media use may have a negative impact on children's wellbeing, including increased feelings of anxiety, low mood and reduced self-esteem.
- **Distraction from Learning:** Smartphones can divert attention away from learning, concentration and engagement in school activities.
- **Privacy and Online Safety Risks:** Children may not yet have the knowledge or experience to manage personal information safely online, increasing their vulnerability to privacy breaches, exploitation or other online harms.
- **Pressure from Social Media:** Regular exposure to social media can contribute to unrealistic comparisons, concerns about appearance and self-image, and pressure to present an idealised version of oneself online.

Confiscation and Sanctions

- The school reserves the right to apply appropriate sanctions where this policy is not followed, including the confiscation of mobile phones and other internet-enabled devices.
- Any smartphone or internet-enabled device brought onto school premises without prior permission will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or carer.
- Basic mobile phones ('brick phones') are permitted for children in Years 5 and 6 for the journey to and from school. However, if they are not handed to the class teacher at the start of the school day, they will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or carer.
- Repeated breaches of this policy may result in further consequences in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.
- When confiscating devices, staff will act reasonably, proportionately and in accordance with school policies and relevant legislation.

Pupil Tracking Devices

- To safeguard all children, the use of personal tracking devices, GPS trackers, location-monitoring tags or similar technology is not permitted in school.
- Children must not wear or carry devices that enable real-time location tracking whilst on school premises, educational visits or residential trips.
- The use of individual tracking devices can create safeguarding, privacy and security concerns for children, staff and other members of the school community.
- Any exceptional circumstances requiring the use of a tracking device must be discussed and agreed with the Headteacher in advance.

What is a Brick Phone?

For the purposes of this policy, a brick phone (sometimes referred to as a basic mobile phone or feature phone) is a device used solely for basic communication between home and school.

A permitted brick phone:

- Allows phone calls and SMS text messaging only.
- Does not provide unrestricted internet access.
- Does not allow access to social media platforms.
- Does not support the downloading or use of applications.
- Does not provide location-sharing or tracking functionality.
- Is designed primarily for simple communication rather than internet connectivity.

The school reserves the right to determine whether a device meets the definition of a brick phone. Any device that provides smartphone functionality, including internet access, social media access, app download capability or location-sharing features, will be classified as a smartphone and is not permitted under this policy.

Policy implemented: September 2026

Next Review: September 2028

Appendix 1 – Example Alternative Options to Smart Phones

This list is not comprehensive, and acts only to give examples. They are not recommendations.

Sim-free mobile phone
Talk, text and wireless FM radio
Very good battery life
Torch and snake game



Nokia 2660 Flip

Texts and phone calls
Very long-lasting battery
Range of colours
Bright, colourful display (non-pixelated text)
Built in FM radio, MP3 player and torch
Snake (and Tetris but you need to pay for the full game)
Single rear facing camera (no selfies!)



Nokia 5710

Like an iPod with in-built wireless earbuds which charge when not in use
Inbuilt mp3 player with storage for thousands of songs
Inbuilt speaker
Wireless FM radio
Great sound quality
Great battery life
No wifi or whatsapp



Appendix 2 – SIM Card Details

When purchasing a SIM card for your child's phone, we advise that it has no data within the contract, but rather only calls and texts. This is so that there is no chance that they can access the internet. Asda, amongst a few other mobile providers, offer this type of SIM card. This is not a recommendation but a suggestion.