

Dear [],

We are writing to you as a group of parents who are concerned about the impact of smartphones on pupils at [X] School. We know how much pressure schools are under and are so grateful for all the work you and your team do for our children. We also understand that it isn't a school's role to dictate what parents do at home – but as a school leader, you are in a powerful position to help shift the norms around childhood and tech.

Smartphone Free Childhood is a **parent-led grassroots movement** that's growing fast across the UK. We're passionate about giving kids the space to learn and grow free from toxic and addictive algorithms, and our community includes many schools and school leaders.

Why this matters

When smartphones were first introduced, we didn't yet understand their full impact. Now, the evidence is stacking up – and it's worrying.

Smartphone use is linked to rising levels of anxiety, depression and loneliness. They're a gateway to pornography, cyberbullying, grooming and violent content. They affect academic performance, sleep, and focus – and many children show signs of behavioural addiction.

Underpinning all of this is something bigger: **smartphones are experience blockers**. According to a new University of Birmingham study, the average 12–15-year-old now spends 35 hours a week on their smartphone – that's the equivalent of a full-time job. It leaves less time for the real-world play, social interaction, exploration and learning that are the foundations of healthy development.

And yet, the age kids get smartphones keeps dropping. A fifth of UK 3–4 year olds already own a device, and 24% of 5–7 year-olds do too. Many parents don't want to give their child a smartphone, but feel they have no choice – because "everyone else is." No one wants their child to be left out.

What schools can do

There's currently no national guidance from the government or NHS on when children should get smartphones – which leaves families without a compass. That's why primary schools can play such a vital role. By taking small steps to support families, you can help reset the norm.

When primary schools are explicitly smartphone-free, peer pressure reduces. Parents feel more confident saying "not yet." And if a whole peer group delays together, it becomes much easier to transition to secondary school without smartphones.

What other communities are doing

More and more schools are taking small but powerful steps by working with parents who want to help families minimise the impact of smartphones on childhood. These initiatives are

all parent-led, with the school's backing – rather than something schools need to lead themselves. For example:

- Sharing the [Parent Pact](#) with the school community via the school newsletter. It's a digital tool that helps parents connect and delay smartphones together until at least 14, and social media till 16. It's been signed by 140,000 families at 45% of schools in the UK in the first six months.
- Making a clear and proud commitment to being a smartphone-free school.
- Holding an expert parent talk (SFC recommends Papaya Parents) to spark open, supportive conversations among parents on the issue.
- Letting parents host a Smartphone Free Childhood stall at the summer or winter fair – a friendly way to share info and build support in the community.
- Sharing advice on simple, child-safe [phone alternatives](#) – so families can stay connected without the risks of full internet access.
- Join the [Smartphone Free Childhood Schools Network](#) – a supportive community for teachers and school leaders working together to create change

We'd love to talk to you about what's possible at [school name].

Would you be open to a short meeting? A few of us from the local community would be happy to meet at a time that suits you. We'd love to share ideas and hear your perspective too.

With thanks again for all you do,

[Your names]