



Highcliffe St. Mark Primary School & Fledglings Pre-School

A Church of England Foundation School

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Dear Parents and Carers

Over the past year, we have been considering our approach to mobile phones in school. The Department for Education and Ofsted have issued new guidance which makes it clear that simply keeping phones "out of sight" is no longer sufficient.

We have taken note of the increasing support for the Smartphone Free Childhood campaign within our school community and we agree with the findings of recent research into the adverse impact of Smartphones on children. You may also be aware that most of the local secondary schools, including Highcliffe School, have made the decision to be either Smartphone free or on a pathway towards that from September.

This issue was discussed at our recent Full Governing Body meeting and we have taken the decision that **from September 2026, Highcliffe St Mark Primary School will be a Smartphone-free school.**

What this means for our pupils

- Pupils in Years 5&6 will be permitted to bring a basic 'brick phone,' without a camera or internet connectivity, for essential communication on their journey to and from school. Parents of children bringing in a 'brick' phone will need to register this with the school via their Arbor account.
- All other pupils are not permitted to bring phones of any sort into school in line with the previous mobile phone policy. Our school's relationships and behaviour policy will be updated in September with an appendix detailing these protocols.
- Smart watches and any device capable of internet access, photography or messaging apps are also not permitted.
- All 'brick' phones must remain switched off and kept in bags throughout the school day.
- Should a child bring a smartphone or device with internet connectivity or a camera into school, we will retain the device until a parent or carer is able to collect this from our school office. Repeat offenders will not be allowed to bring any sort of phone into school.
- Should a child be seen with their 'brick' phone at any point after they have entered the school grounds, we will retain the device until a parent or carer is able to collect this from the school office. Repeat offenders will not be allowed to bring their phone into school.

Types of phone

Any simple, low-cost basic phone, without access to the internet or a camera is permissible. Please see below some suggested models:



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2023 - 2024



- Nokia 105 4G (no-camera version)
- Easyfone Prime A6 4G
- Chakeyake
- Artphone 30

Pupils with medical needs

Pupils who require smartphone-linked medical monitoring (e.g. diabetes, epilepsy) will receive an individual exemption. These arrangements will be included in their Health Care Plan.

Parents As Role Models

We would like to encourage parents to provide positive role modelling for our new policy and ask that you do not use your Smartphone whilst on school grounds. This includes during drop-off and pick up.

More information can be found in the PowerPoint presentation attached with this letter and you can find lots of information here <https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/> .

There is also an interesting free webinar on healthy screen use which is well worth a watch. https://www.facefamilyadvice.co.uk/supportforparents?utm_campaign=a2a313f6-332d-4c0a-90a9-880ea26523ba&utm_source=so&utm_medium=mail&cid=07609028-f684-47c5-bb9b-b543c494c406

We ask that you support us in this important move to safeguard the wellbeing of our children at Highcliffe St Mark Primary School. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please get in touch.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs Barker

Headteacher