



4<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

This is a joint letter being sent to all families of primary age children in the Hedge End area. We call this our cluster schools.

We are becoming increasingly concerned about the impact of smartphones on our children.

Smartphones are a big part of life today. Most adults have one. They are a fantastic tool for finding information and staying connected with family and friends. However, there is now an alarming amount of evidence and research of the negative effects of smartphones and social media on children and teenagers.

These include:

- Poor mental health, such as depression, anxiety and low self-esteem.
- Issues with cyberbullying, attention, focus and sleep.
- Exposure to dangerous and harmful content, and inappropriate material.
- Opportunity cost: Smartphones can be highly addictive, and hours spent on a device reduces time spent playing, interacting and developing vital social skills.

Children often get their first phone in primary school and over 90% of 12-year-olds now have a smartphone. This period is crucial for brain development. A [major study](#) found that the younger a child gets a smartphone, the worse their mental health will be. Schools are in a powerful position to change the norm, and support parents on this difficult issue.

That's why Hedge End schools along with many Hampshire primary schools are now coming together to take collective action, and commit to making Hampshire primary schools genuinely smartphone free. This is without question, a growing movement that already enjoys the support of so many parents.

In the Hedge End cluster, **collectively we are committed to making our primary schools completely smartphone free by September 2026**. In the meantime, we will work together as school leaders to ensure our policy documents securely reflect this change.

If you need to contact your child while they travel to and from school, a simple 'brick' phone is more than enough. 'Brick' phones do not have internet connectivity, and they are inexpensive. There are a few phones that look like smartphones but are not. You can find a list of non-smart phones [here](#).

Here are some links to some more popular non-smart phones:

[Nokia 105](#)

[Ushining Flip Phone](#)

[Oakcastle SIM Free Mobile](#)

We would like to work together with parents to safeguard children and preserve childhood. By doing so, we can not only protect our children's mental health and wellbeing, but we can also set a standard for how communities can come together to challenge the norms that no longer serve our children. We are also encouraging all parents to delay giving a smartphone to your child until they are at least 14 years old and to delay allowing their children access to social media until age 16.

If you would like to find out more about support for parents who want their children to be smartphone free, do please visit [Smartphone Free Childhood](#). Here you can sign the [Parent pact](#). This allows parents to come together in delaying giving a smartphone to their children, until the end of Year 9.

Yours sincerely,

Amanda Greenwood

Headteacher

