



Horsell C of E (voluntary aided) Junior School

At Horsell C of E Junior School we believe we are all 'made in the image of God'. Through a commitment to Christian values and high academic aspirations, we strive to provide a rich and inclusive education for every member of our school family.

SMARTPHONE POLICY	
Date adopted:	1st September 2025
Author/ Owner:	Celia Wand, Headteacher
Approved by:	Governing Body
Date approved:	September 2025
Due for review:	September 2026

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

‘Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may’ Ephesians 4:29

At Horsell Junior School we recognise that smartphones are an integral part of daily life for adults, but we are increasingly concerned about the ownership and use of smartphones for our children.

This policy aims to:

- Promote safe and responsible phone use.
- Set clear guidelines for the use of smartphones by, staff, parents, and volunteers.
- Support the school's other policies, especially those related to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and use of ICT.

The Impact of Smartphone Use on Children

Developmental Concerns: Research indicates that early exposure to smartphones can negatively impact children's mental health, leading to increased anxiety, depression, and social isolation. Smartphone use in children can significantly impact children's sleep, leading to a higher risk of poor sleep quality, reduced sleep duration, and daytime sleepiness.

Educational Concerns: Research indicates that use of a smartphone can be a contributing factor to children's lack of ability to concentrate and to a reduced attention span.

Family Concerns: Smartphone use can be addictive and can cause family conflict as children struggle to come off smartphones. Additionally, any family member can be distracted by their smartphone, reducing the opportunity to develop language and communication skills and build family relationships. We would encourage all families to be conscious of how smartphones are used by all members of the household and the impact this can have on their children.

Alternative Activities: We will encourage children to engage in outdoor play, face-to-face interactions, and other non-screen activities to support their physical and mental development.

Parental Guidance: Parents are advised to delay providing smartphones to children until they reach the age of 14. This helps ensure that children develop healthy habits and coping mechanisms before being exposed to the potential risks associated with smartphone use.

Smartphone use at Horsell C of E Junior School

Educational Purpose: Smartphones will not be used to enhance learning and support educational activities. Other devices such as Chromebooks, iPad and desktop computers will be utilised.

Safety and Security: Ensuring the safety and security of children is paramount. Smartphones must not be used in ways that compromise the safety of any individual.

Respect and Responsibility: We will teach children, through the curriculum, how to use smartphones and other technologies respectfully and responsibly, understanding the impact their actions can have on themselves and others.

Digital Citizenship: We will teach children to be responsible digital citizens, understanding the importance of privacy, appropriate online behaviour, and the consequences of cyberbullying.

Use of Smartphones by children

We strongly advise that parents, if they wish their child to have a phone for safety reasons, purchase a phone that only has the capability to make phone calls or send single text messages (see Appendix 1)

The school is implementing a staged approach to a ‘no smartphones’ policy. Children joining the school in September 2025 will not be permitted to bring smartphones into school during their time at Horsell Junior. They will be able to bring in alternatives to smartphones (see Appendix 1).

For current pupils, the following rules apply:

1. Children in Years 3 and 4 will not be allowed to bring smartphones into school.
2. Children in Years 5 and 6 who do have a smartphone will be required to hand their smartphone and/or smartwatch into the smartphone box on the school gate, and parents will be required to complete a smartphone registration form for their child prior to a child bringing a smartphone/smartwatch into school. The smartphone box will be stored securely in the school. Smartphones will be returned to class at the end of the school day. Smartwatches will also be stored in this way. Children who bring in an alternative to a smartphone (see Appendix 1) will also need to register their device and hand it into school staff in the same way.
3. Children who attend any after school club must leave their phone in their bag until they have left the school premises. Children using their phone on the school site after school teaching hours will result in consequences as set out in the school’s behaviour policy.
4. Smartphones/smartwatches that are not handed into the school smartphone box will be confiscated and parents will be informed. Breaches of the school policy in this regard will result in consequences as set out in the school’s behaviour policy.
5. Children are not permitted to bring any phone or any internet enabled device, including air tags, digital cameras or tablets, on school trips or residential. Breaches of the school’s policy in this regard will also result in consequences as set out in the school’s behaviour policy.

Use of Smartphones by Staff

Staff are not permitted to make or receive calls or send texts during contact time, including staff training sessions. Use of personal smartphones must be restricted to non-contact time and areas where children are not present (e.g., staff room).

It is at the Headteacher's discretion to allow staff to use their phone for specific reasons, such as a doctor's appointment during the school day.

Use of Smartphones by Parents, Volunteers, and Visitors:

Parents, volunteers, and visitors must adhere to the school's smartphone policy when on school premises. Whilst on site, phones should not be used, or in sight, including on the playground, in the reception area of the school, on the benches outside the office, or at collection time.

The school expects all parents to support the school in upholding this policy. Parents must not text or contact their child via their phone during the school day or during after school clubs. If parents need to contact their child, they should phone the school office.

Loss, theft or damage

The school is not responsible for the loss, theft or damage of phones.

Appendix One

Suggested alternatives to Smartphones (as of May 2025):

Nokia 105

Nokia 5710

Nokia 2660

The Light Phone II

Please note, this is a short list of known phones at the time of writing and phone companies are regularly bringing out new products, so parents and carers are advised to research recommendations from other organisations such as:

<https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/alternatives>

<https://www.papayaparents.com/solutions#anchor-link-Basic>

Further Guidance

This policy has been prepared using research and recommendations from the below sources:

Smartphone Free Childhood: <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/>

The Anxious Generation by Jonathan Haidt: <https://jonathanhaidt.com/anxious-generation/>

PAPAYA: <https://www.papayaparents.com/>