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Smart Phone Free Childhood

Dear families,

We wanted to share something important with you – something we've been thinking hard about as a school and as a borough, and something we know many of you are thinking about too. **Hyndburn** has become the first borough in Lancashire to adopt a **smartphone free** pact for its schools. Many schools have signed up to this pact as a collective after coming together with parents, school leaders, our MP, Sarah Smith and Smartphone Free Lancashire.

From September 2026, our school will be **smartphone free** for children. **That means no smartphones on school grounds – for any year group**. This isn't about banning or restricting; it's about creating the kind of space we believe our children thrive in. A place where focus, creativity, friendships, and real connection come first.

The government has made it clear that schools **must** have robust policies in place regarding mobile phones; this is now a legal requirement. However, our decision to become smartphone-free has been made not just because of this directive but because of the deep concerns we have regarding the provision of smartphones for young people.

We have seen a change in children over the last 10 years. As these devices have become more common and part of our daily lives, the impact upon young people is becoming more apparent. We are advocates for technology, and it absolutely has the power to transform education. However, unrestricted access to the internet and social media via smartphones is impacting children's mental health, their confidence, their concentration, and their physical health. We've all been put in an impossible position—including families, schools, and children themselves—when it comes to smartphones. The pressure to hand one over seems to come earlier and earlier, but the truth is, so many of us feel uneasy about it. That's why we're supporting a growing movement called **Smartphone Free Childhood.**

What is changing at many of the Hyndburn schools, including ours: From September 2026:
● **Smartphones** will not be allowed on school grounds for any children.
● **Independent Travelers (Y5 and Y6 only):** Children who travel to or from school independently may bring a simple, non-smart mobile (sometimes referred to as a 'brick phone' that only handle calls and texts and has no camera or internet capability), with prior permission. These must be handed to the class teacher on arrival and collected at the end of the day. (You can see this website for suggestions: https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/alternatives).
● **Smartwatches** will not be permitted. We encourage the provision of analogue or simple digital watches instead.
● **Medical & Exceptional Circumstances:** If there are exceptional circumstances that require your child to bring a smartphone into school each day—for example, if it is used as a vital medical device—then this policy will not apply. This must be formally agreed upon with the school leadership.

We have already held information sessions for parents during the summer term, where we shared information about the impact smartphones can have upon young people and give advice and guidance about how best to support your children growing up in the digital age.

Thank you for helping us create a school environment where our children can stay children just a little bit longer.

With thanks,
M Proctor
Headteacher

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