SMARTPHONE FREE CHILDHOOD

Smartphone-free childhood

Sheriffhales Primary School and Preschool

What is it?

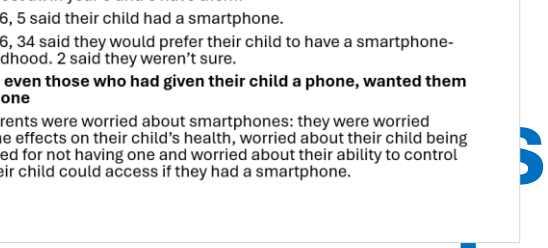
- Smartphone-free childhood is a parent-led initiative gaining momentum across the UK
- It refers to SMARTPHONES only (‘phones which can access the internet)
- It is NOT a school initiative – it’s a parent one
- It is a pact which parents can choose to sign – a promise to not give their child a smartphone until well into secondary school age
- Parents can sign the pact on the Smartphone –free Childhood website

A smartphone is not just a gaming device or a way to stay in touch with friends:
A smartphone is a portable computer with 24/7 access to the internet.
The internet is not a safe space for children to access alone. They do not have the developmental maturity to keep themselves safe.
Parents do not have the ability to keep unsupervised children safe on the internet: parental controls are simply not enough – children or their friends can override them and parents cannot control what their child sees on others' phones. They can simply screenshot things or copy links and forward them to their friends.
Whatsapp, Instagram and Tiktok are some of the apps children use. None of them are appropriate for children. All of them are designed to be addictive. Whatsapp is frequently used for **bullying** between children. There are many other apps which are aimed at children and 'funnel' them to dangerous areas of the internet – **grooming, pornography, violence, abuse, hate, gambling**.

ALL OF THESE HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCED BY SHERIFFHALES CHILDREN.

A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, WE DID A SURVEY OF PARENTS' VIEWS. What did other parents say?

- We did a survey. 37 families replied. 1 reply was from a child! Almost all were Reception- year 3. We know some children in year 4 have them and almost all in year 5 and 6 have them.
- Out of 36, 5 said their child had a smartphone.
- Out of 36, 34 said they would prefer their child to have a smartphone-free childhood. 2 said they weren't sure.
- **No one, even those who had given their child a phone, wanted them to have one**
- Most parents were worried about smartphones: they were worried about the effects on their child's health, worried about their child being ostracised for not having one and worried about their ability to control what their child could access if they had a smartphone.


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s the problem with kids and smartphones?

- Research is overwhelming: exposing children to things their brains aren't yet developed to deal with can cause so many problems:
- ANXIETY EATING DISORDERS CYBERBULLYING SEXUAL GROOMING ADDICTION BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS ACCESS TO PORNOGRAPHY ACADEMIC DISTRACTION MENTAL ILLNESS LOSS OF CHILDHOOD OPPORTUNITY
- You can find lots of information about these on the Smartphone Free Childhood website.
- We see many of these problems in school.
- SMARTPHONES ARE FUELLING A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

This is the problem facing every child in a phone society…

- **In the last decade, there have been 70% fewer outside accidents and 93% more incidents of self harm in children.**

A broken arm is easier to mend than a broken mind.

- Every page on a phone is designed to be addictive: every app, every game, **every single page.**
- **The average British 12 year old spends 29 hours a week on a phone**.
- 51% of 11-13 year olds have seen hardcore pornography; many younger than that have seen it too. (British Board of Film Classification Report 2022)

Smartphones expose kids to harmful content

- You can try to limit and control, but they will get round it.
- They will be exposed to things they never wanted to see.
- 75% of UK 15 year olds questioned had been sent beheading videos (Children's Commissioner Report 2022)
- 90% of girls / 50% of boys say they are sent unwanted explicit content (Ofsted review of sexual abuse in schools 2021)
- When children are on a phone, they are not being children. They are not with friends, talking and playing, not learning from adults and peers, not moving, not developing in the way they were designed to.

What does Smartphone-free childhood look like for a primary school parent?

- It’s a simple click on the smartphone-free childhood website.
- You make a promise to other parents not to give your child a smartphone
- The idea is that instead of giving your child a phone because everyone else has one, you are supported by other parents to do the opposite! You don’t give them a smartphone because no one else has one!
- This is much easier for those families whose children don’t yet have a smartphone.
- You can see on the website how many (but not who) in your school community and in your child’s class have signed up.
- If everyone in your class signs up, this is a powerful tool for you to protect your child and others.

If this feels right for you, go to the website and register!

SMARTPHONE FREE CHILDHOOD

- School will give updates about how many have signed up
- You can check for yourself on the Smartphone Free Childhood website
- You can give your child the promise of a safer childhood.

You can use this QR code



SMARTPHONE FREE CHILDHOOD

