



SOUTH WILFORD

Endowed C of E Primary School

Working together on safe smart-phone use

Dear Parents and Carers,

At our school, we are committed to creating a calm, focused, and safe learning environment for every child. As part of this commitment, we operate as a smartphone-free school. Mobile phones are not permitted on the school site; any phones used for the journey to and from school must be handed in at the school office upon arrival and collected at the end of the day. This approach helps to minimise distractions, reduce the risk of online harm during the school day, and support positive social interaction among pupils.

This approach is in line with the growing national movement towards smartphone-free schools. Recent guidance from the UK government makes clear that schools are expected to be phone-free by default, with mobile phones prohibited throughout the school day to support behaviour, wellbeing, and learning. Alongside this, there is an increasing national conversation about children's relationship with smartphones and social media, with policymakers, educators, and families working together to promote healthier habits and safer online experiences.

We are also mindful of the wider discussion around the age at which children are given smartphones. National campaigns such as Smartphone Free Childhood encourage families to delay giving smartphones until at least age 14, reflecting growing concern about the impact of early smartphone use. Similarly, guidance from industry and research suggests that younger children may be better supported with simpler devices, and that many parents later regret introducing smartphones too early.

By continuing to operate a smartphone-free school, we aim to reduce pressure on families to provide smartphones at a young age and to support a collective approach within our community. We believe that when schools and parents work together, it becomes easier to set consistent expectations that benefit all children.

South Wilford
Endowed C of E Primary School
Main Road, Wilford, Nottingham
NG11 7AL

Tel: 0115 915 2967 / 0115 915 2968
admin@southwilford.nottingham.sch.uk
www.southwilford.nottingham.sch.uk

Head Teacher
Chair of Governors

Natalie Aldridge
Neil Johnson

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At the same time, we recognise that mobile phones and digital technology are an important part of modern life. Rather than ignoring this reality, we take a proactive approach to teaching children how to use technology safely, responsibly, and respectfully.

Online safety and digital literacy are embedded throughout our curriculum, including within PSHE lessons, assemblies, Picture News discussions, and dedicated internet safety sessions. Through this, pupils learn about managing screen time, recognising online risks, respectful communication, and how to seek help if something goes wrong.

We also value the role of parents and carers in supporting children's safe use of technology. We are currently working to secure a workshop for families focused on mobile phone use and online safety, so that we can work together to promote consistent messages between home and school.

In the meantime, we encourage families to consider carefully when introducing smartphones, to make use of parental controls, and to model positive digital habits at home. The link to the smartphone free childhood web page is below so you can have a look at what they promote and how you can support the movement along with other parents.

<https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/>

By maintaining clear boundaries around phone use in school while actively educating pupils about the digital world, we aim to equip our children with the knowledge, confidence, and skills they need to navigate technology safely—both now and in the future.

Best wishes,

Natalie Aldridge (Headteacher)

