



## Smartphone Free Childhoods - The Parent Pact

Dear Parents/Carers

As many of you will know, whilst smart phones can be a very useful tool for adults, there are increasing concerns that smartphones, which were not designed for children, may cause significant harm to children's well-being and childhood.

- According to Ofcom, 84% of bullying in 8 to 17 year olds is via their phone.
- A report by King's College, London found those with high phone usage are twice as likely to have anxiety.
- New research in America shows the younger a child gets a smartphone the worse their mental health is as an adult.

Parents and Carers may also be aware of the Campaign for Smart Free Childhoods which started accidentally as a grassroots movement. Smartphone Free Childhood say they are on a mission to challenge Big Tech's colonisation of childhood.

You can watch a BBC Breakfast Interview about the campaign

here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EkpHud5o9dU>

The Smart Phone Free Childhood website is

here <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/about>

As a school which is within the Cb4 cluster we have agreed to lend our professional support to the campaign for Smart Free Childhoods, by making Parents and Carers **aware** of the Parent Pact and signpost the opportunity for parents/carers to sign up to the Parent Pact **if they would like to**.

We understand the importance for some parents to be able to contact their child as they become more independent, walking to and from school, in order to give you peace of mind and for children to be able to call in emergencies. However, children's phones do not need to have access to the internet in order for parents to keep them safe and it is possible to buy "brick phones", text/call phones rather than Smart Phones.

The Parent Pact states that "acting in the best interests of my child and our community, I will wait until at least the end of year 9 before getting them a smartphone".

"By signing this Pact, you're joining a growing community of parents in Cambridgeshire choosing to wait to give their child a smartphone until at least the end of Year 9. The Pact is anonymous (we'll never share your name publicly), but the more of us who sign, the more powerful it becomes in shifting the social norm in our community. Plus we'll use the data to show the Government how much this matters to parents across the country, so that they

take urgent action to protect children from the harms of smartphones and social media. Your choice – and your voice – really is powerful."

As a collaborating group of schools within the CB4 cluster, we fully recognise that it is up to parents/carers to decide on this issue but, as this [Guardian article](#) shows, the Parent Pact is gaining momentum across the country and has already been signed by parents at 20% of schools across the UK.

**If you would like to "Join the growing movement of parents across Britain who believe that childhood is too short to be spent on a smartphone, then sign the Parent Pact [HERE](https://parentpact.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/)**

**<https://parentpact.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/>**  
"It takes 30 seconds to sign the Parent Pact. And the more of us who do, the quicker we'll change the social norm - and protect childhood for our children and future generations."

Once again, we appreciate that parents/carers may have different views and perspectives on this matter, and it is up to you to decide as parents what is best for your child, however, as a Head Teacher, I have committed to promoting our school as smart-phone free. We believe we can all work together and join the growing movement across the country to change the 'usual' age that children are given smartphones.

To be successful, however, this movement relies on you, our children's parents, to resist the pressure from your children and their peers and hold back on giving your children smartphones until they are 14. In this way you will be working together with a wide network of parents and schools in this area to re-set the expectation and remove social peer pressure.

If you would like to find out more about this issue, or would like to become more actively involved, please ask at your school or click on the links in this letter.

Our children's futures are so important, to you and to us. In a world where fast-changing technology is actually impacting the development of our children's brains, it is up to us to stand up for them, and their futures. If not us, then who?

With best wishes

Collaborating schools in the CB4 Cluster

[Arbury Primary School](#)  
[Castle School](#)  
[Chesterton Primary School](#)  
[Kings Hedges Educational Federation](#)  
[Milton Road Primary School](#)  
[Mayfield Primary School](#)  
[North Cambridge Academy](#)  
[Olive AP Academy - Cambridge](#)  
[Orchard Park Community Primary School](#)  
[St Laurance Catholic Primary School](#)  
[Shirley Community Primary School & Preschool](#)  
[The Grove Primary School](#)  
[University of Cambridge Primary School](#)