



Smartphone-Free Policy

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Smartphone-Free Policy

Introduction and Purpose

Aragon Primary School is committed to providing a safe, focused, and inclusive learning environment for all pupils. To support this commitment, we are introducing a Smartphone-Free School Policy, effective January 2027.

We believe that primary-aged children learn best through real-life social interaction, hands-on activities, and time free from digital distractions. By restricting smartphones and other internet-enabled devices on school premises, we aim to promote pupils' emotional development, protect their wellbeing, and strengthen the sense of community within our school.

We kindly ask parents and carers to support the school in implementing and maintaining this policy.

This policy applies from January 2027 onwards.

Smartphone ban - a staggered approach

- From September 2026, only pupils in Year 6 may bring a smartphone to school, and a brick phone is still strongly preferred.
- Pupils in Year 5 must not bring in a smartphone under any circumstances. If a phone is necessary for a Year 5 pupil, it must be a brick phone that allows only voice calls and text messages and has no internet access.
- From September 2027, no pupils will be permitted to bring a smartphone onto the school site. If needed, pupils in Years 5 and 6 may bring a brick phone only.
- Pupils in Years R - 4 are not permitted to bring any type of mobile phone to school.
- Any mobile phone brought onto school grounds must be handed in immediately on arrival. Phones will be stored securely by school staff throughout the day and returned to pupils at the end of the school day.
- Phones must not be used during the school day and must remain switched off while on school premises.
- If there is a medical reason why a pupil requires a smartphone, parents or carers must discuss this with the Headteacher in advance.

Rationale

- Aragon Primary School does not support primary-aged children owning a smartphone for several reasons, including:
 - The importance of developing critical thinking and emotional regulation skills without reliance on digital devices.
 - The value of encouraging real-life social interactions and building communication skills.

- The need to reduce privacy risks and protect children from online dangers, including exposure to inappropriate content and online bullying.
- We promote a smartphone free environment to encourage face-to-face communication and to minimise distractions. This expectation applies at all times while pupils are on school premises, as well as during school trips and residential visits.

Medical Exceptions

In exceptional circumstances - such as when a smartphone is required to run an essential medical app (for example, glucose monitoring systems for children with diabetes) - we will work closely with families to ensure appropriate arrangements are put in place. Any approved device will only be used for its medical purpose and will be stored securely during the school day, except when medically required. If you believe your child needs a smartphone for health reasons, please contact the school office to discuss permission and next steps.

Use of Smart Trackers

Use of Smart Trackers

Smart trackers, including GPS watches, Bluetooth tags, and other wearable or portable location-tracking devices, are not permitted in school. These devices regularly connect to Wi-Fi, GPS, or Bluetooth networks to update their location, which can result in identifiable signals being broadcast around the school or during educational visits. Location data is often sent to external apps or cloud services outside the school's control, creating potential safeguarding and privacy risks if those systems are not fully secure.

Because smart trackers are linked to personal accounts, the school cannot monitor how the data is stored, used, or shared. Some devices may also detect the presence or movement of other nearby children, potentially revealing group locations. In addition, tracker data is frequently delayed or inaccurate, which can interfere with essential safeguarding procedures such as registers, headcounts, and emergency responses.

For these reasons, Aragon Primary School does not allow pupils to use or carry smart trackers, GPS devices, electronic tags, or any similar location-monitoring equipment during the school day, on school premises, or while taking part in school trips, visits, or any school-led activity. These devices are not compatible with our safeguarding and child protection policies and therefore must not be worn or brought into school.

Risks Associated with Smartphone Use

Smartphones provide advanced functions such as internet access, messaging apps, and social media, all of which can pose significant risks to primary-aged children. These include:

- **Cyberbullying:** Smartphones make it easier for unkind or harmful messages to be sent and received, making it harder for pupils to escape bullying outside school hours.
- **Exposure to inappropriate content:** Unrestricted or unsupervised internet access may expose children to material that is unsuitable for their age.
- **Mental health concerns:** Excessive or unsupervised screen time can contribute to anxiety, low mood, and other emotional wellbeing challenges.

- **Distraction from learning:** Smartphones can interrupt focus, reduce engagement in lessons, and hinder academic progress.
- **Privacy and security risks:** Children may not fully understand how to protect their personal information, making them more vulnerable to online exploitation or data misuse.
- **Self-image and social pressure:** Social media and selfie-based culture can create unhealthy comparisons, affect confidence, and encourage pupils to focus on appearance or online validation.

Confiscation and Sanctions

- Aragon Primary School reserves the right to apply sanctions for any breach of the Smartphone-Free Policy.
- Any smartphone, smart tracker, or internet-enabled device found on a child while on school premises or during an educational visit (without prior approval) will be confiscated immediately. The school office will contact the parent or carer, and the device will only be returned directly to them from the school office.
- Brick phones are permitted for Years 5 and 6 only for travel to and from school. These devices must be handed in to the class teacher on arrival. If a brick phone is not handed in during school hours, it will be confiscated and returned to a parent or carer directly from the school office.
- Repeated breaches of this policy may lead to further consequences in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Staff are protected from liability when confiscating items provided, they act lawfully, proportionately, and in line with school policy.

What is a brick Phone?

A brick phone (also known as a *dumbphone* or *feature phone*) is a basic mobile device designed primarily for making calls and sending text messages. Unlike a smartphone, it does not provide internet access, apps, or advanced features, and it operates on a simple, limited system.

A smartphone, by contrast, is an advanced mobile device with internet connectivity and a wide range of applications, making it significantly more complex and feature-rich than a brick phone.

Appendix I - Example Alternative Options to Smart Phones

This list is not comprehensive and acts only to give examples. They are not recommendations.

Make	Features	Image
Nokia 105 £20.00 - £25.00	Sim-free mobile phone Talk, text and wireless FM radio Very good battery life Torch and snake game	 A blue Nokia 105 mobile phone with a small screen displaying a snake game. The screen shows a green snake on a black background with various icons and a 'Snake' title. Below the screen is a standard numeric keypad.
Nokia 2660 Flip £60.00 - £70.00	Texts and phone calls Very long-lasting battery Range of colours Bright, colourful display (non-pixelated text) Built in FM radio, MP3 player and torch Snake (and Tetris but you need to pay for the full game) Single rear facing camera (no selfies!)	 A red Nokia 2660 Flip mobile phone, shown closed. The back of the phone is red with the Nokia logo in the center. Below the phone, there are five color swatches: green, pink, red, dark blue, and black.
Nokia 3210 £74.99	No apps, no social media, no WhatsApp, no internet browsing Keypad for simple texting. Designed as a “digital detox” phone Large 2.4” display 2MP Camera FM Radio Torch Bluetooth	 A yellow Nokia 3210 mobile phone with a large screen displaying a 3D game with a yellow ball on a yellow grid. The screen shows a 3D perspective of a yellow ball on a yellow grid. Below the screen is a standard numeric keypad.

Appendix 2 – SIM Card Details

When purchasing a SIM card for your child's phone, we advise that it has no data within the contract, but rather only calls and texts. This is so that there is no chance that they can access the internet. Asda, amongst a few other mobile providers, offer this type of SIM card. This is not a recommendation but a suggestion.

Appendix 3 – How to turn a Smart phone into a 'Dumb' phone

There is guidance from www.internetmatters.org that support parents and carers to turn a smartphone into a 'dumb' phone. This guidance can be found here too:

- [Apple iPhone and iPad parental controls](#)
- [Android smartphone parental controls](#)