Smartphone Free Childhood-Barnet

January 6th 2026

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are increasingly concerned about the impact of smartphones on our children.

Smartphones are a big part of life today. Most adults have one. They are great for finding information and staying connected with family and friends.

However, there is now an **alarming amount of evidence and research of the negative effects of smartphones and social media on children and teenagers**. These include:

- Poor mental health, such as depression, anxiety and low self-esteem.
- Issues with cyberbullying, attention, focus and sleep.
- Exposure to dangerous and harmful content, and inappropriate material; and
- Smartphones can be highly addictive, so time spent on a device reduces time spent playing, interacting and developing vital social skills.

Children often get their first phone in primary school and over 90% of 12-year-olds now have a smartphone. This period is crucial for brain development, and the younger a child gets a smartphone, the more harm it can cause.

Schools are in a powerful position to change the norm and therefore a large group of Barnet schools have come together as we are committed to making our Barnet schools smartphone-free. Children cannot use smartphones during the school day, and **we do not want primary school children to bring a smartphone to school. Additionally, from September 2025, new cohorts of children moving to one of the secondary schools in the below list will no longer be permitted to bring smartphones or smart watches into their school for the duration of their time in Years 7-11.**

Research now indicates that age 11-15 is the age group when children are at their most vulnerable to potential negative influences from access to social media. Accessing the internet through a smartphone can pose additional risks than doing so from a more secure network in the home environment. As such, we are also encouraging all parents to delay giving a smartphone to your child until they are at least **14 years old** and to delay allowing your children access to social media **until age 16**.

A growing number of parents and schools across the country are choosing to do this and there is **widespread support from Barnet Education and Learning Service (BELS), Barnet Public Health, Barnet Headteachers/Principals and Chipping Barnet MP Dan Tomlinson.** We include a list of local schools that are working together on this campaign.

If you need to contact your child while they travel to and from school, a simple ‘brick’ phone is enough. “Brick” phones do not have internet connectivity, and they are inexpensive.

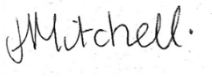
We would like to work together with parents to safeguard children and preserve childhood. By doing so, we can not only protect our children’s mental health and wellbeing, but we can

also set a standard for how communities can come together to challenge the norms that no longer serve our children.

We are encouraging other boroughs and regions to consider similar actions because together, we can make a big difference in our children's lives.

If you would like to find out more about support for parents who want their children to be smartphone free, do please visit Smartphone Free Childhood and One Collective Power.

Yours sincerely,



Iain Dalziel Jenny Mitchell Emma Taylor

Heads of School – Squires Lane Learning Federation

Together with:

Acorn Early Intervention Centre
Akiva School
All Saints' CofE Primary School N20
All Saints' CofE Primary School NW2
Alma Primary School
Ark Pioneer Academy
Ashmole Academy
Ashmole Primary School
Barnfield School
Beis Yaakov
Beit Shvidler Primary School
Bishop Douglass Academy
Blessed Dominic Catholic
Broadfields Primary School
Brookland Infant & Nursery School
Brookland Junior School
Brunswick Park Primary & Nursery School
Chalgrove Primary School
Childs Hill Primary School
Christ Church Primary School
Christ's College Finchley
Church Hill School
Claremont Primary School
Colindale Primary School
Coppetts Wood Primary School
Copthall School
Courtland School
Cromer Road Primary School
Danegrove Primary School
Deansbrook Infant School
Deansbrook Junior School

Dollis Primary School
East Barnet School
Edgware Primary School
Fairway Primary School and Children's Centre
Finchley Catholic High School
Foulds School
Frith Manor Primary School
Garden Suburb Infant School
Garden Suburb Junior School
Goldbeaters Primary School
Hasmonean High School for Boys
Hasmonean High School for Girls
Hasmonean Primary School
Hendon School
Hollickwood Primary School
Holly Park Primary School
Holy Trinity CofE Primary School
Independent Jewish Day School
Jewish Community Secondary School
Kisharon School
Livingstone Primary and Nursery School
London Academy
Manorside Primary School
Mapledown School
Martin Primary School
Mathilda Marks-Kennedy Jewish Primary School
Menorah Foundation School
Menorah High School for Girls
Menorah Primary School
Mill Hill County High School
Millbrook Park Primary School
Monken Hadley CofE Primary School
Monkfrith Primary School
Moss Hall Infant School
Moss Hall Junior School
Northgate School
Northside Primary School
Northway School
Oak Hill School
Oakleigh School & Acorn Assessment Centre
Osidge School
Our Lady of Lourdes RC School
Pardes House Primary School
Parkfield Primary School
Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School
Queen Elizabeth's School
Queenswell Federation
Rimon Jewish Primary School
Rosh Pinah Primary School

Sacks Morasha Jewish Primary School
Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Primary School
Saracens Bell Lane Primary School
Saracens High School
Shalom Noam Primary School
St Agnes' Catholic Primary School
St Andrew the Apostle Greek Orthodox School
St Andrew's CofE Primary School
St Catherine's RC School
St James' Catholic High School
St John's CofE Primary and Nursery School N20
St John's CofE Primary School N11
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
St Mary's and St John's CofE School
St Mary's CofE Primary School EN4
St Mary's CofE Primary School N3
St Michael's Catholic Grammar School
St Paul's CofE Primary School N11
St Paul's CofE Primary School NW7
St Theresa's Catholic Primary School
St Vincent's Catholic Primary School
Summerside Primary Academy
Sunnyfields Primary School
The Annunciation RC Junior School
The Archer Academy
The Compton School
The Henrietta Barnett School
The Hyde School
The Orion Primary School
The Pavilion Study Centre
The Totteridge Academy
The Windmill School
Trent CofE Primary School
Tudor Primary School
Underhill School
Watling Park School
Wessex Gardens Primary School
Whitefield School
Whitings Hill Primary School
Woodcroft Primary School
Woodridge Primary School
Wren Academy