



# Upper Beeding Primary School

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Head Teacher: Mr M Andrews

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to let you know about a policy change relating to smartphones in school from September 2025.

As you may be aware, support is growing amongst parents and carers to limit the use of smartphones for young people. To this affect, we have been working with our families, staff and Governors as well as the Smartphone Free Childhood campaign to consider how we can support this at Upper Beeding Primary.

Thank you to all our families who completed the survey we sent out last half term, and for sharing your views and experiences of children's access to smart technology on devices. We really do appreciate your honest feedback. We had nearly 30% of the school community take part in the survey which has given us a lot of data to study and distil.

## Results of the Survey

- 86% of the respondents' children do not currently have a phone.
- 60% of those children who do have a phone, use it for entertainment, such as music and gaming.
- 55% of those with a smartphone access WhatsApp, Kids YouTube or YouTube.
- 26% of all respondents said that they are feeling pressure to get their child a smartphone.
- 12% said that they plan to get their child a smartphone in Year 6.
- 79% said that they would be happy to get their child an alternative phone such as a simple or brick phone.
- 72% of respondents said that they would be interested in additional support and information for parents on this topic.
- 90% said that they believe primary aged children should not have smartphones/devices on school premises.

As a result of the findings from the survey, and conversations with staff, we are announcing a move towards a smartphone free environment from this September. This was overwhelmingly supported by parents with 92% opting for the school becoming smartphone free in September 2025 rather than September 2026.

## What does a Smartphone/Device Free School mean?

As you know, we already have a policy in place that prohibits children from using phones of any kind during the school day. To further support parents/carers and the wellbeing of our pupils, we have decided to implement a smartphone/device free policy starting September 2025. This means that Upper Beeding will prohibit the use of smartphones/devices for pupils throughout the school day, including on the school premises at the beginning and end of the day. Children will no longer be able to bring smartphones in and hand them into staff to look after for the day. Children will still be able to bring phones without smart capability such as simple or brick phones. Examples of these can be found using this link:

<https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/alternatives>

Children will need to apply for a phone license from the school office in September in order to bring their simple phone to school. More details on this to follow.



### **Why are we making this change?**

We understand that setting boundaries around smartphone use is a particularly challenging aspect of parenting today. A smartphone free approach at school will make it easier for parents to explain to children that they do not need a smartphone. Smartphone usage can be highly addictive, and has been linked to poor mental health, depression and low self-esteem. Learning, behaviour and wellbeing are our top priorities at our school and we believe that being smartphone free will benefit all of these areas.

### **What will happen if a child does bring a smartphone into school?**

If a smartphone or device is found, staff will put the device in the school safe and a parent/carer will be asked to come and collect it.

Many other schools in the country have become smartphone free already and are seeing a positive impact. All local schools are also considering their position on this. We are keen to work with you to support the healthy development of our children.

### **Where can we get more information on this?**

72% of our survey respondents said that they would be interested in further training and information. Previously, we arranged for Papaya <https://www.papayaparents.com/> to run a workshop and information session for KS2 children and have been working with our local Smartphone Free group who have already held two events for parents in school and a further meeting with Papaya for parents. Further events will be organised with our local Smartphone Free group.

Other information can be accessed from the Smartphone Free Childhood website, <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/>

Best wishes,

Mr Andrews

