

Article 1: All children under 18 have rights
Article 19: I have a right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated
Article 24: I have a right to ... a safe environment...
(UN Convention on the Rights of a Child)

Safeguarding News

If you are worried about a child or need any advice, please do not hesitate to contact a member of our Safeguarding Team. This can be via the office or by email

dsl@uppernidderdalefed.school



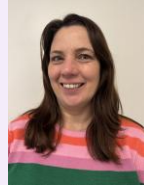
Miss Thornber



Mrs Wilkinson



Mrs Thomas



Mrs Bourne



Mrs Lumley



Mrs Fearnley

Mrs Simmonds

PSHE
This half term we will be looking at 'All about me'

THE PROBLEM

Smartphones have reshaped childhood

Smartphones weren't designed with kids in mind – but they've reshaped childhood almost overnight. In the UK, 89% of 12-year-olds now own one, and so do a quarter of children aged 5 to 7. On average, kids get their first smartphone aged nine.

Instead of growing up slowly, children are being pulled into a digital world built to keep them hooked. The impact on their development, mental health and relationships runs deep – and we can't afford to look away any longer.

Here are some of the biggest issues:

Grooming

TikTok, Snapchat, and Roblox aren't just playgrounds for kids – they're hunting grounds for predators. They're often used by sexual predators to target children with their first smartphones

Harmful content

Smartphones mean explicit, violent, and extreme content is only ever a few clicks away, often served up by algorithms when kids aren't looking for it. Once children see these things, they can never be unseen.

Mental health

Teenage anxiety, depression and self-harm rates have skyrocketed since 2010 – when kids started getting smartphones. Evidence shows a direct link between early smartphone use and declining mental health.

Cyberbullying

Arguments and fallouts used to end at the school gate. Now they follow kids home, lingering on their screens day and night – with no safe space to switch off, process or recover.

Addiction

The tech giants' business model is simple: the longer kids stay on their platforms, the more money they make. That's why apps are packed with addictive features – and why kids find it so hard to put them down.

Family life

Smartphones' addictive design means they can quietly start to take centre stage in family life – causing arguments, battles over screen time, and making it harder to share real, uninterrupted time together.

Sleep

The blue light from screens disrupts melatonin, making it harder to fall asleep, while endless scrolling and late-night notifications keep kids wired when they should be resting.

Attention

The average teen now receives over 200 notifications a day – fragmenting their focus and making it harder to concentrate on schoolwork, hobbies or real-life friendships. Constant distraction is the new normal.

Opportunity cost

Compared to any other generation in history, children growing up in the smartphone era spend less time outdoors, less time playing, less time reading, less time moving and more time scrolling, alone.

If you need support please let us know by emailing

familysupportworker@uppernidderdalefed.school

Safeguarding is a priority here!

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THE SOLUTION

Together we're powerful

Governments need to do more to protect children from addictive algorithms and harmful content. Much more.

But, as parents today, we don't have time to wait for more studies, more debates or more delays for regulation to take hold.

Our children's futures are at stake, so we need change, right now.

And by working together, we're creating it.

We're not anti-tech *we're pro childhood*

Tech isn't the enemy – it's how we use it that matters. We want kids to grow up confident using technology, not dependent on it. That's why we believe in building digital skills gradually and intentionally, and giving kids more time to be kids before they're always connected. SFC is about balance, not banning.

Every family's path will be different. But here's one that's working for many.

It starts by delaying, together

Smartphones are the gateway to social media and the Wild West of the internet.

If children don't have 24/7 access in their pockets, everything changes.

The longer we wait to give our children smartphones, the more time they have to learn, grow and develop away from addictive algorithms and the anxiety machine of social media.

That's why we say delay, delay, delay.

The Parent Pact makes it easy

We know that being the lone parent saying no is hard. But when we delay together – as families and communities – it becomes easy.

That's the whole point of our Parent Pact – a collective agreement to delay getting our kids smartphones until at least 14, and social media 16.

It's organised around school communities – so the more of us who sign it in any area, the more powerful it becomes.

Sign the Pact here

[Sign the Parent Pact | Smartphone Free Childhood](#)



0 - 11 Years old

No phone

We're not saying 'no internet' or 'no screens'. But barring some exceptions, most primary aged kids don't need a phone of their own.



11 - 14 Years old

First phone

A simple phone for communication but without social media or web browsers. Shared access to family laptop or other devices.



14 - 16 Years old

Follow on phone

Introduce a smartphone with parental controls and clear boundaries around apps and daily usage.



16+ Years old

Smartphone

Older teens are better equipped to manage the complexities of constant internet and social media access.

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