

Bricks for '26



Helping our children build healthy habits for the future

At St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School, we want to help our children grow into confident, kind and safe young people—both **offline and online**. As part of this, we are making a small change to our mobile phone rules for **September 2026**.

These changes help children practise safe habits now, so they are ready for the new freedoms and challenges of the future.

What's Staying the Same?

- Children are not allowed to use phones during the school day or take phones on day visits or residential trips.
- Only Year 5 and Year 6 children who travel to and from school on their own may bring a phone.
- Parents must provide written permission on the Going Home Arrangements form before sending their child into school with a phone.
- Phones must arrive at school turned off, handed into the class teacher immediately and will be locked away until home time.
- Any unauthorised phones will be confiscated and held in the school office for collection by a parent.



What's Changing from September 2026?

To help keep children safe and to remove access to social media, we will only allow basic “brick phones” (call-and-text only) for children who bring a phone.

Smartphones will no longer be allowed on site.

You can find examples of safe, simple phones here:

<https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/alternatives>

Any unauthorised phones will be confiscated and held in the school office for collection by a parent.

Why Are We Doing This?

We know that primary children are still developing their confidence, friendships and sense of self. Smartphones can make this harder.

Research shows that smartphones were *not designed with children in mind*, yet they have changed childhood very quickly. Many children now see harmful content, spend more time alone online, and have less time to play, talk and build real friendships.

Here are the key reasons for the change:

1. To Help Friendships Grow



Smartphones can expose children to arguments, fallouts and group chat worries that follow them to school, making it harder for them to switch off and focus on their learning.

By using brick phones only, children avoid these pressures and can focus on building real friendships in person.

2. To Support Children's Wellbeing



Studies show that early smartphone use is linked with more anxiety, lower self-esteem and more comparison on themselves with others. Removing access to apps, social media and constant notifications helps protect children's mental health.

3. To Keep Childhood Joyful



Smartphone use often replaces outdoor play, reading, exploring and talking with friends—important parts of growing up.

By limiting smartphone access now, we help children rediscover activities that build confidence and creativity.

4. To Prepare Them for the Future



These changes give children a safe chance to practise healthy habits early—without the risks that smartphones bring.

The Benefits We Want for Our Children

Schools that remove smartphones see many improvements:

Better Focus and Learning

Children concentrate more and engage more deeply when phones are not a distraction.

Happier, Calmer Children

Without social media or constant notifications, anxiety drops and children feel more themselves.

Kinder Behaviour and Stronger Relationships

Schools report fewer fallouts and more positive play, chats and friendships.

A Safer Environment

Phones with cameras and internet access can lead to risks such as harmful content or unkind messages.

Removing smartphones greatly reduces these risks.

We're in This Together

We know parenting in the digital age is hard—and you're not alone.

Our aim is to walk alongside families, support you with clear expectations, and help your children grow into thoughtful, confident young people.

If you need help finding a suitable brick phone, or want to talk through the changes, please speak to us.

We're here to support you and your child every step of the way.

Want to know more...?

Visit: <https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/resources-for-parents>