



NEGLECT NOT THE GIFT THAT IS IN THEE

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7<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

You will be aware that next academic year we aim to become a Smartphone Free School. Many schools across the country have made this decision and a number of schools across Waltham Forest will also be endorsing this.

### **Why is the school making this decision?**

Although there are many benefits to smartphones, there is increasing evidence that smartphone use has negative effects on the wellbeing and mental health of young people, and poses a number of significant safeguarding risks. Smartphone use has been linked to impaired attention and focus, sleep deprivation, mental health issues, online bullying, exposure to inappropriate content and people, increased risk of mugging, and increased loneliness and social isolation. We want young people to prioritise in-person interactions because these strengthen the stronger social skills, empathy and sense of community real-world interactions offer.

In many schools across Waltham Forest, mobile phone bans are already in place and children are protected from some of these risks when in school. We are now extending this approach here at WSfG.

### **What if I am concerned about my child's safety?**

If you feel your child needs a device for safety reasons, consider instead a phone without internet connectivity (a 'brick' phone) or an Airtag.

From our research and visits to other Smartphone Free schools, we will be able to provide a list of acceptable 'brick phones' that students can bring to school. These allow calls to be made and text messages to be sent but are not internet enabled. Some parents also give their children 'trackers' or 'tags' that can be used to monitor their journeys.

This research, along with the feedback from all key stakeholders, will shape the guidance and advice we give to students and families about the acceptable technologies that will be allowed in September 2026.





We appreciate you may have concerns about buying your child a 'brick phone' if they already have a smart phone. We will aim to address these concerns within the focus group meetings following the consultation.

**How can I voice my concerns, express support or ask questions?**

We will be consulting with all key stakeholders including students, staff and you as parents and carers. We would be very grateful if you could complete the online survey below. We appreciate you may have queries or concerns about this change and after analysing the survey results we will hold parent focus group meetings to address these.

Thank you in advance for completing the survey. The deadline is **Wednesday 21st January**.

[Parent and Carer Smart Phone Free School Consultation – Fill out form](#)

Kind regards,

Ms Warren  
Assistant Headteacher