

Woodlands Academy,
Hathaway Gardens,
W13 0DH

Head Teacher: Ms C Hasker

Together We Achieve

Tuesday 2nd September 2025

Dear Parents/ Carers,

RE: Smartphone free school

This is a friendly reminder that, as communicated last term and during our school Online Safety workshop, Woodlands Academy has now become a smartphone-free school, joining many other primary and secondary schools in Ealing. This will begin when the children return to school at the start of the new academic year. Our aim is to support a safe, focused, and social learning environment where every child can thrive.

Why is this change important?

Smartphones are a big part of life today. Most adults have one, and they are great for finding information and staying connected with family and friends. However, there is now evidence of the negative effects of smartphones and social media on children and teenagers. These include:

- Poor mental health, such as depression and anxiety
- Issues with attention and sleep
- Risks of cyberbullying and exposure to harmful content like violence or inappropriate material
- Smartphones can be addictive and distract children from learning important life skills

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

How will this affect my child?

If you are thinking about giving your child a mobile phone, please consider how it might affect their concentration and overall wellbeing. Smartphones, with their many apps, can sometimes expose children to risks such as online abuse, particularly in group chats. For these reasons, we encourage families to **delay giving children a smartphone until they are at least 14**. Many parents and schools are choosing to do this, and it is supported by Ealing Council and local headteachers.

We understand that some Year 6 children may be allowed to walk home on their own. For safety, these pupils should bring a simple **“brick” phone—one that can only make calls and send texts, with no internet or apps**. This allows your child to contact you if necessary, while still keeping our school free from smartphones.



Thank you for your continued support in helping us make Woodlands a safe and focused place to learn.

A gentle reminder to all parents and carers: our playground is a **phone-free zone**. We kindly ask that mobile phones are not used while on the playground, and that any calls are taken before or after collection. This helps us keep everyone safe, and it also means the children can be warmly greeted as they come out of school.

If you have any questions, please speak to Ms Hasker or myself.

Yours Sincerely,

Ms Moxom
Assistant Headteacher