

17 March 2025

Dear Parent/Carer

### **New Year 7 pupils joining Swanmore College in September 2025**

I hope your child is looking forward to joining Swanmore College in the Autumn. It is on this matter that I am writing to you with some advance notice of a change in our policy regarding smartphones and watches. After careful consideration and extensive discussions, we have decided to implement a policy that prohibits new Year 7 pupils from bringing smartphones/watches to Swanmore College.

This decision has not been made lightly, and we want to share the key reasons behind it, focusing on safeguarding and mental health concerns.

#### **Safeguarding Concerns**

Smartphones, while incredibly useful, can pose significant risks to the safety and well-being of our pupils. The unrestricted access to the internet and social media can and does expose children to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and online predators. By limiting smartphone use, we aim to create a safer environment where pupils can focus on their learning without these potential threats.

#### **Mental Health Concerns**

There is growing evidence that excessive smartphone use can negatively impact mental health, particularly among young people. Constant connectivity and social media can lead to anxiety, depression, and a sense of inadequacy. These are conditions that have risen sharply within schools very recently. By reducing smartphone usage during school hours, we hope to foster a more positive and focused learning environment, encouraging face-to-face interactions and reducing the pressures associated with an online presence. We have also noticed that there has been a significant increase in pupils asking to go to the toilet during lesson time. Much of this is fuelled by the need for our children to respond to messages/watch social media reels that are being sent to them when they should be focussed on their learning.

#### **Implementation**

Starting from September 2025, pupils in Year 7 will not be allowed to bring smartphones/watches to Swanmore College. We understand that this may require adjustments for both pupils and parents/carers, and we are committed to supporting you through this transition. Should you need to contact your child during school hours, you can do so via our main number, and we will ensure that messages are relayed promptly.

One of the concerns you might have will be about contacting your child before/after school to check their whereabouts. To mitigate this safeguarding concern, we suggest that you purchase for your child one of the following non-smartphones.

You may choose a Nokia 105, Ushining Flip phone A series or an Oakcastle (links below). Mobile phones must be turned off when on the Swanmore College site. Any phone, other than the ones listed below, will be classified as a 'prohibited item' and will be confiscated, as per our current policy.

The above only applies to the new Year 7 pupils and not the rest of the college community, at present. This is a trial, and we will be monitoring several metrics across the college to determine if the approach is successful. Any phone that is seen or used, be it smart or not, will be confiscated by staff.

We are introducing this new approach with the support of our feeder/linked primary schools, who have been consulted throughout this decision. Our feeder/linked schools are Bishop's Waltham Junior School, Curdridge Primary School, Droxford Junior School, Hambledon Primary School, St John the Baptist CofE Primary School, Swanmore CE Aided Primary School and Wickham CE Primary.

We believe that this policy will contribute to a healthier, safer, and more productive school environment. There are some links below that support this view.

We appreciate your understanding and support in this matter. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us via [enquiries@swanmore-sec.hants.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@swanmore-sec.hants.sch.uk)

Kind regards

**R K Jonathan**  
**Headteacher**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-L58niidJMO> – very good presentation and interview  
<https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk>  
<https://www.anxiousgeneration.com/take-action>  
<https://www.humanetech.com/youth>  
<https://edexec.co.uk/news-london-schools-ban-smartphones-for-pupils/#>

[Nokia 105, Dual Sim 1.8 Inch S30+ Feature Phone with 4G Connectivity, 128MB + 48MB Storage, 1020mAh Removable Battery, FM Radio \(Wired and Wireless Dual Mode\) and 3-in-1 Speaker - Black: Amazon.co.uk: Electronics & Photo](#)  
[USHINING Unlocked Flip Mobile Phone Pay as You Go Simple Dual SIM Basic Button Sim Free Clamshell GSM Feature Phone 1.8".....\(Black\): Amazon.co.uk: Electronics & Photo](#)  
[Oakcastle SIM free Unlocked Mobile Phone | Pay As You Go Mobile with Dual SIM & SD Card Slots | Basic Mobile with Bluetooth, FM Radio & MP3 Playback | Cheap Phone with 7+ Day Battery Life F101: Amazon.co.uk: Electronics & Photo](#)