



Swords Educate Together
National School
Roll Number 20145 O

Voluntary Smartphone Code

(Opt-in Policy: Delaying Smart Phone Ownership Until Primary School Completion)

Introduction:

At Swords Educate Together National School, we understand the increasing prevalence of smartphones in today's society. While smartphones offer numerous advantages, we strongly encourage parents to consider delaying the purchase of smartphones for their children until they complete primary school (approximately age 12). This Opt-in Policy has been developed in conjunction with other local primary schools and is supported by our Board of Management and Parent Teacher Association.

Benefits of Delaying Smart Phone Ownership:

- *Enhanced Social and Emotional Development*
Delaying smartphone ownership can foster better social and emotional development in children. It affords them the time to develop essential face-to-face communication skills and build stronger interpersonal relationships without digital distractions.
- *Improved Concentration and Academic Performance*
By postponing smartphone usage, children can focus on their studies, leading to improved academic performance. Reduced screen time can enhance concentration and critical thinking skills.
- *Reduced Screen Time*
Delayed smartphone ownership limits a child's exposure to excessive screen time, reducing the risk of negative effects such as sleep disturbances, decreased physical activity, and cyberbullying.
- *Safer Online Experience*
Young children are vulnerable to online risks. Delaying smartphone access allows parents to educate children about responsible internet use and gradually introduce them to digital technology in a controlled environment.
- *Parent-Child Bonding*
Without the constant distraction of a smart phone, parents and children can engage in more meaningful activities together, strengthening the parent-child bond.

Applewood, Swords, County Dublin.

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Principal: Aoife Malone

Deputy Principal: Eoghan Beglan

Note:

As this is an Opt-in code, we understand that parents may still choose, or may have already chosen, to buy their child a smartphone. In these cases, we would encourage parents to educate themselves and their children in online safety and encourage healthy habits around time spent on their phone. Smartphones are not permitted in school.

Conclusion:

Delaying the purchase of smartphones for children until they complete primary school at least, can bring about numerous benefits for their development and safety. We hope that collectively, along with other parents in our own school and in the wider community, we can make this a realistic option for parents and children in the years to come.

Aoife Malone
Principal

Mairéad Farquharson
Chairperson, BOM

Amanda Foran
Chairperson, PTA

Date: _____

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