



# Burlington Infant & Nursery School

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3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to inform you of an important change regarding the use of mobile phones within our Malden and Coombe Cluster of schools, which also aligns with other Primary Schools in the borough.

Starting from September 2025, pupils will no longer be permitted to bring smartphones onto school premises. We realise that as an infant school, our children are not likely to have a mobile phone nor would they bring them into school, however we are sharing this letter to make you aware of what is happening in all primary schools in our local cluster and to offer our full support to the primary schools implementing this new policy. This may also, in the future, help you to make an informed decision about the right time to introduce a phone to your child and the type of phone you opt for.

The decision to ban smartphones in school has been made after extensive research and reflects the commitment to creating a learning environment that promotes positive social interactions, free from the distractions, and potential risks associated with smartphone use, such as phone addiction.

We understand that many families with older children may be considering purchasing smartphones as gifts, however, in light of this upcoming change, we strongly recommend **refraining from buying a smartphone** and instead opting for a more basic mobile device, often referred to as a 'brick' or 'simple' phone. These devices will be allowed under the new policy. They enable essential communication but lack internet access, social media apps, and other features that can disrupt learning, and harm well-being. The benefits are already well documented:

- Reduced exposure to online risks, such as cyberbullying and inappropriate, adult only content.
- Improved concentration and academic performance.
- Enhanced social skills and face-to-face interactions.

## From September 2025, at Burlington Infant and Nursery School...

To further support these new changes, we would kindly like to ask parents and carers to help us by not using their mobile phones when on the school site. While we understand that staying connected is important, we also believe that moments such as drop offs and pick ups are opportunities to give your child your full attention and encourage meaningful interactions that are free from distraction. Please refrain from using your phone in school, greet your child with a smile instead and ask them about their day - not only does this allow for a more personal and engaging connection, it also sets a positive example for healthy and mindful interactions not only for your child but our whole school community.

In recent years, we have seen a rise in children starting school with low levels of communication, language and social skills. Research tells us that much of this may be attributed to excessive screen time and less quality adult-child interactions in formative years. To combat this, our whole school focus this year is on 'Oracy'. Well-developed communication skills enable children to develop socially, educationally and emotionally. We are asking parents for support by reducing screen time (TV, phones, iPads) at home, and



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spend more quality time talking to children for example, on their way home/on car journeys/when out and about/at meal times, playing board games, sharing a book, and cooking together.

Please come and join our **parent information morning on Friday 9th May** in the infant hall, when we will be focusing on developing communication and language, social skills and reducing screen time in the home. This is a crucial stage of cognitive development in infant aged children, and it is important for all parents to be fully informed of the negative impact of excessive screen time (including TV), and support our children to develop healthy habits moving forwards.

Thank you for your understanding and support in helping us create a more focused and enriching school environment. If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Best Wishes

**Malden and Coombe Cluster of Schools:**

Burlington Infant School

Burlington Junior School

Coombe Hill Junior School

Christ Church New Malden Primary School

Corpus Christi Primary School

Malden Parochial Primary School

Malden Manor Primary School

St Joseph's Primary School

Coombe Hill Infants School

Maple Infants School