



July 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

You may be aware of a recently published Government report outlining the impact of electronic devices, specifically mobile phones, on the lives of young people. All current research indicates that extensive access to the internet and, specifically, social media can have a significantly negative impact on the mental health of adolescents in addition to being detrimental to their social and academic development. The number of young people that currently have access to these devices has increased significantly and research has found that:

- By the age of 12, 97% of children own a mobile phone. (Ofcom)
- The majority of 8-11-year-olds (63%) use social media and messaging apps. This rises to 93% for children between 12 and 15 years old. (Ofcom)
- 29% of secondary school pupils (rising to 40% for KS4 pupils) reported mobile phones being used without permission in most of their lessons. (The National Behaviour Survey (2021-2022))
- Mobile phones have already been prohibited or age restricted in countries worldwide, such as France and the Netherlands.
- Screen time can displace positive activities and interactions. (Royal College Paediatrics and Child Health; 2019)
- Two in five children have experienced bullying online or have admitted sending a message to someone that they would not say to them in person. (Office of National Statistics; 2020)

For those of you interested in hearing more of the research on the impact that mobile phones are having on young people, the podcast below provides a fascinating, and sobering, insight into this:

<https://shows.acast.com/feelbetterlivemore/episodes/456-how-smartphones-are-rewiring-our-brains-why-social-media>

At Seaford Head School we have taken a pragmatic approach to this issue for a number of years. We are a phone-free school and pupils are expected to have their phones in their bags throughout the school day. If a pupil is seen with a phone at any point during the day, without specific permission from a member of staff, the phone is confiscated. Any pupils in which this is a persistent problem will be asked to hand their phone in at the start of each day for a period of at least two weeks. This is supported through our behaviour policy.

However, we are aware that more can be done in order to protect our young people and know that the best way of achieving this is through collective action. We are, therefore, asking you as parents/carers to support the school in reducing the amount of access our pupils have to their mobile phones, messaging and social media apps. With this in mind, please refrain from contacting your child on their mobile during the school day. If you need to speak to your child please contact their Assistant Head of Year at school. To support you in restricting access to mobile devices at home we have, in the next two pages, included a step-by-step guide on how you can set up time restrictions on a young person's Apple or Google device and hope that some of our families find this useful in being able to monitor this.

## Seaford Learning Trust

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We are passionate about achieving the best for the young people in our school community and, as always, the most effective way of doing so is by working in partnership with our families. If you have any concerns or questions in regard to this, or would like additional support in addressing your child's access to social media then please contact their Head of Year. We value the input of you all as parents/carers and, with this in mind, Mr Ellis will be discussing the issue of mobile phones in his first parent forum of the next academic year.

Kind regards,

Seaford Head School

## Setting up your child's iPhone with Apple Family Sharing a Parent's Guide

### Step 1: Set up Family Sharing

- a) On your iPhone, go to Settings > [Your Name] > Family Sharing.
- b) Tap "Add Member" > "Create an Account for a Child".
- c) Follow the prompts to create your child's Apple ID.

### Step 2: Set up your child's iPhone

- a) Turn on the new iPhone and follow the setup prompts.
- b) When asked to sign in with an Apple ID, use your child's new Apple ID.
- c) Enter the parent's Apple ID password when requested to complete the setup.

### Step 3: Enable key Parental Control features

#### A. Screen Time

1. On your iPhone, go to Settings > Family Sharing > Screen Time.
2. Tap your child's name and turn on Screen Time.

#### B. Downtime

1. In Screen Time settings, tap "Downtime".
2. Set a daily schedule when apps are unavailable e.g. the school day 8.25am–3.05pm.

#### C. App Limits

1. In Screen Time settings, tap "App Limits" > "Add Limit".
2. Choose app categories or specific apps to limit, e.g. YouTube/Gaming Apps.
3. Set a time limit for each day or customise by day.

#### D. Communication Limits

1. In Screen Time settings, tap "Communication Limits".
2. Choose who your child can communicate with during allowed screen time and downtime.

#### E. Communication Safety

1. In Screen Time settings, tap "Communication Safety".
2. Turn on the feature to warn your child about sensitive content in Messages.

### Step 4: Manage purchases and downloads

- a) Go to Settings > Family Sharing > Purchase Sharing.
- b) Ensure "Share Purchases with Family" is turned on.
- c) Your approval will be required for your child's purchases and downloads.

### Step 5: Location Sharing

- a) In Family Sharing settings, tap "Location Sharing".
- b) Turn on location sharing for your child's device.

**Remember:** Review and adjust these settings *regularly* as your child grows and their needs change. Open communication about device usage is key to maintaining a healthy digital lifestyle

## Setting up your child's Android phone with Google Family Link a Parent's Guide:

### Step 1: Set up Family Link

- a) Download the Google Family Link app on your phone.
- b) Open the app and tap "Create family group".
- c) Follow the prompts to add your child to the family group.

### Step 2: Set up your child's Android phone

- a) Turn on the new Android phone and follow the setup prompts.
- b) When asked to sign in with a Google account, choose "Create account for my child".
- c) Enter your child's information and follow the prompts to create their account.
- d) Link your child's account to yours when prompted.

### Step 3: Enable key Parental Control features

#### A. Screen Time Limits

1. Open the Family Link app on your phone.
2. Select your child's profile.
3. Tap "Daily limit" to set overall screen time limits.

#### B. Bedtime

1. In Family Link, tap "Bedtime" under your child's profile.
2. Set a schedule for when the device should be locked.

#### C. App-Specific Limits

1. In Family Link, tap "App limits" under your child's profile.
2. Select apps you want to limit and set daily time limits.

#### D. Content Restrictions

1. In Family Link, tap "Content restrictions" under your child's profile.
2. Set age limits for apps, games, movies, and TV shows.

#### E. SafeSearch and YouTube Restrictions

1. In Family Link, scroll to "Filters on Google Chrome" and "YouTube" sections.
2. Enable SafeSearch and restricted mode on YouTube.

### Step 4: Manage purchases and downloads

- a) In Family Link, tap "Google Play" under your child's profile.
- b) Choose approval settings for purchases and downloads.

### Step 5: Location Tracking

- a) In Family Link, tap "Location" under your child's profile.
- b) Enable location tracking to see your child's device location.

### Step 6: Device locking

- a) In Family Link, you can remotely lock your child's device at any time.
- b) Tap "Lock now" under your child's profile to instantly lock the device.

#### Additional tips:

- Some features may require you to set up Family Payment Methods in Google Play.
- For teenagers (13 years and older), the child can turn off some restrictions, but you will be notified of this.
- Family Link settings can also be accessed through [parents.google.com](https://parents.google.com) on a computer.

**Remember:** Review and adjust these settings **regularly** as your child grows, and their needs change. Open communication about device usage is key to maintaining a healthy digital lifestyle.