

P-06-1482 Ban smartphones in all schools in Wales with exemptions for exceptional circumstances, Correspondence from Carers Trust Wales to the Committee, 8 January 2025

Bore da,

Diolch for inviting me/Carers Trust to take part in the roundtable on Monday on the petition to ban smartphones from school.

I promised at that session to follow up with examples of guidance produced in England and Scotland that relate to restricting phone use, and the exemptions for young carers.

Guidance from Department for Education in England:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65cf5f2a4239310011b7b916/Mobile_phones_in_schools_guidance.pdf

Carers Trust's recent report on the experiences of young carers in schools in England, [Caring in Classrooms](#), quotes from the Guidance:

"The Department for Education's guidance on mobile phones in schools makes clear schools should be allowing flexibility for pupils such as young carers. It says: "Schools should recognise that a need for mobile phone access for some pupils may depend on their individual circumstances, including at home... Schools should allow flexibility in their policy for these pupils and consider including arrangements in other relevant policies (such as a young carers policy)."

Scottish Government's Guidance:

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2024/08/mobile-phone-guidance-scotlands-schools/documents/guidance-mobile-phones-scotlands-schools/guidance-mobile-phones-scotlands-schools/govscot%3Adocument/guidance-mobile-phones-scotlands-schools.pdf>

Approach on young carers "consideration of situations where mobile phones may be used by pupils with particular needs, for example, a young carer who is worried about the health of their parents." and "consideration is given to whether exceptions for individual circumstances are required. For example, exceptions for pupils: who are young carers and who require ongoing contact with family members"

If we were to see similar guidance or restrictions in Wales, Carers Trust would expect young carers to be named as an exempted group, and for reference to be made to a school's Young Carer Policy in their development of a school Mobile Phone policy.

Please do let me know if I can support with anything further.

Cofion gorau,

Catrin Edwards