

P-06-1482 Ban smartphones in all schools in Wales (with exemptions for exceptional circumstances)

This petition was submitted by Zena Blackwell having collected 3,369 signatures.

Text of petition:

Inspired by the movements Smartphone Free Childhood and Delay Smartphones, as well as recent compelling research on the profound negative effects of smartphones on children, we call on Senedd Cymru to ban them in all schools in Wales, with exemptions for exceptional circumstances. Smartphone use poses significant wellbeing and safeguarding concerns. We are deeply worried about our children's social development and mental health and believe all pupils have the right to a smartphone-free school.

Additional information:

Children's mental health is at an all-time low, with smartphones & social media major contributing factors.

Research highlights the detrimental effects of smartphones on children, with a UK Parliamentary Select Committee report stating the risks of screen time outweigh the benefits. The BMJ recently called for a precautionary public health response. Smartphones disrupt brain development, lower self-esteem, trigger anxiety, and expose children to harmful content. Reports include teenagers witnessing real-life killings on social media and cases of suicide due to 'sextortion.' 83% of parents believe smartphones are harmful, with 58% supporting a ban for under-16s (Parentkind poll)

Countries including France, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, and China, along with many UK and US schools, have implemented smartphone bans, leading to improved student focus and well-being. UNESCO and the UK government have also called for bans on smartphones in schools.

The Committee held a round table event on the issue and carried out engagement work in schools. A [report](#) was published on 12 March 2025 with recommendations for the Welsh Government.

Senedd Constituency and Region:

- Cardiff Central
- South Wales Central