



3rd October 2025

Dear parents / carers



B&H Smartphone Free Guidance

As you know, Cottesmore hosted Smartphone Free Childhood's event back in January 2025. This was an amazing event where around 170 leaders and parents, including Peter Kyle, came to listen to a panel of speakers discuss the impact of smartphones on our young people. A recording of this informative event can be watched via this link-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyAqYBf59zE>

We have been doing lots of work behind the scenes in the hope that, alongside SFC, we can make a change within our school, across the city and beyond. In March, I was asked to speak at the Diocesan RSHE Leads day (there are 83 Catholic schools in our Diocese) about all we had done in our school. This was a great success and I have since been contacted by other schools to help them with their journey. I also presented to Headteacher's from the Bosco Multi Academy Trust (11 Catholic schools across Sussex) who also wanted to follow our path. In April, I met with the SFC team and their letter was sent to all Year 6 families, across the city, noting that phones weren't needed in secondary school, giving guidance and useful links. In school, we set up Year 6 Smartphone Free Ambassadors and held assemblies to discuss our mission. Thank you to the Smartphone Free Ambassadors from Varndean who came to talk to our children about their experiences and why they are behind this movement. In May, I met with Ashley Seymour-Williams (Senior Education Advisor for B&H) to discuss the work we had done around mobile phones within our school community. You may recall but by this point we had suggested to parents / carers that, from September 2025, children wouldn't be able to bring smartphones into school (if walking home from school alone) and could only bring non smartphone alternatives. Ashley met with myself and three of our Year 6 Smartphone Ambassadors and was very impressed with how impassioned they were. At the end of June, I was then invited to speak at a meeting for Headteachers, Councillors and other members of the Local Authority, hosted by Councillor Emma Daniels, to discuss our journey and next steps. Members of SFC had also met with councillors separately. Our aim was to encourage the Local Authority to introduce a city wide approach with regards to non-Smartphone use that could be disseminated to all local schools. The start of the new school year came and our Smartphone free decision came into effect. We are delighted to say that no Smartphones have been brought into school and there has been a huge reduction in who has them at home. We also made the decision that staff would not be seen using a Smartphone anywhere around the building and that phones weren't to be on desks during staff meeting or training days. A big thank you to for supporting this as we work to model better phone use to the children.

On 15th September, BHCC Schools Bulletin sent the letter attached to all schools. The letter emphasises the harms associated with children's exposure to smartphones and lends its full support to schools in Brighton & Hove which decide to become smartphone-free. It also asks parents to delay giving their children smartphones until 14 and to sign the [Smartphone Free Childhood Parent Pact](#). This is wonderful news. For more details, and to see Cottesmore recognised as one of a handful of schools leading the way, you may wish to read the recent [Argus article](#).

<https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25481860.brighton-hove-council-backs-smartphone-free-bid/>

B&H's pioneering move was also noted on BBC South East today. They asked to interview us, we declined, but it is great to see a SFC B&H member being interviewed

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDo5iU9bsbg>

Our next step is to introduce a no phone use on school grounds pledge by parents – your support is appreciated. Thank you for your ongoing support and thank you to Brighton and Hove for their recent decision. Don't forget to follow their suggestions and delay giving your child a smartphone until 14 as well as signing the parent pact.

European Day of Languages

On 26th September, Cottesmore celebrated European Languages Day – a day when we celebrate all the diverse languages and cultures that make up our school community. Mrs Mazzoleni from Newman brought some of her 6th Form College students over to share their love of languages with us in our assembly. They demonstrated conversations in their mother-tongues and children had to guess which languages they were using. They learned how to say what their name is in Italian and how to pronounce one of the most difficult German words there is – Eichhörnchen. Can you guess what it means? The assembly ended with Ms Szeless saying the Hail Mary in her native language – Hungarian – and an invitation from Mrs Breen for children to end future school assemblies with the Hail Mary or Our Father in their native language, too.

Ms Mazzoleni said afterwards, "Your school is so lovely! We loved the children of the world map in the stairs and it was obvious the children loved languages." How fortunate we are, here at Cottesmore, to have such a wonderfully vibrant, international family.



Thank you for all your support. Rachel Breen, Headteacher.

Harvest

Key Stage One

You are invited to year group Harvest liturgies. These will take place in the Forest School area, at 9am, and run for approximately 20 minutes.

Reception - Tuesday 14th October at 9am

Year 1 - Friday 17th October at 9am

Year 2 - Wednesday 15th October at 9am

Please can all children wear full school uniform on these days. Once you have dropped your child off with the class teachers in the infant playground, please head straight to the Forest School area on the field.

Key Stage Two

Year 6 - Children in Year 6 have been invited to a special Harvest Mass at Cardinal Newman School, with other Year 6 classes from across the Deanery, on Tuesday 14th of October. This is an event for children only. If you can volunteer to help with this eg walking children over and back, please email Year 6 teachers directly. Smart school uniform please. No PE kits.

Year 3 and 4 and 5 - Harvest Mass will take place on 16th October at 9am, in the school hall celebrated by Canon David. Parents are welcome to attend. Please enter via Radinden Manor gate only. This will be locked at 8.40am as usual and then reopened from 8.50am - 9am.

Donations

We ask for your support, at Harvest, to help with our annual collection of food or money for our local food bank based at St. George's church - Hangleton and West Blatchington Food Bank as well as for City Mission. Donations of food will be collected across week beginning 9th of October and retiring monetary collections will take place at the end of each event. Please see the list of much needed food to see how your family can help. Any contributions are to be left in the KS2 shelter. Every contribution is gratefully received.

HARVEST NEEDS LIST

Currently we require the following items -

- TINNED MEAT
- TINNED FISH
- INSTANT COFFEE & TEA
- JAMS & SPREADS
- PASTA SAUCES
- RICE & NOODLES
- TINNED TOMATOES
- HOT CHOCOLATE
- SHOWER GEL & SHAMPOO
- TINNED FRUIT
- TINNED RICE PUDDING
- GLUTEN FREE PRODUCTS
- BISCUITS
- CRISPS
- CEREAL

Thank you so much for your amazing support.



PTA AGM – 8th October – All welcome!

We hope the new school year has got off to a great start for you and your family.

We're excited to dive into another year of fundraising, kicking things off with the PTA AGM on Wednesday 8th October at 7pm in the school hall. We hope you can join, everyone's welcome.

Don't forget to follow the PTA on Facebook and Instagram to stay up-to-date with all that's coming up.

www.instagram.com/friendsofcottesmoreprimary?igsh=MWplbTizbTA5NjZ3YQ%3D%3D&utm_source=qr

www.facebook.com/share/1D32oyGqgL/?mibextid=wwXlfr

Help with parking

I am writing to request your attention and support regarding an important matter concerning the safety of our children during school drop-off and pick-up times.

As we begin a new academic year, it is crucial that we all work together to ensure a safe environment for children arriving at and leaving school - particularly during the busy periods at the start and end of the school day.

We would like to highlight the following concerns:

- Use of the staff car park off The Upper Drive: This area is being used for drop-offs and pick ups, with vehicles reversing back onto Upper Drive. This practice poses a serious risk to children due to limited visibility in the area and the number of children using the pavement. A reminder to park on The Upper Drive and use the path / gate that runs behind the car park.
- Parking on zigzag lines outside the school gates: Parking on these lines is strictly prohibited, even for blue badge holders. These markings are there to protect our children's safety, and must be respected at all times.
- Nuisance parking across driveways on Radindon Manor: This causes inconvenience for local residents and must be avoided.

The school is actively supporting children's safety through staff supervision at the gates during busy periods.

However, the resources are limited, and we are looking for parents and volunteers who would support the supervision on the roads to deter dangerous parking and support our children to enter the school safely between 8:30am and 08:40am as well as around pick up time at 3.10pm. Interested parents, with time to volunteer, to email Mrs Breen.

We kindly ask that you avoid unsafe behaviours such as using restricted areas for drop-off, parking where it is prohibited. Let's work together to set a positive example and keep our school and community safe.

With best wishes, Dr Thomas Medveczky, Co-Chair of the Governing Body

Volunteer Readers

We are keen to welcome parents and carers to become volunteer reader at Cottesmore. We believe that reading opens doors for children and it is our passion to make every child a reader. Regular practice plays such an important role in becoming fluent and confident. If you are able to give at least half an hour of your time, consistently every week, for at least one school term, we would love to hear from you. Please email katiemcfarland@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk if you are interested. As part of the process, we will ask for two references and documents needed for us to complete a DBS. Please note than volunteer readers will be places in year groups other than that of their own child.



Pupil Premium - free clubs, uniform, events, food and more. Please sign up asap.

For every child registered for Pupil Premium, the school will receive extra funding that can be spent on your child. It is vital that you apply, if eligible.

Your child may be eligible for this funding if you are entitled to receive one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Please be assured that no one will know you have registered and it will not affect any other benefits you are claiming.

This funding can offer your child:

- Free breakfast club for the whole year
- £50 towards a termly, after school club of your choice
- Free school lunches when in Key Stage 2 (all children in KS1, regardless of family income, automatically receive them)
- Free holiday clubs via HAF <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/holiday-activities-and-food-haf>
- HUGG vouchers (food vouchers to spend in most grocery stores during the school holidays)
- A free, almost new uniform (from the PTA shop)
- Heavily subsidised music tuition from the Brighton and Hove music school
- Free access to PTA events
- Money to support in school booster / intervention sessions

How does it work?

First, check if you qualify – so please look at the list above. Registering is then really quick and easy. You only need to provide your name, date of birth, national insurance number and details of your child. If you think you qualify please contact the School Office or the Free School Meals Team at Brighton and Hove City Council, telephone 01273 293497. You can also apply online at <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/free-school-meals>

Your enquiry will be dealt with sensitively and in strict confidence.

Autumn Termly [first half] Overviews on Website

The Half Termly Overviews for the 1st half of the Autumn Term have been published on the relevant year group pages on our school website. These overviews give you detailed information about the upcoming topics and, whether it's exciting science topics, creative art projects, or language learning opportunities, there's something for every child to look forward to. We encourage you to find out, and have conversations with your child, about what they will be studying at school: perhaps you would like to investigate further, provide background reading or extra practice/support at home. If you have any questions about forthcoming topics, please speak to class teachers.



Reception September 2026 – please encourage new families to visit our school

If you are currently a member of our school family and have a younger child due to start school in September 2026, don't forget that, in addition to completing the online Brighton and Hove admissions form, you must also complete the school Supplementary Information Form (SIF). This can be found on the school website and is required to be delivered to the school office. We encourage you to complete the SIF form sooner rather than later, especially if you require a priest's signature. A reminder that the deadline for Reception applications is 15th January. Please encourage families who are new to our school to visit one of our open days. The dates and times of these are:

- **9am Tuesday 5th November**
- **9am Wednesday 6th November**
- **9am Thursday 7th November**
- **9am Monday 11th November**
- **9am Tuesday 12th November**
- **9am Wednesday 13th November**
- **9am Monday 18th November**
- **9am Tuesday 19th November**
- **9am Wednesday 20th November**

Families can email office@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk with their preferred date/dates and their full name, the name of their child (who they are considering enrolling at the school) and mobile number. In the meantime, you may wish to re-watch a video that we created when parents were unable to visit the school. Please do share this with friends. <https://player.vimeo.com/video/482774309>

The Admissions Page of our school website also contains a range of helpful information.

<https://www.cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk/page/admissions/>

Please spread the word about Cottesmore to all that you know and encourage friends and families to get in touch. We look forward to hearing from all prospective parents and are here to help in anyway. If schools don't fill, they lose vital funds so getting as many applications as possible is vital.

10th September 2025

Dear Parents/Carers/Guardians,

The council is increasingly concerned about the impact of smartphones on our children's development and wellbeing, and we know this concern is shared across many of our school leaders, teachers and school staff.

Smartphones have become an integral part of modern life, with most adults relying on them to access information and stay connected with family and friends.

However, research suggests that smartphones and social media can have negative effects on children and teenagers. Many children receive their first phone while still in primary school, and by the age of 12, the majority already own a smartphone.

- A group of Brighton & Hove schools have come together and committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to make our city schools smartphone-free.
- Most children already cannot use smartphones during the school day: the majority of secondary schools across Brighton & Hove have a smartphone-free policy. Similarly, most primary schools do not allow phones to be used during the school day.

Brighton & Hove City Council fully supports schools in Brighton & Hove which decide to become smartphone free.

We anticipate a shift in the coming years, with fewer children receiving smartphones upon entering secondary school. This expectation is based upon a growing awareness that smartphones are not essential for school attendance and an increasing understanding of the risks associated with early smartphone use.

Several secondary schools have already introduced parent pacts for students in Year 7, and it is expected that participation in such initiatives will continue to increase annually. While exceptions may be made for children with specific medical requirements or those acting as young carers, these cases are few and should be reviewed by the child's school on an individual basis.

A growing number of parents and schools across the country are choosing to take this action. If you need to contact your child while they travel to and from school, a simple 'brick' phone will allow for this. 'Brick' phones do not have internet connectivity, and they are inexpensive.

We would like to work together with parents to safeguard children, preserve childhood and continue to develop important transferable life skills. **We would ask that families help us by signing up and agreeing not to provide a smartphone until their child is 14** (unless they have a specific need for one). By doing so, we will protect our children's mental health and wellbeing and set a standard for how communities can come together to challenge the norms that no longer serve our children.

If you would like to find out more about support for parents who want their children to be smartphone free, do please visit [Smartphone Free Childhood](#).

Yours faithfully,



Cllr Emma Daniel
Cabinet Lead for Children, Families & Youth Services

Friends of Cottesmore Primary

FREE EVENT

- YEAR 3 -

DISCO

Friday 10th October

TIME: 15:15 - 16:30
VENUE: The School Hall

Children can wear their school uniform or bring party clothes to change into before the end of the school day.

Adults will need to collect their child from their classroom and take them to the school hall.

YAY!

Please book a FREE ticket by Monday 6th October so we can confirm final numbers.

BOOK HERE: WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/SOCSEVENTS

Every child must have a nominated adult who remains at the Disco for the duration.

Friends of Cottesmore Primary

FREE EVENT

- RECEPTION -

DISCO

Friday 17th October

TIME: 16:30 - 17:45
VENUE: The School Hall

Entrance will be via the KS2 playground gates (off the staff car park - the Upper Drive side) at 4.30pm.

YAY!

Please book your FREE ticket by Monday 13th October so we can confirm final numbers.

BOOK HERE: WWW.TICKETSOURCE.CO.UK/SOCSEVENTS

Every child must have a nominated adult who remains at the Disco for the duration.

Friends of Cottesmore Primary

PRE-LOVED UNIFORM SALE

7TH OCTOBER

IN THE KS2 PLAYGROUND 15.10 - 15.30

Please leave any donations in the covered area in the KS2 playground on the morning of the 3rd October.

RELOVE RECYCLE REUSE

All items £1-£2

YAY!

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SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER	OCTOBER = MONTH OF THE ROSARY and BLACK HISTORY MONTH
MONDAY 29 th	- Year 6 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet) - PTA lost property stall in KS2 playground from 3.10pm - 4.20pm
TUESDAY 30 th	- Flu Vaccinations – all years - Year 6 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet) - SchoolPing online booking system for Parents Evening closed
WEDNESDAY 1 st	- Year 5 St Oscar Forest School am - Year 1 St Teresa Forest School pm - Year 6 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet)
THURSDAY 2 nd	- Individual and sibling school photographs - all to wear school uniform eg no Forest school or PE clothes - Year 6 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet)
FRIDAY 3 rd	- Year 5 Swimming - Year 4 trip to Fishbourne Roman Palace - Year 6 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet)
SUNDAY 5 th	Grandparents Day
OCTOBER	
MONDAY 6 th	Interim report request for Parents Evening closed
TUESDAY 7 th	PTA uniform sale after school - items between £1 and £2
WEDNESDAY 8 th	- Year 5 St Josephine Forest School am - Year 1 St George Forest School pm - PTA AGM and drinks. 7pm School hall – all parents welcome. - Author Andy Day visiting Reception - Year 4, in the school hall at 10am
THURSDAY 9 th	
FRIDAY 10 th	- Year 5 Swimming - World Mental Health Day and World Homeless Day - Year 6, level 2 bikeability, 8 children, on road so adult needed. 1.15pm – 2.45pm. Bring – or borrow – bike and helmet. - PTA Year 3 Welcome to KS2 Welcome Disco 3.15pm – 4.30pm
MONDAY 13 th	Year 6 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet)
TUESDAY 14 th	9am - Reception Harvest. Forest School, parents welcome - Year 6 Harvest Mass (with other schools), Newman. Children only (school uniform). - Year 6 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet)
WEDNESDAY 15 th	- Year 5 and 6 choir to Glyndebourne (Midsummer's Night Dream) 9am - Year 2 Harvest. Forest School, parents welcome - Year 4 St Cuthman Forest School am - Year 1 St Teresa Forest School pm - Year 6 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet)
THURSDAY 16 th	9am - Year 3, 4 and 5 Harvest mass, parents welcome (school uniform) - Parent Consultation phone calls and SEN 3.20pm - 6pm - Year 6 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet)
FRIDAY 17 th	9am - Year 1 Harvest. Forest School, parents welcome - Show Racism the Red Card Day - wear red today - Year 5 Swimming - Year 6 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet) - PTA Reception Welcome Disco 4.30pm – 5.45pm
MONDAY 20 th	
TUESDAY 21 st	- Parent Consultation phone calls and SEN 3.20pm - 6pm - Year 6 Height and Weight
WEDNESDAY 22 nd	- Year 4 St Lewinna Forest School am - Year 1 St George Forest School pm
THURSDAY 23 rd	PTA Spooky Cake Sale after school – please bring in shop bought / homemade donations and leave them in the KS2 structure before school. Nothing containing nuts.
FRIDAY 24 th	INSET DAY – school closed to pupils
HALF TERM HOLIDAY Monday 27th October – Friday 31st October Outdoors Project Holiday Club on school field Friday 31st October Closing date for secondary school applications	

NOVEMBER	
MONDAY 3 rd	
TUESDAY 4 th	9am -10am School Tours for Reception 2025
WEDNESDAY 5 th	9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2025 - Year 3 St Martin Forest School am - Year 1 St Teresa Forest School pm
THURSDAY 6 th	9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2025
FRIDAY 7 th	Year 5 Swimming
MONDAY 10 th	- Anti-Bullying Week – Power for Good. - World Science Day – Peace and Development - Remembrance Day (Remembrance Sunday is Sunday 9th) 9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2025
TUESDAY 11 th	9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2025
WEDNESDAY 12 th	9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2025 Year 3 St Cecilia Forest School am Year 1 St George Forest School pm
THURSDAY 13 th	World Kindness Day
FRIDAY 14 th	- Year 5 Swimming - Children in Need - non school uniform in exchange for money towards collection
MONDAY 17 th	9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2025
TUESDAY 18 th	9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2025
WEDNESDAY 19 th	9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2025 - Year 2 St Monica Forest School am - Year 1 St George Forest School pm
THURSDAY 20 th	
FRIDAY 21 st	Year 5 swimming Year 5 and 6 PTA film night after school – more information to follow.
MONDAY 24 th	
TUESDAY 25 th	
WEDNESDAY 26 th	- Year 2 St Patrick Forest School am - Year 1 St Teresa Forest School pm - Years 3 – 6 Red Riding Hood pantomime at school at 9.30pm
THURSDAY 27 th	
FRIDAY 28 th	Year 5 swimming
DECEMBER	
MONDAY 1 st	Advent begins
TUESDAY 2 nd	Choir to Brighton Centre for One Voice Singing Festival (rehearsal in day and show in evening)
WEDNESDAY 3 rd	Year 1 St George Forest School pm
THURSDAY 4 th	
FRIDAY 5 th	Reception and Year 1 parent / carers Phonics workshop. School hall. 8.50am. PTA Advent Fair, school hall and outside, 3.15pm – 4.30pm. School uniform day (or PE kit is usual PE day). Please bring donatations of cakes and sweet treats.
MONDAY 8 th	
TUESDAY 9 th	
WEDNESDAY 10 th	Year 1 St Teresa Forest School pm
THURSDAY 11 th	Interactive Fairy Tale Show for Reception - Year 2. Fairytale costumes or party clothes for children in Reception only
FRIDAY 12 th	
MONDAY 15 th	Year 6 Nativity - 2.30pm
TUESDAY 16 th	Year 2 Nativity - 9.15am Year 5 Nativity - 2.30pm
WEDNESDAY 17 th	- Reception Nativity - 9.15am - Year 4 Nativity - 2.30pm - Christmas Dinners: KS2 (these year groups wear Christmas jumper / colourful clothes). All children in KS1 to bring a packed lunch this day. - Honeypot celebration
THURSDAY 18 th	Year 1 Nativity - 9.15am Christmas Dinners: KS1 (these year groups wear Christmas jumpers / colourful clothes). All children in KS2 to bring a packed lunch this day. Y3 Nativity - 2.30pm PTA uniform sale after school – items between £1 and £2
FRIDAY 19 th	- Class parties for all school and Father Christmas to visit Reception – Year 3. - School finishes for Christmas holidays
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY Monday 22 nd December – Friday 2 nd January	