



Wednesday 17th June 2026

Launching “Solihull IRL” – Supporting Smartphone-Free Childhoods

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are delighted to share the launch of an exciting new website, **Solihull IRL (In Real Life)** – a borough-wide initiative designed to support children, young people and families in navigating a childhood with less reliance on smartphones. You may have noticed the banners appear today on the pedestrian entrances to school!

This project has been developed through a powerful collaboration between professionals across Solihull, including colleagues from Family Hubs, secondary schools and colleges, SOLAR CAMHS, SEND specialist teachers, and NHS partners. We are proud to have contributed to this important work, helping to create a resource that supports the wellbeing of our children both in and beyond school.

What is Solihull IRL?

The website – www.solihullirl.co.uk – offers practical guidance, reassurance and encouragement for families who are considering reducing or delaying smartphone use.

It provides:

- **Clear, accessible information for parents** about the impact smartphones and social media can have on children’s wellbeing, sleep, relationships and learning
- **Practical tips and support** to help families confidently make changes
- **Ideas and inspiration for children and young people**, promoting positive alternatives to screen time
- **Dedicated guidance for children with SEND and medical needs**, recognising that some young people may be particularly vulnerable online
- **Resources for schools**, helping to support open, informed conversations with parents and pupils

As a school community, we are incredibly proud that Dorridge has already been leading the way, having been smartphone-free for over a year.

The impact has been clear and extremely positive:

- A significant reduction in issues linked to social media affecting the school day
- More focus on learning, with fewer distractions and disruptions

HEADS OF SCHOOL: Mrs G Thelwell, BEd (Hons) and Mrs J Hales, BA (Hons)

Dorridge Primary School, Station Road, Dorridge, Solihull, West Midlands, B93 8EU
T: 01564 772836 E: office@dorridge.solihull.sch.uk www.dorridge.solihull.sch.uk

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- Improved wellbeing and social interaction among pupils
- Greater support for families, with many parents telling us they feel reassured knowing there is less pressure for their child to have a smartphone when others do not

This shared approach has made a real difference, and we are excited to see this work extend across the wider borough.

A Shared Vision for Solihull

The overall ambition of the Solihull IRL project is bold and inspiring: to create a Smartphone-Free Solihull, where children can enjoy richer, healthier childhoods with more time spent learning, playing and connecting in real life.

We encourage all families to explore the website and join us in this important conversation. Together, we can support our children to grow up with confidence, balance and strong wellbeing.

To find out more, please visit: <https://www.solihullirl.co.uk/>

Kind regards,

Mrs G Thelwell

Head of School EYFS & KS1

Mrs J Hales

Head of School KS2

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