

EXAMEN INGLÉS PAU JUNIO 2025 EXTRA

Prohibiting phones in schools is not improving grades or behaviour

Banning smartphones in schools does not seem to improve students' grades or mental health, according to a new study. Researchers found no difference in sleep, classroom behaviour, exercise, or how long they spent on their smartphones between schools that prohibited smartphones and those that did not. However, they found that spending more time on smartphones and social media in general was linked with worse results in all these areas. This study is the first to compare school phone rules with student health and education, contributing to the current debate in homes and schools.

Dr Victoria Goodyear, the main researcher, told the BBC that the results of the study were not "against" prohibiting smartphones in schools, but she suggested that doing only this is not enough. She said that the aim should be to reduce how much time students spend on their phones. She added: "We need to do more than just prohibit phones in schools".

The University of Birmingham's study, published in The Lancet's journal for European health policy, analysed 1,227 students and the rules their 30 different secondary schools had for smartphone use at break and lunchtimes.

Results showed that limiting smartphone use in school did not lead to the expected improvements on health, behaviour, or attention in the classroom. However, spending more time on phones and social media was linked to worse mental health, less physical activity, poorer sleep, lower grades, and more disciplinary problems in the classroom.

Joe Ryrie, director of the campaign group Smartphone Free Childhood, told BBC Radio 4 that the results were "surprising", because teachers in their group had reported benefits from the prohibition of mobile phones in their schools. He also said that the average time children in the study spent on their phones – four to six hours – was a "terrifying amount of time". Ryrie said that stricter regulations were needed to make social media platforms safer and less addictive for children.

The study may intensify the debate around whether under-16s should be stopped from having smartphones completely. Some schools say it is the parents' responsibility to decide. The Online Safety Act, which will soon come into effect, would protect young people from harmful

content and ensure they had an age-appropriate experience online.

Adapted from an article by Alice Evans, BBC News, 05-02-2025

Part I. Reading Comprehension

1. Are the following statements true (T) or false (F)? Identify the part of the text that supports your answer by copying the exact passage on the answer sheet. (2 points: 0.5 point each)

- The study found that banning smartphones in schools significantly improved students' academic performance.
- The research showed that students who spent more time on social media had poorer sleep and lower grades.
- Dr Victoria Goodyear believes that prohibiting smartphones in schools is the only solution.
- The director of campaign group Smartphone Free Childhood concluded that social media platforms need no further regulations to protect children.

2. Answer the following questions using your own words but taking into account the information in the text. (2.5 points: 1.25 point each)

- What should the main implication of the study be according to Dr Victoria Goodyear?
- Why was Joe Ryrie surprised by the study's findings?

3. Find a synonym for each of the four words below from these six options. All words are underlined in the text (1 point: 0.25 point each)

banning linked current policy expected average

a. rule		b. forbidding	
c. standard		d. present	

4. Choose a, b, or c, in each question below. Only one choice is correct. (1.5 points: 0.5 point each)

1. What did the study conclude about banning smartphones in schools?

- It significantly improved students' grades and behaviour.
- It had no major impact on students' academic performance or mental health.
- It led to increased classroom participation and better focus.

d) It resulted in students using their phones less outside of school.

2. According to the study, what was linked to worse mental health and lower grades?

- a) Spending more time on social media and smartphones.
- b) Having strict smartphone rules in schools.
- c) Using smartphones only during breaks and lunch.
- d) Not having enough parental supervision over smartphone use.

3. How might the study influence the debate on smartphones for children under 16?

- a) It suggests that all children should have unrestricted access to smartphones.
- b) It may lead to discussions about banning smartphones for children under 16.
- c) It proves that parents should have no say in their children's phone use.
- d) It highlights the need for broader regulations on smartphone use, beyond school bans.

Part II. Composition (130 to 150 words approximately) (3 points)

5. Choose one of these two topics and write a composition about it.

- A. Are smartphones more harmful or beneficial for students? Give reasons.
- B. Write about the differences between digital and printed books. Which do you prefer? Why?