Students First
OUTWOOD
FAMILY OF SCHOOLS

# STUDENT MOBILE PHONE POLICY

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# Background

At Outwood Grange Academies Trust we are committed to creating a learning environment where every student can thrive. Our young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world, living their lives on and offline. This presents many exciting opportunities - but also academic, emotional and social challenges. Our goal is to promote a focused and distraction-free learning environment whilst encouraging responsible use of technology. To support this, we have introduced a mobile phone policy that incorporates the Yondr phone pouch programme https://www.overyondr.com/.

We believe that every student deserves the chance to experience a phone-free education. Yondr pouches provide a simple and secure way of supporting this approach across our school. This approach provides a balanced solution, ensuring young people retain possession of their phones while minimising distractions during school hours. The pouch helps foster social interaction, improve focus on learning, and reduce stress associated with phone use, all while maintaining communication for families during travel to and from school.

# Student Phone Policy & Guidelines

**All Outwood Academies are phone-free communities**. Each student will be assigned a personal Yondr Pouch and they are responsible for bringing it to school daily and keeping it in good working condition. **Phones and wearable tech will be secured in the pouch upon arrival and remain there until the end of the school day.**

*Note: This policy applies strictly to secondary academies and does not apply to Post 16 centres.*

# Daily Process

Upon arrival, students will:

1) Turn their phone off.
2) Place their phone and any wearable technology inside their Yondr pouch and lock it **in the presence of school staff**.
3) Keep the pouched phone with them throughout the school day, and store it in their bag.

At the end of the school day, students will unlock their pouch, retrieve their phone and tech, and re-close the pouch to protect the locking mechanism from damage. Pouches must be brought to and from school each day.

**Note:** Students arriving late or leaving early must pouch or unpouch their phones at their **designated late entry point**.

# Procedures and Sanctions

# Late Arrivals/Early Dismissals

Students arriving late (after the school late gate) or leaving early must pouch or unpouch their phones and wearable tech at the **main school reception**.

# Forgotten Pouches

If a student forgets their pouch, their phone will be collected and securely stored in the academy office until the end of the day. Parents/carers will be contacted and reminded of the procedures. Repeated instances will result in the pouch being treated as lost and a replacement fee of £15 will be charged.

# Phone Use During the School Day

If a student is found in possession of a phone **outside of their pouch** on school site, the phone will be confiscated and stored in the main office. It will be returned once collected by a parent or carer. Based on the circumstances, it will be at the discretion of the Principal for the sanction issued. If it is confirmed deliberate use then this will result in suspension.

Bag searches and/or phone detector wands may be conducted if teachers have concerns that a student has a mobile device on them that hasn't been secured into their pouch. This will be in line with OGAT Positive Discipline for Learning & Life Policy (11-16) and DfE guidance: Searching, screening and confiscation: Advice for head-teachers, school staff and governing bodies, July 2022.

# Travel & Trips

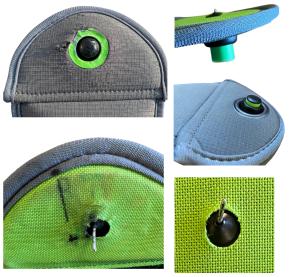
The OGAT phone-free policy remains in effect during all school-led overseas trips and residential visits to ensure safety, minimise distractions, and promote peer socialisation. Phone pouches (Yondr) may be taken on flights and passed through airport security in either hand or cabin luggage. Staff will also carry the release magnet with them for hand luggage in case a pouch needs to be opened for any reason. Trip leads may designate specific time slots during the day for permitted phone usage (e.g., for photography or course requirements) and specified social time. For safeguarding reasons, photo taking is restricted outside of designated times, with staff responsible for capturing and checking photos before distribution. Prior to travel, payment requirements will be communicated to families, as students will need physical cards or cash rather than mobile payment methods.

# Damaged Pouches

Any attempt to tamper with the Yondr system, including use or possession of high-strength magnets will be treated as a **serious offence**, potentially resulting in a replacement fee of £15, confiscation of the device until a parent/guardian picks it up and sanction. Based on the circumstances, it will be at the discretion of the Principal for the sanction issued. Deliberate damage will result in suspension.

If accidental damage occurs, students must report it immediately. If damage is discovered during checks and has not been reported, it may be considered **intentional**.

The following may indicate intentional damage:



- Ripped or cut fabric
- Bent or cut pin
- Signs of force to the black locking mechanism
- Pen marks inside the pouch
- Pouch opening without a station
- Scuff marks on the black ball

The pouch should not be used as a replacement for a protective case and/or screen protector on a mobile device.

# Emergencies and Safeguarding

# Communications During the School Day

Parents/ carers who need to contact their child during the school day should do so via the **school office** on enquiries@grange.outwood.com. We will then pass this message onto your child. In the case where students have an allocated key worker, then a parent/carer may wish to email that colleague directly who can pass a message on.

# Medical Conditions

Students who require access to their mobile devices for specific medical purposes will be provided with a medical pouch. These medical conditions include but are not limited to: Diabetes type 1, medical implants and the use of pacemakers.

# Emergency Procedures

In an emergency, the priority is for students to follow school safety procedures under staff guidance. Unauthorised phone use during such situations may:

- Delay emergency responses
- Spread misinformation
- Put students and staff at increased risk
- Disrupt coordinated safeguarding measures

Emergency communications will be managed through the school.