

# Mobile Phone Policy

**Approved by: Governors**

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## **Dorothy Stringer School is a phone free environment.**

### **1. Rationale**

Whilst mobile phones are a useful accessory in 21st century modern Britain, research suggests that the dependency that students have towards their devices is detrimental to their education and to their emotional well-being. The government has recently recognised this and issued non-statutory guidance that prohibits the use of mobile phones through the school day. This is not to say that phones cannot have a place in teenagers' lives, but at Dorothy Stringer, to allow our students to be cognitively active and to allow them a small period of the day where face to face communication trumps any other form of communication, our school is a phone-free space. To facilitate this we use a system of lockable phone pouches called Yondr.

### **2. Scope**

The Yondr system at Dorothy Stringer applies to students in Years 7-11 inclusive.

### **3. Policy Overview**

Mobile phones and headphones\* are not to be used or seen during school. Every student who brings a phone to school will secure their phone in their own Yondr pouch when they arrive at school. It is each student's responsibility to bring their pouch with them to school every day. Students will maintain possession of their own phones in Yondr pouches and will not use them until their pouches are opened at the end of the school day at unlocking stations. If students do not wish to have a pouch, their mobile phones must be left at home.

Students must 'pouch' their mobile phone and wireless headphones by placing inside the pouch and locking it.

\*Students may need to use headphones as part of their music lessons only.

\*\*Smartwatches are permitted, but they must not be wirelessly connected to a phone.

### **4. Daily process for students who wish to bring a mobile phone to school**

As students arrive to school, they will:

- 1) Turn their mobile phone off
- 2) Unlock their Yondr pouch using one of the unlocking stations
- 3) Place their mobile phone and wireless headphones inside the pouch and secure it in front of school staff.
- 4) Store it in their bag for the day.
- 5) Form tutors and Lesson 1 teachers \* will check all phones are secured in pouches
- 6) At the end of the day, students will open their pouch at an unlocking station, remove their phone, close their pouch and put it in their bag.

\* Discreet but regular checks will be scheduled to ensure students are following this policy

## 5. Consequences for not following the policy correctly

The school will implement consequences for not adhering to the policy. These will include, but are not limited to, issues such as pouch damage / lost pouch / using a dummy item in the pouch/using a smartphone during school/using a data-connected smart watch.

If a student damages their pouch, is seen with a mobile phone, or their phone is not securely pouched throughout the day, duty staff will collect the phone/pouch and an email home will be sent in order for a parent/carer to collect the phone at the end of the working school day. Alternatively, students can collect their phone themselves at the end of the following school day. The student will receive a consequence, and this will be logged on the SLG as 'Use of mobile phone'. If a student has claimed they do not have a mobile phone but is identified as having one later, this will be logged as 'Lack of Respect' and a sanction will be set.

If a student has deliberately damaged the pouch, this will need to be replaced at a cost of £19. Examples of damage include:

- Ripped fabric
- Cut
- Torn
- Bent/cut pin
- Signs of force to black button on flap.

### **Forgotten pouch:**

If a student forgets their pouch, they must alert their form tutor/Lesson 1 teacher on arrival. Their mobile phone will be collected and securely stored for the school day and school staff will email home to remind the parent / carer of the policy. The phone will be returned to the student at the end of the school day. This will be logged on the SLG as 'Use of mobile phone' and identified as a forgotten pouch but will not receive a behaviour point.

## 6. Exceptions

**Students with Medical Needs:** On receipt of medical evidence to confirm a mobile phone is needed for medical reasons (such as diabetes), a 'medical pouch' will be issued. These look identical to normal pouches, but have no locking mechanism, meaning that mobile phones can still be accessed.

**Students with SEND:** In exceptional circumstances for some students with complex SEN and/or multi agency involvement a headphone pass/check in pass may be considered. Parents/carers requesting a headphone pass/check in pass will need to complete [this Form](#) and will be required to provide evidence from professionals working with or known to the student. Headphone passes/check in passes will need to be

requested by parents/carers on an annual basis. Students cannot self-refer. Forms will be reviewed by a SENDCo, Head of School and year group panel and a response in writing will be sent to the parent or carer. We strongly suggest that alternatives to phones are considered.

Students who may require 'check ins' with home will be able to do this at three points through the day:

1. On arrival at school (8.30-8.40am)
2. Break (In the HUB only)
3. Lunch (In the HUB only)

This will be facilitated and supported by staff from the Pastoral Team.

**Emergency Situations:** In an emergency, students may be allowed to use their phones under staff supervision.

## **7. Staff and Visitor Guidelines**

- **Staff:** Staff are expected to be role models and should limit phone use to necessary situations, or in designated areas such as staff rooms or offices.
- **Visitors:** Visitors, including parents and carers, are asked to turn off or silence mobile phones during school visits to avoid distractions.

## **8. Liability**

The school is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of mobile phones brought onto school premises, or of the Yondr pouches. Students bring mobile phones to school at their own risk.

## **9. Communication with Parents and Carers**

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school reception or pastoral staff rather than their child's mobile phone during school hours for urgent matters.

## **10. Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains effective and aligned with the school's goals and the well-being of students.