



HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

Mobile Phone & Smart Device Policy

Aspiration – Respect – Excellence

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

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HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

Mobile Phone and Smart Device Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Supporting Children with medical Conditions Policy
- Uniform Policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation – Advice for Schools – Department for Education 2022

Rationale

At Highdown School & Sixth Form Centre, we are committed to creating a safe and calm 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 programme <https://www.veryondr.com/>.

We believe that every student deserves the chance to experience a phone-free education and pouches provide a simple, 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.

This policy also brings Highdown School & Sixth Form Centre in line with government plans announced in April 2026 to ban smart phones in schools.

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all students in Years 7-11.

The policy covers phones and wearable tech, e.g:

- Mobile phones (of all types)
- Smart watches (already not permitted in school)
- Wireless earphones (e.g. Air Pods)
- Any smart-enabled or internet-capable wearable technology

All phones and wearable tech must be secured in a Yondr pouch during the school day.

Yondr pouches will also be used during educational visits unless otherwise directed by staff. Trip leaders may authorise temporary access to devices where this supports safety, communication or

educational activities. In these instances, the trip lead will be issued with a handheld unlocking station.

The School accepts no responsibility for devices brought onto site.

Use of Bring Your own Device

The use of students BYoD laptops (years 8-11) can continue to be used at break and lunch. Students using these devices must follow the acceptable use policy. This includes using only the school Wi-Fi and not 'hot-spotting'. The school will continue to review BYoD use at break and lunch.

Daily Process

Students are expected to bring their Yondr pouch every day and ensure that it is in good condition.

Upon arrival to the school site, students will:

- Turn their phone off.
- Unlock their pouch at one of the unlocking stations and make their way to morning line-up or mentor period (year group depending)
- Place their phone and wearable tech inside their Yondr pouch and **lock it in the presence of school staff**
- Keep the pouched phone with them throughout the school day and store it in a backpack or locker.
- At the end of the day the student will unlock their pouch, retrieve their phone and tech, and re-close the pouch to protect the locking mechanism from damage.

Each student will be assigned a numbered pouch, the list of assigned pouches will be kept centrally so that teachers can access it. Students must use their own pouch each day. Pouches will have name cards inserted in the back. These name cards will also contain the pouch number. Students must not remove the name cards or present someone else's pouch as their own during pouch checks.

Procedures & Consequences

Students arriving late (after 9:05am) or leaving school early must report to Reception/Main Office where staff will supervise pouch locking or unlocking of phones and wearable tech. When signing a student in the staff member will update the attendance register and note that pouching has been seen. If a student refuses to pouch or claims not to have a phone a behaviour alert will be recorded.

Students arriving between 8:40am-9:05am will pouch their phones with the members of SLT at the front gate who will sign students in as 'late at the gate'. Students must be onsite before 8:40am as they are expected to be at line-up or in their mentor room when school starts at 8:40am

Forgotten Pouches

If a student forgets their pouch they will:

- Inform their mentor at morning line up/mentor period
- Hand their phone & wearable tech to their mentor
- Their phone & wearable tech will be stored securely in the main office where the student will collect it at the end of the day

If the pouch is repeatedly forgotten it will be treated as a lost pouch and a replacement fee of £18.50 will be charged.

Phones & wearable tech seen during the school day

If a student is found in possession of a phone and or wearable tech **outside their pouch** on school site, the phone and or wearable tech will be confiscated and stored in the main office. The items will be returned once a parent/carer collects it. Consequences will be applied in line with the school behaviour policy.

Searches may be conducted if staff have concerns that a student has a mobile device/wearable tech on them that has not been placed into their sealed pouch.

Damaged Pouches and deliberate circumvention of the Yondr system

Any attempt to tamper with the Yondr system, deliberately damage pouches or avoid pouching procedures, including use or possession of high-strength magnets will be treated as a **serious offence**, potentially resulting in a replacement fee of £18.50, confiscation until a parent/carer picks it up and a sanction, following the behaviour policy, up to and including suspension. Bringing magnets into school with the intention to undermine this policy will result in a fixed term 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 examples 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 following behaviours are examples of what will be considered as deliberate attempts to bypass the school's mobile phone policy:

- Carrying a second phone or other wearable tech
- Placing an inactive or alternative phone into the pouch while retaining another device or hiding a second device on site e.g. in a locker
- Placing an alternative item into the pouch e.g. a calculator
- Deliberately avoiding pouching procedures
- Damaging the name card holder or removing the name card from the pouch
- Covering, altering or in any way making the pouch identity number difficult to read

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

Serious consequences will apply to any student deliberating tampering with, vandalising or damaging unlocking stations.

Random Checks and searches

The school will conduct random checks and searches to ensure that the mobile phone policy is followed.

Random checks on individuals – These will be conducted as part of the schools monitoring and evaluation processes. This random check may take place at any point in the school day. These checks will involve students opening their pouches to show that their phone/wearable tech is secured in the pouch and the pouch is properly locked.

Checks on cohorts - Will be conducted as part of the schools monitoring and evaluation processes. This will involve a cohort of students (e.g. a class or year group) showing that their pouches contain their phones/wearable tech and that the pouches are properly locked.

Searches – Searches of individual students will take place when there is concern that a student is deliberately avoiding pouching procedures or other behaviour that suggests a student has a phone or wearable tech on their person or hidden on site.

Random checks and searches may involve the use of a handheld metal detector (wand).

Pouch identification

All pouches will be numbered and then assigned to individual students. All pouches have credit card size plastic wallet on the back. Each student will be given a card with their name and pouch number clearly written to go in this wallet.

Different coloured cards will be used to indicate the following:

- White - General pouch – no exemptions, phone and wearable tech to be secured inside
- Red - Medical pouch – student has an exemption to be able to use their phone and or a smart watch for medical purposes only. The phone is then returned to the pouch.

- **Yellow** – The student does not own or have parental permission to have a mobile device in school. Or only brings a phone to school on certain days. The student is still required to bring their pouch daily and present it in line-up and mentor period or at other points when requested. The pastoral team will check with parents on a termly basis to ensure that it remains the case that the student does not own a phone or have permission to bring a phone to school. These cards will be signed and dated to confirm when the last pastoral check was made.

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 0118 901 5800. We will then pass this message onto your child.

Medical Conditions

Students who require access to their mobile device for specific medical purposes will be provided with a medical pouch. These pouches are closed using Velcro. Phones should be kept in the pouch and only removed as required for medical checks.

In these cases, individual arrangements will be agreed based on medical need. This may include:

- supervised access arrangements
- the ability to check at any point

Reasonable adjustments will be considered on an individual basis in consultation with:

- the student
- Parents/carers
- SENDCo
- Head of Achievement
- Safeguarding team

Parents/carers wishing to request a medical exemption should contact their child's Head of Achievement. An Health Care Plan, (HCP) will need to be completed (appendix 1).

Medical exemptions will be recorded on Provision Map (which writes to ClassCharts) and is also indicated by a coloured name card on the back of the pouch. This card will indicate a medical exemption and not the student's medical details.

Exemptions for students with an Individual Health Care Plan (HCP) will be reviewed annually, usually in the summer term in preparation for the following academic year. Students with a short-term HCP will have their exemptions reviewed in line with their short-term HCP.

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. For example, in the event of a lockdown the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will formulate messages to parents/carers as appropriate to the incident and follow the communication process as described in the Emergency Protocol (HSP111).

Staff responsibilities

All staff are expected to:

- Promote the positives of having a learning environment free of distraction
- apply the policy consistently and fairly
- challenge non-compliance
- supervise locking/unlocking procedures
- record incidents appropriately on ClassCharts
- apply consequences consistently
- refer serious incidents to pastoral teams or SLT

Parent/carers responsibilities

Parents/carers are expected to:

- support the school policy and promote the positives of having a learning environment free of distraction
- avoid contacting students directly during the school day
- reinforce expectations at home
- ensure replacement costs are paid where applicable

The success of the policy depends upon strong partnership between school and home.

Parents/carers must not send messages to their child's device during the school day. Messages sent during school hours will not be received until end of day and may cause distraction if the student attempts to access their device in breach of this policy. Parents/carers are asked to contact the school office for any urgent communication.

Initial Policy Rollout and induction of new students/cohorts

During the initial period of implementation and at the start of academic years with new cohorts:

- additional staff will supervise unlocking stations
- reminders and guidance will be prioritised
- students will receive support on correct pouch use
- additional mobile unlocking stations may be deployed
- consequences may be phased proportionately where appropriate

Following the rollout period and induction of new cohorts annually, full sanctions and procedures will apply consistently.

Monitoring and evaluating the policy

The mobile phone and smart device policy will be reviewed annually by the Deputy Headteacher (Operations and Staff Culture). The policy will be reviewed in conjunction with other relevant policies including the Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the GLF Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy.

Sixth Form

Sixth form students will be exempt from using Yondr Pouches to aid their preparation for working life where they will need to use their technology responsibly. Sixth form students can only use their devices in the sixth form study room or in a class at the direction of their teacher. Sixth form students must never use their phones while walking around the school site.

From September 2026 sixth form students will have the option to lock their mobile phones away while in school so that they can have the opportunity to study without the distraction of their phone. Any sixth form students not following our expectations regarding phone use will be instructed to use the phone lockers by the sixth form pastoral team.

Appendix 1: GLF Health and Care Plan (HCP)

Name of school/setting

Child's name

Group/class/form

Date of birth

Child's address

Medical diagnosis or condition

Date

Review date

Family Contact Information

Name

Phone no. (work)

(home)

(mobile)

Name

Relationship to child

Phone no. (work)

(home)

(mobile)

Clinic/Hospital Contact

Name

Phone no.

G.P.

Name

Phone no.

Who is responsible for providing support in school (named staff)

Describe medical needs and give details of child's symptoms, triggers, signs, treatments, facilities, equipment or devices, environmental issues etc

Name of medication, dose, method of administration, when to be taken, side effects, contra-indications, administered by/self-administered with/without supervision

Daily care requirements

Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs

Arrangements for school visits/trips etc

Other information

Describe what constitutes an emergency, and the action to take if this occurs

Who is responsible in an emergency (*state if different for off-site activities*)

Plan developed with

Staff training needed/undertaken - who, what, when

Form copied to

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In addition to the prescribed medication detailed above, I hereby give consent for the administration of the generic emergency anaphylaxis medication or salbutamol inhaler held by the school if required in an emergency.

Signed by parent / carer :

Date:

