Pathway Trust

Mobile Phone Policy

Policy effective from	1 September 2026
Policy owner	Director of Inclusion
Policy applies to	Downend School Mangotsfield School Marlwood School Priory Community School The Castle School The King Alfred School Worle Community School
Policy changes since last version	New policy

1. Background

1.1 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.

2. Secondary schools

3.1 In order to support our goal of promoting a focused and distraction-free learning environment whilst encouraging responsible use of technology, we have introduced a mobile phone procedure that incorporates the Yondr programme https://www.overyondr.com/.

3.2 We believe that every student deserves the chance to experience a phone-free education and Yondr 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.

3. Student Phone Procedure & Guidelines

3.1 Our school is a phone-free community. 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 dismissal.

5. Daily Process

5.1 Upon arrival, students will:

- Turn their phone off or switch it to airplane mode.
- 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 bag or locker.

5.2 At dismissal, 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.

5.3 Students arriving late or leaving early will pouch/unpouch their phones in reception or other designated space allocated by the individual school.

5.4 Any student leaving the school site during the school day will be able to unlock their phone at reception or the other designated space allocated by the individual school.

6. Procedures and Sanctions

6.1 Payment for pouches

We strongly believe that becoming phone free during the school day will benefit student wellbeing. Parents and carers will be asked to provide a voluntary donation of £15.60 towards the cost of the pouch. There will be options for those parents that feel very strongly about wanting the school to be a phone free environment to donate more than the £15.60. These donations will enable the schools to continue to put this solution in place.

Donations/payments can be made via the school payment system.

6.2 Children who do not own a phone

Each child will still be allocated a pouch and be part of the morning procedures. Parents can speak on an individual basis to the school and declare formally in writing that their child does not have a phone. Forms for this declaration will be available from the school. These students will have a pass that can fit into the phone case. Students will still be checked for a phone in line with all procedures below.

If a student is found with a phone after declaring they do not have one, this will be deemed a serious incident and the sanction will move immediately to a suspension.

6.3 Late Arrivals & Early Dismissals

Students arriving late or leaving early must pouch/unpouch their phones and wearable tech at the main school reception (or other designated area).

6.4 Forgotten Pouches

The student's phone will be collected and securely stored by the school until the end of the day. Parents/ carers will be contacted and reminded of the procedures. If the pouch is repeatedly forgotten their pouch will be treated as lost and a replacement fee of £15.60 will be charged.

6.5 Phone Use During the School Day

If a student is found in possession of a phone outside their pouch on school site the phone will be confiscated and stored by the school. The phone will be returned once the child has completed their detention and a parent/guardian collects it. Repeat incidents will result in escalation of sanction.

In certain rare circumstances, as deemed fit and necessary by the school, the school may return the mobile device to the child after a parental discussion and ensuring the student will complete their sanction.

Where staff have reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is in possession of a mobile phone in breach of this policy, the school may exercise its statutory search powers in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

6.6 **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 £15.60, confiscation until a parent/guardian picks it up and 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 pouch should not be used as a replacement for a protective case and/or screen protector on a mobile device.

7. Emergencies and Safeguarding

7.1 Communications During the School Day. Parents/ carers who need to contact their child during the school day should do so via the school. Contact details are available on each school website. The school will then pass this message onto your child.

7.2 Medical Conditions. Students who require access to their mobile devices for specific medical purposes (such as diabetes) will be provided with a medical pouch.

7.3 **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. Each school will ensure that portable unlocking devices are considered as part of their evacuation plans.