



9th September 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Yondr Mobile Phone Pouch in support of a phone FREE school

This letter contains lots of important information on a new change we are bringing in, so we thought it would be helpful to summarise the key ideas. There are plenty of further details below:

- We are making Colton Hills Community School a **phone-free environment**.
- This will involve the use of lockable pouches that are opened and closed at the start and end of school each day.
- This will come at no cost to you unless your child damages or loses their pouch.

We are mindful that the government has recently issued guidance on prohibiting mobile phones in school which can be found at : <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mobile-phones-in-schools>.

We are aware of increasing concerns about the impact of mobile phones on the mental health and academic achievement of young people, concerns shared by many of our parents, students and staff. Due to this we feel strongly as a school community that the use of electronic devices and mobile phones (other than Colton Hills devices to support learning) are prohibited during the school day.

Interesting facts

Yondr recently surveyed over 900 school partners to measure the effects of creating phone-free educational environments. These schools achieved notable progress in multiple areas:

- **65% of schools saw an improvement in academic performance**
- **74% of schools saw an improvement in student behaviour**
- **83% of schools saw an improvement in student engagement in the classroom**
- **86% of schools saw a positive impact on student safety and wellness**

Whilst we recognise the benefits these approaches can bring, we also appreciate that they bring issues with them. Many parents and carers need to be able to contact their children on the journey to and from school, and whole-school hand-in systems can be time consuming and result in the loss or damage of expensive devices. Over the past few months, we have been working to develop an approach that:

- 1) Makes Colton Hills a phone-free space, with all the related benefits to teaching and learning, wellbeing and mental health.
- 2) Enables students to carry a mobile phone, should their parent/carers want them to, on the journey to and from school, but must be securely locked away during the school working day.



- 3) Avoids mass hand-in systems, with all of the practical problems they entail. During the autumn term (September/October we will be launching the mobile phone pouch system. This system has been implemented successfully in over 3,000 schools across 21 countries.

Next Steps

Tuesday 9th September 2025 - share new approach with students, followed by weekly reminders in assembly for each year group launch.

We have selected this option as we believe it is in the best interests of all our children to become a phone free school. Should you need to get hold of your child in an emergency, please contact reception on **01902 558 420** and we will work quickly to relay messages and facilitate contact. We will continue to monitor our procedures and amend further should we feel it is the appropriate cause of action at Colton Hills.

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank you for your continued support in promoting our high standards and for ensuring your child meets our school's expectations daily.

I would ask that you discuss this important and permanent change with your child to ensure a smooth transition. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Winward
Deputy Headteacher





Frequently asked questions

How does this system work?

All students are assigned a pouch with a magnetic locking system. As they arrive at school, students switch off and secure their mobile phone in the pouch. They will not be able to access it until their pouches are opened at the end of the school day. Form Tutors will check these daily at morning registration at 8.30am.

Do I have to pay for the pouch?

No – we will provide all students with their first pouch free of charge. A cost of £15 will be incurred if your child damages or loses the pouch as this is a direct on-cost from the school to you for a replacement.

What if my child does not have a mobile phone?

The pouch is going to become part of our uniform and equipment policy, and so your child should carry a pouch in their bag even if they do not carry a mobile phone. It may sometimes be used to ask students to store other small items we may have previously confiscated and returned e.g. Jewelry, air pods etc.

What if my child loses or damages the pouch?

Pouches will be named by the students themselves in the viewing window, and so we hope that they will generally be returned if lost. It will be your child's responsibility to take care of the pouch. If they do lose or damage the pouch, they will be asked to cover the cost of a replacement at £15 as referenced above.

What will happen if my child refuses to hand in their electronic device/mobile phone?

This is something we all want to avoid and as such we will also have an escalated approach to this:

restorative>reflection room>suspension

Please encourage your child to not use their device in school to avoid the above escalation.

How will I contact my child during the school day?

There should be no need to contact your child during the school day except for in emergency situations. Should this be the case please contact the school receptionist.

What if there is an urgent need for my child to use their mobile phone?

There should not be any situation where students need to use their mobile phones, but if there is a genuine reason then they will be directed to use the phone in Reception or in their Head of Year office.

External Appointments

If your child has an appointment e.g. hospital, dentist etc., and needs to leave school early, you should:



1. Notify the school in advance of an upcoming appointment.
2. Remind your child what time they need to leave school.

Illness/First Aid

If your child is unwell or requires First Aid, parents/carers will be telephoned by the school as usual.

Detentions after school

Children will be able to unlock their pouch after detention. Parents will have access to Class Charts via the app and therefore will be able to track and monitor if their son / daughter has a detention after school.

After School Clubs

Unlocking stations will be available at the end of the school day for children to access.

Will my child's phone be safe?

Students are in possession of their phone - in their pouch - for the entire school day. We will advise students to store the pouch in their backpacks where it is completely safe.

My child is in Sixth Form – will they have to use a pouch?

No, Sixth Form students will not be issued with a pouch. The school rule applies from previous years in that we must see or hear mobile phones and students should keep this in their safe keeping for use before and after school.

What would happen if my child does not use the pouch, and is found with a mobile phone whilst on the school site?

As this is becoming part of our Standard Operating Procedures it is important that all children follow these rules. As such we will increase the sanction for the breaking of these rules. Should a child be seen with their mobile phone whilst on the school site, the phone will be confiscated and will only be returned when a parent/carer comes to collect it.

What happens if my child forgets their pouch?

As this will now form part of the formal uniform policy, failure to bring their pouch will result in the phone being confiscated, it will be returned at the end of the school day.

What happens if a student forgets to open their pouch at the end of the day?

In Yondr's experience, this almost never happens. All students funnel past the unlocking stations at the exits, and as they often want their phones back they rarely don't forget to unlock their pouches. If they do arrive home with a phone in a pouch, they can either come back to school to unlock it or have a phone free evening!

How quick is the unlocking process?

The unlocking process is quick and takes under a second per student. While students are still getting used to how to unlock pouches, staff will be on hand with mobile unlocking stations to stop queues forming in the first few weeks. If needed, we will add extra unlocking points.

How can I help my child reduce their reliance on their mobile phone during the school day?



Make sure they have a copy of their timetable. Please ensure that your child's Parent Pay is kept topped up. Check MS Teams each evening for home learning and other key notices.

How can I find out more about this initiative?

We would also recommend reading the Anxious Generation and reviewing their website <https://www.anxiousgeneration.com/> for more information on why this policy is so important.

How the pouches work.



As students enter school, they place their phone in their assigned Yondr Pouch.



Students close and secure their Pouch, keeping it on them throughout the day.



When leaving school, students tap their Pouch on a Base to retrieve their phone.

