



Dear Parent/Carer

WE'RE GOING PHONE-FREE WITH YONDR

At Willingdon Community School, we're 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 off line. This presents many exciting opportunities – but also academic, emotional and social challenges.

Beginning from **Term 6, Monday 1st June 2026**, we will launch the [Yondr Phone-Free Schools Programme](#). This isn't just about limiting screen time, it's about giving students the space to think deeply, engage meaningfully, and thrive in an environment designed for their growth.

For over a decade, Yondr has supported schools in more than 40 countries to build healthier, more engaging school cultures. Their pouch-based programme, combined with hands-on guidance and dedicated support, has led to powerful results:

- 86% reported improved safety and student wellness
- 84% saw increased engagement in class
- 44% reduced behavioral referrals

How the Programme Works

Each student will be required to purchase a Yondr pouch—a secure, lockable case for storing personal devices. Payment can be made payable via ParentPay and pouches for Year 10 students will be charged at £10 each. This will act as a **deposit scheme** for students, and can be paid for, via ParentPay, from Monday 13th April 2026, and will be distributed to students on the first day of Term 6, Monday 1st June 2026 in Coaching Time. **All payments are due by Friday 15th May 2026.**

As stated above, due to your child being in Year 10, we are requesting a deposit payment for the pouch. Once the pouch is returned at the end of the academic year (end of Year 11), in a good, working condition, the deposit will be returned back to parents/carers in Term 6 2027. The final decision of the condition of the pouch will be made by school staff.

Students are responsible for bringing their pouch to and from school each day, and keeping it in good condition, as they would any item of school uniform.

After the 1st June 2026:

- **Upon arrival:** Students power off all smart technology including their mobile phones and smart watches, place all devices in the pouch, and lock it in front of a member of school staff.
- **During the day:** Students keep the locked pouch in their bag/backpack etc.
- **At the end of the school day:** Students unlock pouches at designated stations to retrieve their devices.

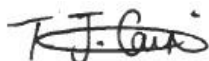
This process is quick, simple, and will be supervised by school staff as part of our daily routine.

Staying Connected

With student safety as our top priority, we will follow our standard safety protocols in the event of an emergency. If you need to reach your child during the school day, please contact our main office at 01323 485254 ext 200 or Student Support on 01323 485254 ext 266.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to create a focused, present, and positive school environment for every student.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Tom Cain

Assistant Headteacher

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Frequently Asked Questions

Morning and Afternoon Procedures

How quick is the unlocking process?

The unlocking process is quick and students typically will take a few seconds to do this. 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.

What if my child arrives late or needs to be dismissed early?

Main Reception and Student Support will have an unlocking device for students to monitor students arriving late or leaving early.

Will my child's phone be safe?

Students are in possession of their phone - in their Yondr pouch - for the entire school day. We will advise students to store the pouch safely in their bags/backpacks etc. While the Yondr pouch will provide some protection, it's not a protective case, so students should continue to handle their phones with the same care they normally would to prevent damage.

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 they typically want their phones back. 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!

What happens if a student forgets to bring in their pouch?

The student's phone will be collected and securely stored in 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 £17** will be charged. We suggest that students leave the pouches in their school bags and pouches should stay in the locked position when not at school.

Daily Pouch Use

What if my child needs their phone for medical reasons?

We have an alternative solution for the small number of students who require their phones for medical reasons (e.g. diabetes). We will be in touch with these families if they have informed us of their medical condition and will require evidence from a medical professional.

My child currently doesn't bring a phone to school, how will this work for them?

Please send an email to Tom Cain TCain@willingdonschool.org.uk and he will be in touch to discuss next steps.

What happens if a phone is seen outside of a pouch?

If a student is found in possession of a phone **outside their pouch** on the school site, the phone will be confiscated and returned to them at the end of the school day. If this is a repeated offence, the confiscated phone will need collection from a parent/carer, rather than the student.

Bag searches may also be conducted if staff have concerns that a student has a mobile phone on them, that hasn't been placed into their pouch.

What if the Yondr pouch gets damaged?

Any attempt to tamper with the Yondr system, will be treated as a serious offence, potentially resulting in a replacement fee of £17, plus confiscation of their device until collected by a parent/carer and/or further sanctions.

If accidental damage occurs, students must report this immediately. If damage is discovered during checks and has not been reported, it may be considered intentional. Students will be provided guidelines to lock their pouch when they leave school, to avoid any accidental damage.

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

We will be conducting random pouch/spot checks over the full academic year, to assess the condition of pouches.

Emergencies

What if there is a school emergency?

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.

Any further questions not answered above, should be sent to tcain@willingdonschool.org.uk