



## Student Mobile Phone Policy

### Background

At Thomas Hardy 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 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 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.

### Student Phone Policy & Guidelines

**Our school is a phone-free community.** All parents who wish their child to bring a phone to school, will need to purchase a Yondr pouch at a cost of £20 (£10 for students in receipt of pupil premium). Should the pouch be kept undamaged and in good condition by the end of year 11, we will offer parents and carers a refund of half the cost of the pouch in the form of a supermarket voucher. 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.**

### Daily Process

Upon arrival, students will:

- 1) Turn their phone off or switch it to airplane mode.

- 2) Place their phone and wearable tech inside their Yondr pouch and lock it **in the presence of school staff**.
- 3) Keep the pouched phone with them throughout the school day and **store it in a backpack or locker**.

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.

**Note:** Students arriving late or leaving early will pouch/unpouch their phones in the Main Office when they sign in or out.

Students leaving the school site for trips will unpouch their phones with a member of staff prior to leaving the site.

## **Procedures and Sanctions**

### **Late Arrivals/Early Dismissals**

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

### **Forgotten Pouches**

The student's phone will be collected and securely stored in the office 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 £20 will be charged.

### **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 in the main office. The phone will be returned following a meeting with parent/carer (usually the following day). Repeated possession of a phone outside the school pouch will result in the phone being confiscated for longer periods and kept in the school safe. Parents will be required to collect it at the end of the period.

Searches may be conducted if teachers have concerns that a student has a mobile device on them that hasn't been placed into their pouch.

## 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 £20, 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.

## 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 01305 266064. We will then pass this message onto your child.

### Medical Conditions

Students who require access to their mobile devices for specific medical purposes will be provided with a medical pouch.

### **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.

Senior leadership will bring a portable unlocking station with them if it is in grasp and safe to do so. They will assist in unlocking pouches if it is safe to do so.