



Phone-Free Schooling at Rednock School

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

May 2026

Rednock School

Where everyone matters



Phone-Free Schooling at Rednock School

Overview

At Rednock School, we want the best for our students. While we value the positive role technology can play in learning, there is growing evidence showing that mobile phones in school can negatively affect children's attention, behaviour, and overall wellbeing.

To help our students focus on their learning and protect their mental health, Rednock School will become a phone-free environment for Years 7–11 from September 2026.

What's Happening Nationally?

Since we first began planning this change, the national conversation around phones in schools has moved quickly. We are proud to say that Rednock is ahead of this curve, and our new policy perfectly aligns with upcoming proposed changes across England:

- **Government Guidance:** The Department for Education now states that all schools should be mobile phone-free by default. See latest guidance [here](#).
- **New Law on the Horizon?** The government is currently introducing legislation via the [Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill](#) to make smartphone bans in schools a **legal requirement**.
- **Stronger Measures:** The government has moved away from the "not seen, not heard" guidance. Instead, they are backing stronger measures - specifically mentioning the use of magnetically sealed pouches as a possible approach
- **Ofsted Compliance:** Ofsted has announced that school mobile phone policies will now be actively monitored during inspections.

How Will It Work at Rednock School?

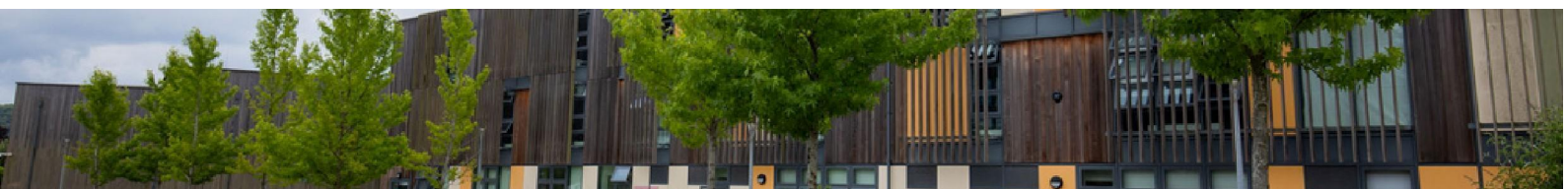
From the moment students register in the morning until the end of the day, mobile phones are not allowed to be used by students in Year 7-11. We are introducing Focus Pouches to make this rule simple, fair, achievable and consistent for everyone:

1. **Arriving at School:** As soon as students enter their morning tutor period, they will place their mobile phone inside their personal Focus Pouch, secure it shut, and put it inside their school bag.
2. **During the Day:** The phone stays locked inside the pouch and in their bag all day.
3. **Going Home:** At the end of the school day, students will unlock their pouches using special unlocking stations located in every classroom.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

We have been working closely with other schools, suppliers, our Parent Forum, Governors and our Student Council to anticipate the questions you might have. We have created a helpful FAQ guide to give you all the details you need well ahead of the official launch in September.

We hope you find this document useful. people



Focus Pouch FAQs

The Basics: Rules & Daily Routine

How is the mobile phone policy changing?

- **Old Policy:** Phones had to be switched off and kept out of sight in school bags.
- **New Policy (From 1st September 2026):** Phones must be switched off and locked inside a secure **Focus Pouch**, which is then kept inside the student's school bag for the entire day.

When will students get their Focus Pouch?

All students in Years 7–11 will be given their pouch on their first day of school in September 2026, and they will sign to confirm they received it. The first pouch is provided **free of charge**.

What is the daily routine for locking phones away?

- **Morning Routine:** As students enter the school site the mobile phone should not be seen or heard. Duty staff in the morning will actively remind and encourage this for those onsite early. However, for consistency, as soon as students enter their tutor room at the start of the day, they will put their phone inside their focus pouch, unlocked, and place it on their desk so their tutor can check for compliance with this clear expectation.
- **Late Arrivals:** If a student arrives late to school, the staff at the attendance gate will check that their phone is securely locked in its pouch before they are allowed to enter the school site. This will also be the routine for this signing in late via reception.
- **During the Day:** The phone must remain in the locked pouch throughout the day and should stay inside the student's school bag - unless a student is checking their paper timetable on the front. Senior staff will carry out regular spot checks in lessons.

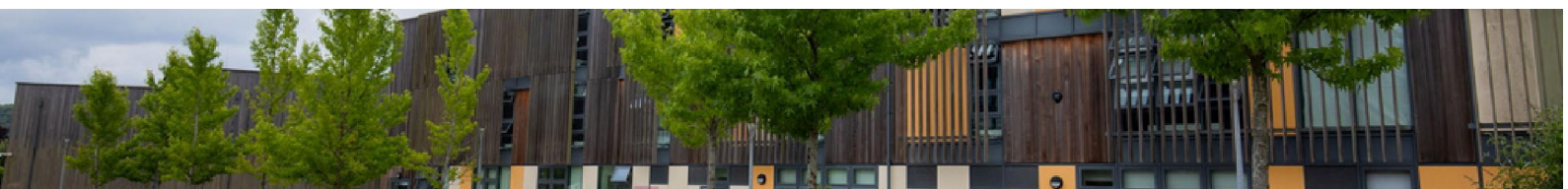
Where and how do students unlock their pouches at the end of the day?

Pouches are unlocked using special magnetic unlocking stations. These are located in:

- Lockable boxes mounted on the walls of **all classrooms**.
- The main School Reception.
- Strategic locations near external exits.

What if my child leaves school late due to an after-school club, revision, or detention?

- **Clubs & Revision:** Teachers leading these sessions will have a mobile unlocking dock. Students can also use the wall stations in the classroom or at the school exits.
- **Detention:** The member of staff supervising detention will have a mobile station to unlock pouches when the detention is finished.



How will after-school trips and sports fixtures work?

Phones will remain locked in pouches during school trips unless there is a specific, pre-approved reason they are required. Trip leaders will carry a portable unlocking device in their school trip kits and will use their professional judgment if a situation arises where students need access to their phones.

What happens if a student forgets their pouch?

If a student leaves their pouch at home, they will be expected to hand their phone into the school 'Hub' and will have their phone locked in a secure locker which we have installed as part of this project. There may be circumstances where we are able to issue a loan pouch for the day. If this applies, just like loan uniform items, this must be returned before they leave at the end of the day.

What if a pouch is accidentally locked while empty?

When empty, pouches should always be left open. If a student accidentally locks an empty pouch at home, they can simply unlock it using the station in their tutor room first thing in the morning.

How do you ensure a student hasn't brought a second "dummy" phone to school?

While we cannot search every bag daily, we will be running random spot-checks. We ask for parents' support in ensuring that students are respecting the policy and leaving secondary devices at home.

What sanctions will be put in place if a student breaks the rules?

If a student is found with their phone on school grounds not in a focus pouch, it will be treated as a serious breach of school rules (Level 3). In most cases, this will result in an internal suspension from lessons until the student agrees to comply with the policy. We will work closely with parents to resolve these situations.



Communication & Safety

How can I contact my child during the school day?

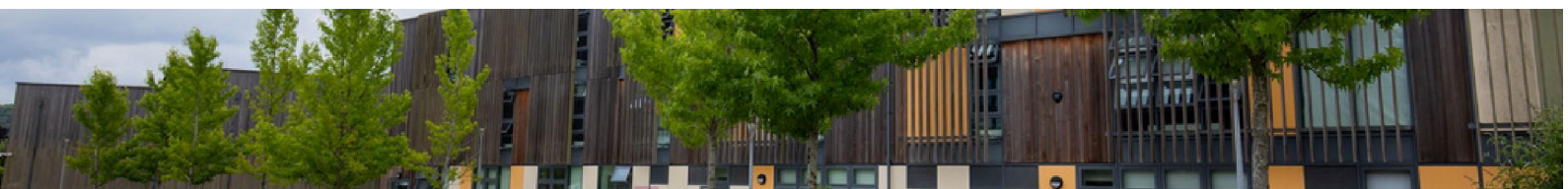
Please call the main School Reception. Our administration team will ensure that any urgent messages are passed on to your child promptly.

What if my child needs to contact me, or is feeling unwell/upset?

Students should go to the Hub or School Reception and speak to a member of staff first. We have clear procedures to support students who are unwell or distressed. If our First Aid or pastoral team assesses that your child needs to speak with you or be collected, **we will contact you directly.**

What happens if there is a critical incident or emergency at school?

Student safety is our absolute priority. Every single teaching space in the school is equipped with an unlocking station. In the unlikely event of a critical emergency where phone access is necessary, staff will immediately direct students to unlock their phones.



Medical & Special Circumstances

What if my child has a medical need that requires a mobile phone?

If your child relies on their phone to monitor a medical condition (for example, diabetes tracking apps), they will be issued a special **Medical Focus Pouch**. This version allows them to view and access their device whenever necessary. Medical evidence for this need will be required.

My child uses their phone to support their mental health. Will they be allowed access?

Research heavily indicates that mobile phones can negatively impact mental health and often worsen the anxiety challenges young people face.

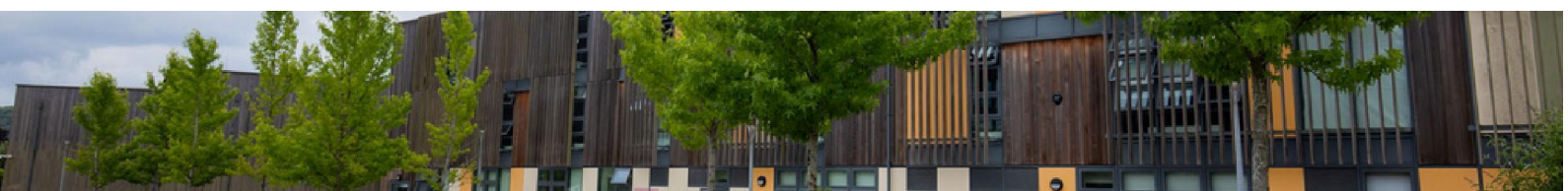
To ensure fairness and support your child's wellbeing, the standard rules apply to all students. Devices must be locked away unless a certified medical expert explicitly advises the school in writing that your child requires phone access during the day.

How will students see their timetable without their phones?

Students will be given a printed copy of their timetable twice a year. The Focus Pouch features a clear visibility pocket on the front specifically designed for students to slide their timetable into.

Will phones ever be used in lessons (e.g. Art or Photography)?

We recognise that specific subjects, like Art Photography, benefit from using phone cameras or editing apps. Photography and Art classrooms will have their own unlocking stations. Teachers may allow students to unlock their phones to transfer project work when appropriate. Teachers will ensure all phones are locked back into pouches before students leave the department.



Technology, Damage & Costs

Do the magnets used in the Focus Pouches damage mobile phones?

No. We have verified this directly with our supplier, who successfully works with numerous other schools. However, please note that the pouches are not heavy-duty protective cases; students should still treat their phones with the usual care.

What about smartwatches?

Standard smartwatches will effectively become unusable for messaging and social media, as the Focus Pouch blocks the Bluetooth connection to the phone.

Who pays for a lost or damaged pouch?

- **Lost or Intentionally Damaged Pouches:** If a student loses their pouch or damages it on purpose, it must be replaced just like any other piece of required school uniform or equipment. Replacement pouches cost **£15** and can be purchased directly from the school.
- **Damage by another student:** If a pouch is proven to be wilfully damaged by another student, the replacement cost will be passed on to that student's family.
- **Unintentional/Manufacturing Damage:** Every pouch comes with a manufacturer's warranty. We will work directly with our supplier to replace any faulty or naturally degraded equipment free of charge.

Community, Staff & Funding

Do staff and Sixth Form students have to pouch their phones?

Staff and Sixth Form students will not be required to use pouches, but they are expected to model our phone-free principles:

- **Sixth Form:** May only use phones in designated "Phone Zones" (Study Atrium & Common Room).
- **Staff:** Will restrict phone use to staff offices, away from corridors and classrooms. (Exceptions apply to operational staff who use mobile devices for school communication and site management).

How is Rednock School paying for this project?

We are incredibly grateful to the Dursley United Charity, who generously donated the vast majority of the start-up **costs** for this initiative. This incredible community support has allowed us to implement this system without diverting vital funds away from our students' everyday curriculum and classroom resources.

