

Phone-Free Policy

From 1st September 2026

Why phone-free in schools?

- To create a focused, present, and positive school environment for every student.
- To create an inclusive learning environment where every student can thrive.
- Young people live in an increasingly complex world, living more of their lives online. While this presents many exciting opportunities, it also creates academic, emotional and social challenges, which can be very harmful to young people.
- **A new law from Government states all schools with students aged between 5 and 16 years old must be mobile phone-free environments.**

Changes to our phone-free policy

- “NOT SEEN, NOT HEARD, NOT TAKEN” will **not change**, but **we are adding** an extra layer to safeguard this.



NOT SEEN



NOT HEARD



NOT TAKEN AWAY

Changes to our phone-free policy

- **From 1st September, all students in years 7 to 11 must own a lockable phone pouch.**
- This will completely prevent any use of mobile phones and smart devices during the school day.
- No phone pouch, then no phone /smart device will be allowed in the Academy.



How it works

- Each student must purchase a phone pouch from the Academy.
- The phone pouch is a secure, lockable case for storing personal devices.
- Students are responsible for bringing their pouch to and from the Academy each day and keeping it in good condition.



How it works

Upon arrival: Students **power off** all smart technology including their mobile phones and smart watches, **place all devices** in their pouch, and **lock it in front of a tutor/teacher**.



How it works

During the day: Students keep their locked pouch in their bag or locker. Staff will ask to check their pouches through the day.



How it works

At dismissal: Students unlock their pouch at designated stations to retrieve their devices. The phone (and pouch) is taken home by the student ready for the next school day.

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



Having parental contact during the day

All communication should happen through the Academy.
Parents/Carers can call the Academy to pass on messages to students.

Equally, if students have something they think urgently needs to be communicated to parents, then we will have a process for this through their tutor or head of year.

Parent/Carers will continue to be contacted in the event of any emergency.

Frequently asked questions

How much do the phone pouches cost?

The cost of each pouch is **£18**.

Students who are on **Free School Meals** will be eligible to purchase the pouches at a **reduced cost of £15**. Payment plans can be agreed. Parents/Carers should contact the Finance team.

Frequently asked questions

How do I purchase a phone pouch?

Pouches for enrolled students can be purchased through **ParentPay**, in the same way that a replacement tie, lanyard or ID card can be purchased.

Unfortunately, the Academy **will not** be able to accept cash payments.

Frequently asked questions

How do I purchase a phone pouch?

Families of incoming Year 7 students currently in Year 6, or of new students in other year groups enrolling in September 2026, can purchase a pouch through any of the following ways:

1. Bank transfer to the Academy's bank account using the following details:
 - **Bank Name:** Barclays Bank
 - **Sort Code:** 20-46-81
 - **Account number:** 90511498
 - **Reference:** Your child's full name

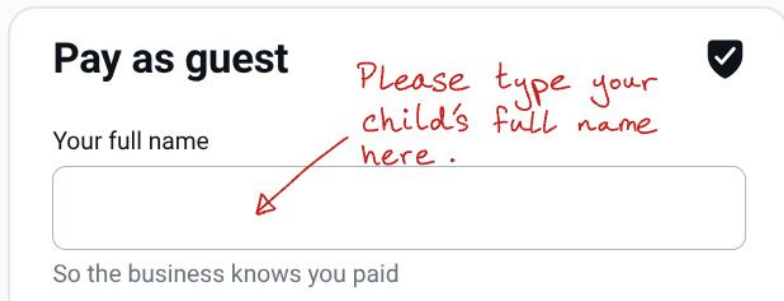
Frequently asked questions

How do I purchase a phone pouch?

2. Payment in person at the Academy using a Credit/Debit Card
3. Payment online using the following links. Where it asks for **"Your full name"** under the "Pay as guest" heading, please type **your child's full name**.

Frequently asked questions

How do I purchase a phone pouch?



The screenshot shows a 'Pay as guest' payment form. It includes a title 'Pay as guest' with a shield icon, a label 'Your full name', and a text input field. A handwritten red note says 'Please type your child's full name here.' with an arrow pointing to the input field. Below the field is the text 'So the business knows you paid'.

Pay as guest 

Your full name

Please type your child's full name here.

So the business knows you paid

- Link to pay the full price of £18 - pay.sumup.com/b2c/QXTBHFY5
- Link to pay the reduced price of £15 for students on Free School Meals - pay.sumup.com/b2c/QIXP81KS

Frequently asked questions

I am not sure if my child has / will have Free School Meals at the Academy. What should I do?

If your child is already enrolled at the Academy, then please contact our finance team on 020 7449 3080 (Option 5) or email them at finance@uclacademy.co.uk and they will let you know. You can also check with your local authority. You may already have correspondence from them with the information you need.

If your child is about to join the Academy in September 2026, then you can check with your child's current school. You can also check with your local authority. You may already have correspondence from them with the information you need.

Frequently asked questions

I am not sure if my child has / will have Free School Meals at the Academy. What should I do?

For students still in primary school where all children are automatically entitled to free school meals, so you may not have made an application for financial support, please contact your school or local authority for information on how to apply. For residents of Camden, you can apply using this link - www.camden.gov.uk/free-school-meals.

Frequently asked questions

I am not sure if my child has / will have Free School Meals at the Academy. What should I do?

Ideally, please purchase your pouch once you are sure of your child's free school meals status. **If there is any doubt, or it is getting close to the purchase deadline, then please pay the full price and the Academy will refund you** if your application for free school meals is later successful.

Frequently asked questions

When do purchases need to be made?

Purchases must be made **before 1st September 2026** so that we can prepare the pouches for students when the new academic year starts.

Frequently asked questions

I am having difficulty making payment through any of the methods listed. What should I do?

Please contact our finance team on 020 7449 3080 (Option 5) or email them at finance@uclacademy.co.uk and they will endeavour to help you. If emailing, please provide screenshots of any error messages you encounter during the payment process.

Frequently asked questions

How does a student receive their phone pouch once purchased?

Once payment has been received, students will receive their phone pouch on their year group's first day of the new academic year in September 2026.

Frequently asked questions

My child(ren) does not bring a phone to school; will I need to purchase a pouch?

If they never intend to bring a phone to school, then parents/carers will need to complete [this form](#) (a link is also on the website in the Parents menu) and return it to the Academy.

Frequently asked questions

What happens if a pouch is purchased after 1st September 2026?

The student will receive their pouch in the same way as they receive a replacement tie or lanyard. They inform reception that a pouch has been paid for and the reception team will support them with obtaining their pouch from the finance team. The next day, the student will be allowed to bring their phone to the Academy.

Frequently asked questions

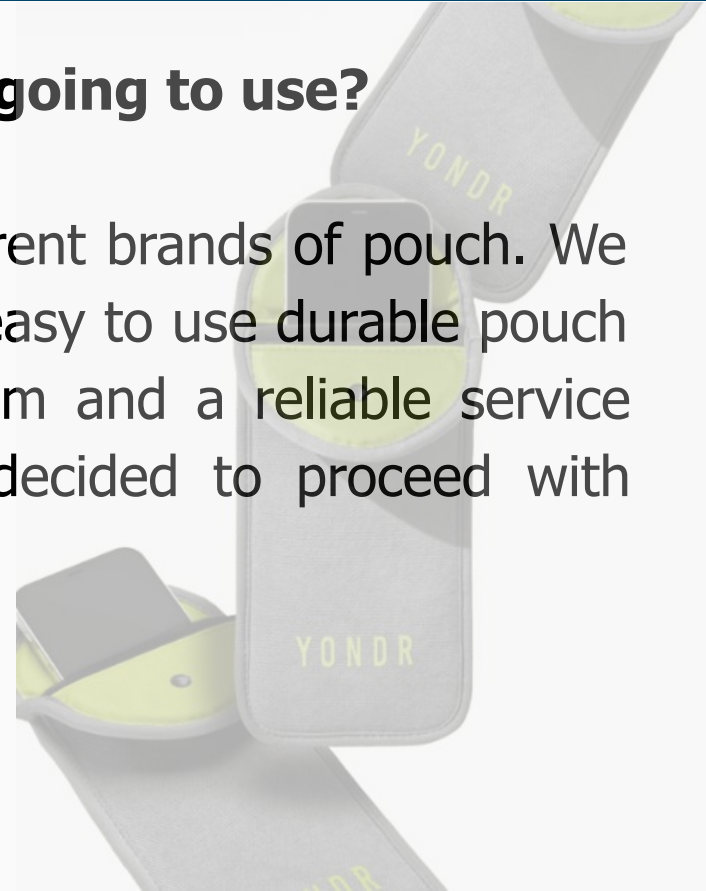
Can siblings or friends share one pouch?

Due to the need to supervise each student placing their phone in their phone pouch and locking it, it would be impractical to manage this if more than one student was using the same pouch. Additionally, while the pouches are big enough to fit a phone, smartwatch and earpods, students may struggle to fit another phone and accessories into it.

Frequently asked questions

What brand of pouch is the Academy going to use?

The Academy tested and reviewed 5 different brands of pouch. We looked for a reputable brand that had an easy to use durable pouch with a strong and safe locking mechanism and a reliable service support team behind it. The Academy decided to proceed with **Yondr** pouches (www.veryondr.com).



Frequently asked questions

Were there any cheaper phone pouches or alternatives?

There were cheaper pouches and cases from other brands. However, the Academy felt they were either of a lower quality or had a design not suited to our setting, and would likely cost parents and carers more money in the long term.

Frequently asked questions

Is the Academy making any profit from the sale of phone pouches?

The Academy is **not** making any profit from the sale of phone pouches. The Academy is buying the phone pouches at a discounted price of £18 per pouch from Yondr and charging families the same amount. The reduced price of £15 for students on Free School Meals means that the Academy is actually subsidising the purchase of these pouches.

Frequently asked questions

Are these signal blocking phone pouches?

The phone pouches do not block phone signals. Students must switch off their phones prior to placing it in their pouch and locking it.

This will ensure there are no accidental interruptions and ensure students have battery charge to use their phones on their journeys home. It also makes the pouches cheaper.

Frequently asked questions

Are the current Year 7, when they enter Year 8, or the new Year 7 cohort coming from Year 6, still restricted from bringing smartphones to the Academy and only allowed to bring “dumb” or “brick” phones?

No. With the introduction of the phone pouches, all students are able to bring any phone, so long as it fits within the pouch.

Frequently asked questions

I already have a lockable phone pouch or case. Can I use this and not buy a new one from the Academy?

The Academy will need to inspect the pouch or case to see if it is suitable, does the same job as the Yondr pouch and will work with our unlocking stations and devices. A pouch or case which the Academy cannot unlock will not be approved. The decision to approve the pouch or case will come from the Principal only.

Frequently asked questions

Will Sixth Form students need to purchase a phone pouch?

The Academy actively promotes greater independent learning at Sixth Form. As such, we want our Year 12 and Year 13 students to make the most of their scheduled study periods. We recognise that technology and online access can help with this, hence, while we do have a fleet of Chromebooks that Sixth Form students can borrow during study periods, we will also continue to allow them to use their phones.

Frequently asked questions

Will Sixth Form students need to purchase a phone pouch?

However, there will be stricter enforcement of the current rules on Sixth Form phone use, notably:

- Phones can only be used in the Sixth Form study area and in lessons where the teacher permits it.
- Phones cannot be used or seen in any other part of the school, including the stairwells, corridors and canteens. Sixth Formers must also not walk around the Academy wearing earpods or headphones.
- Sixth Formers will face sanctions and phone/device confiscation, to be collected by parents/carers, if they do not adhere to the rules.

Frequently asked questions

How quick is the unlocking process?

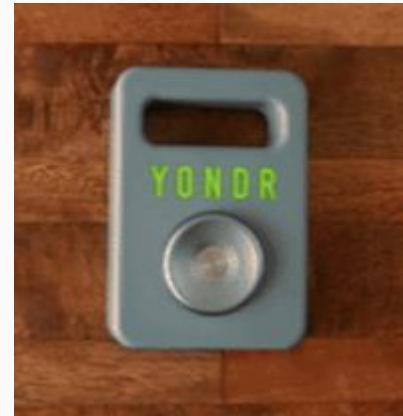
The unlocking process is quick and students typically do not need to break stride. While students are getting used to unlocking pouches, staff will be on hand with mobile unlocking stations to stop queues forming in the first few weeks. Additional stations will be added if required.



Frequently asked questions

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

The Late Gate team and Reception will have an unlocking device for students arriving late or leaving early.



Frequently asked questions

Will my child's phone be safe?

Students are in possession of their phone - in their pouch - for the entire school day. We will instruct students to store the pouch safely in their bags or lockers. While the pouch will provide some protection itself, it is not a protective case, so students should continue to handle their devices with care.

Frequently asked questions

What if my child needs their phone for medical reasons?

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

Consequences for not following the policy

What happens if a student brings their phone to school and:

- **Forgets or does not use the pouch;**
- **Uses their phone or smart device;**
- **Forgets to switch off their phone / devices;**
- **Damages their pouch or does not report a damaged pouch?**
- Their phone will be confiscated.
- 20 minute detention
- Parents/Carers will be contacted and reminded of the procedures and will have to collect the phone from the Academy.
- If issues with phone/pouch persistently happen, then the student could face higher sanctions of Senior Leader 60 minute detentions, seclusion and even suspension.
- Damaged pouches will need to be replaced at full cost.
- **Intentional damage / tampering / attempts to bypass the locks will be treated as a serious incident.**

Monitoring and prevention

The Academy will be conducting random spot checks over the full academic year to check students are following the rules and assess the condition of the pouches.

These spot checks could involve bag / blazer / coat searches and use of detecting wands.

Frequently asked questions

I have a question which has not been answered here. How do I get it answered?

Please read the letter that was sent to all parents through the families bulletin and was emailed to them separately.

If you still have questions, then you can email:

enquiries@uclacademy.co.uk



Thank you.

We look forward to seeing the positive impact of our phone-free school.