

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 you have something you think urgently needs to be communicated to parents, then speak to your tutor or head of year, who will assess the situation and support you accordingly.

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 / does my family 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

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

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

I do not bring a phone to school; will I need to purchase a pouch?

If you never intend to bring a phone or smart device 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

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 reduce ensure there are no accidental interruptions and ensure students have battery charge to use their phones on their journeys home.

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.

Consequences for not following the policy

What happens if I bring my phone to school and:

- **Forget or do not use the pouch;**
- **Use my phone or smart device;**
- **Forget to switch off my phone / devices;**
- **Damage my pouch or do not report a damaged pouch?**
- Your 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:

learningtogether@uclacademy.co.uk



Thank you.

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