
Our Ref: GSI/NWI

4 September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing regarding an update to the Yondr pouch system that we introduced last academic year.

We have been incredibly proud of the fantastic work of both staff and students in adopting this system over the past 18 months, and we have certainly seen many benefits from its implementation.

As communicated when the system was first introduced, Sir Thomas Wharton Academy did not have a significant issue with mobile phone use within the school building, and the introduction of Yondr was not a radical change from our previous expectations, where phones were not permitted to be used during the school day. However, we have found that removing the temptation of phone use, as well as reducing the pressure students can feel about missing out on what is happening online, has had a very positive impact. We have seen a reduction in day-to-day issues, and students themselves have reported positive feedback regarding their overall wellbeing during the school day.

The system has now become part of the normal day-to-day routine within the academy, which has been great to see.

As we move forward, we do need to make some small adjustments to the system, as we have started to see a small number of students either losing their pouch or regularly forgetting to bring it to the academy.

We completely understand that, on occasion, students may genuinely forget their pouch, and we will continue to allow students to hand their phone in if this is a one-off occurrence. However, for students who repeatedly forget their pouch, or for students who have lost it, we will be making a slight amendment to the system.

From this point forward:

- Any student who loses their Yondr pouch will need to have it replaced.
- The cost of a replacement pouch will be added to our online payment system for parents/carers to buy a new one.
- Until a replacement pouch has been purchased, students will not be permitted to bring a mobile phone into the Academy. Parents/carers will be informed of this in advance.
- If a student brings a mobile phone into the academy without a pouch after being informed, the phone will be taken in and kept safely in reception until it is collected by a parent or carer. If a student fails to hand their phone in so it can be collected by parents/carers, they will move onto phase two of the sanction system.

As outlined when the system was first introduced, each student was provided with a Yondr pouch free of charge. However, the pouch remains the property of Sir Thomas Wharton Academy and is intended to be

reused and passed down to future year groups once students leave the academy. It is therefore, important that all pouches issued are returned. Where this does not happen, a replacement pouch will need to be purchased.

As part of these changes, we are introducing revised sanctions for students who are found using a mobile phone during the school day. Details of the updated system can be found below

- **Phase 1** – Students use their phone pouch as expected and comply with the school's mobile phone procedures. All students will start in phase one.
If a student is found with a mobile on their person, it will be taken and stored until parents/carers can collect it from reception, the student will then move to phase 2.
- **Phase 2** – Students will not be permitted to bring a mobile phone into school for a period of **one full half term (seven school weeks)**. If a student brings a phone onto the school site during this time and it is handed in, it will be stored securely in the school safe until collected by a parent/carers. Any student who fails to hand in their phone and is found in possession of it during the school day will be escalated to phase 3.
- **Phase 3** – Students will not be permitted to bring a mobile phone into school for the remainder of the **academic year**. If phase 3 is reached during HT4-6, the sanction will extend until the equivalent HT in the subsequent academic year. Any breach of this restriction will result in further escalation. Students will also have their phone placed into the school safe for a period of **two weeks** before it can be collected by parents/carers.

It has been fantastic to see that we have only had to use the phased intervention system on very rare occasions this year. This speaks volumes about the students at Sir Thomas Wharton Academy and their maturity in understanding the importance of our mobile phone expectations and the reasons we use Yondr pouches. Their positive approach and cooperation have played a significant role in maintaining a focused and productive learning environment for all.

Yours sincerely

Mr G Sills
Vice Principal