



**Ormiston Victory Academy**

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For current Year 7 to 10 students only

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Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you are enjoying the spring sunshine and have lovely plans for the forthcoming bank holiday weekend.

At Ormiston Victory Academy, we have always been 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 offers many exciting opportunities – but also academic, emotional and social challenges.

Our goal is to protect 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, please click the link here: [Yondr](#) As you have seen in recent news reports, this will soon apply in all schools.

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 keep their phones on their person, while minimising distractions during school hours. The pouch helps encourage 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.

At Victory, we will be buying a pouch for each student from our new Year 7s through to Year 10. Students at Lord Nelson Sixth Form will continue to have access to their mobile devices as directed by the Senior Assistant Principal, Mr Willis.

From September 2027, we will expect families to purchase them as part of the Victory uniform.

## **Student Phone Policy & Guidelines**

**Our school is a phone-free community.** Each student will be provided with 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 (including smart watches, earbuds etc.) will be secured in the pouch upon arrival and remain there until dismissal.**

We will make sure students have printed copies of their timetables so they do not need to check ClassCharts during the day – these will be issued each time there is a change to their room or teacher. We will start the entire process once the GCSE and A Level examination season has finished so everyone comes back ready and happy for September.

## Daily Process

Upon arrival at the academy site, students will:

- 1) Turn their phone off or switch it to airplane mode.
- 2) Place their phone and any 'wearable tech' inside their Yondr pouch and lock it. Staff will check each pouch is locked.
- 3) Keep the pouched phone with them throughout the school day and **store it in their school bag**.

At the end of the school day, students will unlock their pouch at one on many unlocking stations, 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 at Student Services.

Any students who currently have a flexible or part-time timetable, will need to go to Student Services to lock/unlock their pouches.

**It is really important that every child has a strong school bag for September which can easily hold their daily essentials, including water bottles, pencil cases, exercise books and their phone pouch.**

## Procedures and Sanctions

### Late Arrivals/Early Dismissals

Students arriving late or leaving early must pouch/ unpouch their phones and wearable tech at the Student Services.

### Forgotten Pouches

If a student forgets their pouch, the student's phone will be collected and securely stored in the Reception Office until the end of the day. Parents and 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. Sanction will also be put in place.

### Phone Use During the School Day

If a student is found with a mobile phone **outside their pouch** on school site, the phone will be confiscated and stored in the Reception Office. The phone will be returned once a parent or carer collects it. A sanction will be put in place for the child in line with our behaviour policy.

Random bag searches will be conducted if staff 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**, resulting in a replacement fee of £20, confiscation until a parent or carer picks it up and a sanction in line with our behaviour policy.

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 outside or inside the pouch
- ❖ Pouch opening without a station
- ❖ Scuff marks on the locking section



The pouch should not be used as a replacement for a protective case and/or screen protector on a mobile device.

There is a plastic window on the pouch where a card will show the student's name and year.

### Communications During the School Day

Parents and carers who need to contact their child during the school day should do so via the **main office number** on 01603 742310 or by contacting your child's pastoral team. We will then pass this message on to your child.

### Medical Conditions

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

We plan to introduce the pouches from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June. Year 6 join us for 3 days from 6<sup>th</sup> July and we will explain what they need to do as part of transition.

An FAQ sheet is attached - please read as it may help alleviate some concerns.

Please be assured that we will continue to support your child / children as we want everyone to feel happy and safe at Victory. We understand children have various challenges throughout life and may need help to contact home for reassurance. We will continue to manage this.

Yours sincerely,

Naomi Palmer  
Principal – Ormiston Victory Academy

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Morning and Afternoon Procedures

### **How quick is the unlocking process?**

The unlocking process is quick and students typically don't need to break their stride. We are working with Yondr to ensure we make the entire process as quick and simple for everyone – and we are visiting other schools to learn how best to begin.

While students are still getting used to how to unlock pouches, staff will be on hand with mobile unlocking stations to stop queues forming in the first few weeks. If needed, we will add extra unlocking points.

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

Student Services will have an unlocking device for students to monitor students arriving late or leaving early.

### **Will my child's phone be safe?**

Students are in possession of their phone - in their Yondr pouch - for the entire school day. We will advise students to store the pouch safely in their school bag. While the Yondr pouch will provide some protection, it's not a protective case, so students should continue to handle their phones with the same care they normally would to prevent damage.

### **What happens if a student forgets to open their pouch at the end of the day?**

In Yondr's experience, this almost never happens. All students walk past the unlocking stations at the exits and they typically want their phones back. If they do arrive home with a phone in a pouch, they can either quickly come back to school to unlock it, or have a phone free evening!

### **What happens if a student forgets to bring in their pouch?**

The student's phone will be collected and securely stored in the Reception Office until the end of the day. Parents and 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. We suggest that students leave the pouches in their school bags and in a locked position when not in use.

## Daily Pouch Use

### **What if my child needs their phone for medical reasons?**

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

### **My child currently doesn't bring a phone to school, how will this work for them?**

Please let us know – we are aware that many children do not own a phone.

### **What happens if a phone is seen outside of a pouch?**

If a student is found in possession of a phone **outside their pouch** on school site the phone will be confiscated and returned when a parent or carer picks it up from the school site.

Bag searches may be conducted if staff have concerns that a student has a mobile phone on them that hasn't been placed into their pouch. Sanctions will escalate if this is a persistent issue.

### **What if the Yondr pouch gets damaged?**

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 of their device until collected by a parent or carer and a high level sanction.

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**. Students will be provided guidelines to lock their pouch when they leave school to avoid any accidental damage.

The pouch should not be used as a replacement for a protective case and/or screen protector on a mobile device.

We will be conducting random pouch/spot checks over the full academic year to assess the condition of pouches.

## **Emergencies**

### **What if there is a school emergency?**

In an emergency, the priority is for students to follow academy 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 academy. Senior leaders will have a portable unlocking station with them in the event of an emergency.