

Athboy Community School



Mobile Phone Policy

Ratified 11 June 2024

Updated Draft 24 September 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 As part of our focus on wellbeing, and in order to ensure a healthy, engaging and safe environment for all members of our school community, Athboy Community School is a Mobile Phone free school during the school day (08:00-15:40). This policy will come into effect in August 2024.

Athboy Community School recognises that mobile phones are an integral part of young people's culture and way of life and can have considerable benefits and value when used appropriately. However, we are also cognisant that phones can be a huge distraction, can hinder communication and socialisation and can contribute to high levels of anxiety and stress among young people, and adults alike.

Social Media access on phones during the school day can impact on students' sense of safety and well-being.

The aim of this policy is to protect the wellbeing of all within Athboy Community School and it should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- The Learning Code Policy
- Acceptable use of Technology Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

2. Guidelines for Mobile Phones

- Athboy Community School is a Mobile Phone free zone during the school day i.e. 08:00 - 15:40 (including break and lunchtimes) every day.
- Students may not use earpods or listening devices which connect to their phones. Earpods/listening devices can be placed in the pouch for the school day.
- Smart Watches must also be put into the Yondr pouch.
- Every student will purchase a Yondr Pouch which is theirs to keep for the school year. This Yondr Pouch will be marked with a unique identifier code and a record will be kept of each student's code.
- Please note students are only permitted to bring one mobile phone to school.
- Should a student choose to bring a phone to school, it must be switched off and placed in their Yondr Pouch prior to entering the school building, and be kept there for the day. Their Yondr Pouch is to be kept with them for the school day.
- At the end of the school day, students will unlock their pouch, using the unlocking stations provided around the school.
- If a student arrives after 08:50, they must place their phone in their Yondr Pouch upon arrival.
- If a student needs to leave school early, following the correct procedures, they will release their phone from its Yondr pouch at the Main Office, as they are signing out.

- Parents / Guardians are asked to contact the school and fill in a waiver /consent form if their child chooses not to bring a Mobile Phone to school for the current academic year. However, if the student does bring a phone to school, it will be confiscated and the parent/guardian will be required to collect the phone and to purchase a pouch and the student will be required to have a pouch from this point onwards. A temporary waiver will be made available in the event that a student does not have a phone for a period of time.
- During day school trips, students will put phones in pouches as usual. Staff travelling with the students will have a device to open pouches when students return to school or if phones are needed as a emergency or any other reason deemed necessary by the staff.
- For international trips, pouches may be used for some of the time and staff travelling with students will have a device to open pouches when needed.

3. Breach of the Mobile Phone Policy

- Any student found with a mobile phone not in their Yondr pouch or found using a mobile phone during school hours will have the phone confiscated and parents/guardians may collect it at their convenience.
- The student will get a Red Note on the Learning Code.
- The phone will be placed in the Main Office and Parents / Guardians will be contacted. Phones will be available for collection by Parents / Guardians from the Main Office between 15:40 and 16:10. If unable to collect at this time, phones may be collected by Parents / Guardians the following school day between 09:00 and 16:10.
- Phones will not be returned to students.
- If a student is in breach of this policy for a second time, the phone will be confiscated again, as above, and the student will receive an official detention and a Red Note on the Learning Code.
- Repeated breaches of this policy may lead to further and more serious sanctions up to and including suspension(s).
- Students who bring in multiple phones are liable to receive further sanctions following a meeting with parent/guardians.

4. Forgotten / Damaged Pouches

- If a student forgets their Yondr Pouch, they will be asked to leave their phone in the Main Office for the day.
- Any student who purposely interferes with or damages their Yondr pouch or the Yondr pouch of any other student is liable to a serious sanction, up to and including suspension.

5. Purchase of Yondr Pouches

All students are required to have a Yondr pouch unless there is an individual arrangement with the parent/guardian and the school. Parents are offered the option of paying per year for the pouch buying it outright.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chair)

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Principal)