



27 March 2026

Mobile Phone pouches FAQs

Why are we introducing phone pouches?

The DfE's revised guidance on mobile phones states that *"all schools should be mobile phone free environments by default"* and provides detailed expectations for prohibiting phone use during lessons, transitions, breaktimes and lunchtimes.

The use of phone pouches is one of the most successful approaches highlighted in national case studies and has been adapted across the BDAT secondary schools as an effective way of ensuring that students cannot access their devices during school hours, while still allowing them to bring a phone for safety when travelling to and from school. Therefore, as a Trust and a school we are acting in line with the Department for Education guidance.

How will this support my child's learning?

Research has demonstrated that phone-free learning environments help minimise distractions, improve behaviour and support positive learning habits, leading to improvement in pupils' engagement in learning and promoting positive outcomes.

How will this support my child's wellbeing and social interaction?

Research shared in the DfE's guidance concludes that excessive phone use can reduce social interaction, disrupt sleep patterns, and contribute to lower wellbeing among young people. Creating a phone-free school day encourages pupils to engage with peers, focus on learning, and participate fully in school life.

How does the phone pouch system work?

- Students bring their phones to school as normal.
- Upon arrival, they will secure their phone inside a lockable pouch that we provide.
- The pouch stays sealed for the entire school day and can only be unlocked using a device held/unlocked by staff at the end of the day.
- Students remove their phone and return the pouch.
- Students retain responsibility for their devices; the pouch simply restricts access during school hours.

What are the benefits of the phone pouch approach?

- Ensures phone-free learning while maintaining safety for travel to and from school
- Provides a consistent approach across the Trust
- Reduces low level disruption linked to notifications, messaging, and social media
- Supports safeguarding by preventing inappropriate recording or sharing during the school day
- Enhances students' engagement in lessons, social spaces, and enrichment activities

What if my child forgets to unlock their pouch?

Reception will have an unlocking device should students forget to unlock their phone at the end of the day.

What happens if a child takes the pouch home by accident?



Staff will be on duty at the unlocking stations reminding students to put their unlocked pouch in the basket, so this is extremely unlikely to happen. However, if this does occur then the student will be expected to return the pouch the next day.

What if my child needs to leave school during the school day?

Students will be able to unlock their phone on exit via reception as they leave school.

What if my child currently uses their phone in school for research, taking pictures of final coursework pieces etc?

Learning will not be impacted by the introduction of this policy. Laptops and PCs are readily available in school. Students should upload work to their class Team on Microsoft Teams or email it to themselves.

What if my child currently uses their phone at home for research, homework, editing coursework etc?

Learning will not be impacted by the introduction of this policy. Laptops and PCs are readily available in school. Students should upload work to their class Team on Microsoft Teams or email it to themselves to be able to then access this when they return to school.

What if my child uses their phone to monitor blood sugar levels as they are diagnosed as diabetic? Students with a diagnosis of diabetes with medical evidence provided to school will be issued with a specific pouch which will enable them to continue to monitor their blood sugar levels as required

How can you support us?

We kindly ask parents and carers to:

- Discuss the new system with your child to ensure they understand the expectations
- Contact the school office directly (most easily done by emailing office@immanuel.bdat-academies.org) if your child needs to receive an urgent message during the day
- Reiterate to your child that the aim is not to remove technology from young people's lives, but to create a healthy balance where phones do not undermine learning or wellbeing.