



Mobile Phone Pouches – Supporting Learning and Wellbeing at BHS

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Beaconsfield High School, we are committed to ensuring that every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. From September 2025, we will be taking the next step in our smartphone-free school journey by introducing **mobile phone pouches** for students in Year 7-9.

This decision is supported by growing evidence alongside a national debate and is a natural progression to our long-standing gate-to-gate mobile phone policy. Our approach is designed to strengthen student focus, wellbeing, and community spirit while reducing harm caused by excessive screen time and social media. It is suggested that even the temptation of having a mobile phone in the blazer pocket is enough to distract and, in some cases, lead to rule breaking. Currently, 56% of school children in the UK have restrictions at school enforced already.

Summary: What's changing from September 2025?

Phone pouches will be part of the expected uniform at BHS for Years 7-9 in September 2025. Every student will need their phone pouch in school every day. For students in Years 7-9, any smartphones brought into school should be switched off and **will be** locked and stored in a phone pouch at the start of the day and unlocked at the end. Students will store the pouch in their bags or their locker for the duration of the school day.

Why introduce mobile phone pouches?

There has been much attention and debate in the news recently about adolescent screen time and the use of social media. A Year 7 parent/carers survey tells us that our parents/carers have increasing concerns about us allowing smartphones onsite. Over 90% of them agree that it is important for schools and parents/carers to work together on managing smartphone use among children.

In a recent Ofcom survey, 42% of children aged 8-9 years and 30% of children aged 6-7 years have their own mobile phone; whilst we can't roll back the clock, we can ensure a break from phones during school hours. The survey also indicates that girls continue to be more likely than boys to experience nasty or hurtful interactions online, with 34% of girls nationally saying that they have experienced nasty/hurtful interactions online.

The constant notifications and the temptation to check devices, even when silent, can have a serious impact on focus and wellbeing. Cognitive science tells us that just having a phone nearby lowers working memory and attention, even if it isn't being used. The pouch blocks the signal and so alleviates this concern during school hours. Face-to-face interaction is a crucial skill, particularly in adolescence. Our mobile phone policy has already helped to promote socialisation during breaktime and lunchtime, which strengthens friendships, empathy, and interpersonal skills. Phone pouches add an extra layer of protection in that they block a signal and give a real break from phones during the school day.

Research suggests that reducing access to mobile phones can lead to small but significant improvements in wellbeing, especially amongst younger adolescents. Studies also show that taking breaks from digital distractions supports more balanced emotional states.

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Other studies, including those referenced by *The Lancet* and *Ofcom* ([Ofcom](#) and [The Lancet](#)), consistently link smartphone use with:

- Increased levels of anxiety and depression.
- Poorer sleep quality.
- Reduced self-esteem, especially through social comparison and online pressures.

By introducing **signal blocking pouches**, we ensure phones are out of sight and out of mind, allowing students to engage more fully with school life.

Conversely, phones allow unrestricted access to the internet without adult supervision. This includes exposure to:

- Harmful or age-inappropriate content.
- Social media pressures and algorithms designed to keep young users online.
- Cyberbullying and online drama that continues into school time.

Removing access to smartphones during the school day enhances safeguarding, aligns with our values, and supports a more respectful and safe school culture.

We do as ever urge parents and carers to enforce basic rules at home to help in our endeavour to protect young people from the many risks of excessive screen time and social media.

A little more detail: What's changing from September 2025?

- For students in Years 7-9, any smartphones brought into school should be **switched off and will be locked** and **stored in a phone pouch** at the start of the day and unlocked at the end. Students will store the pouch in their bags or their locker for the duration of the school day.
- When Year 9 goes into Year 10 (Sept 2026), the use of pouches will continue. Likewise, when that cohort goes into Year 11 (September 2027) the use of pouches will continue.
- This policy will apply to each new Year 7 cohort going forward, forming a long-term culture shift. By September 2027 all students in Years 7-11 will be using mobile phone pouches.
- Pouches in year 10 & 11 are **optional** and can also be purchased should they or you wish for a complete break from their phones during the school day.

Phone pouches will be part of the expected uniform at BHS for Year 7-9 in September 2025 and every student will need their phone pouch in school every day.

All Year 7-9 students will secure their phone in their pouch when they arrive at school; our gate-to-gate policy will remain. Students will maintain possession of their phones and will not be able to use them until their pouches are opened at the end of the school day as they depart the site. The pouches are designed to be very hard-wearing and durable and therefore should last for the duration of your child's time at BHS.

ACTION REQUIRED

Phone pouches cost **£12.50**, and we are asking parents/carers to purchase these through the school via ScoPay. Please pay £12.50 for your child's phone pouch via SCOPAY (www.scopay.com/beaconsfield) by the deadline Friday 5th September.

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If you feel you may be eligible for financial support please email pupilpremium@beaconsfieldhigh.school. If you are having difficulty meeting payment deadlines and wish to discuss a payment plan please contact trips@beaconsfieldhigh.school.

In Summary

The use of mobile phone pouches:

- Removes distractions from learning.
- Promotes wellbeing and reduces anxiety.
- Encourages real-life connection and play.
- Enhances safeguarding and online safety.
- Supports a culture of focus, kindness, and excellence.

We are proud to be part of a growing movement of schools across the UK (and beyond) in taking decisive steps to protect students from the downsides of digital overuse.

Please refer to this link for some frequently asked questions, which we hope will be useful: [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

I hope I can count on your support with this new approach, I know many parents have been calling for changes to the policy already in place. Our reason is to try to help ensure that the school is a phone-free zone with all the benefits that this brings.

We thank you for your ongoing support and look forward to working together in the best interests of your child's development.

Yours faithfully,

Tina Bond

Headteacher