

# GYMPIE State High School

1 Everson Road (PO Box 22)  
GYMPIE QLD 4570

Administration phone: 07 54898333  
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Dear Parents and Care Givers

Recently, our students, staff, parents and the wider community were consulted about the use of mobile phones during school hours. Whilst mobile phones were acknowledged for their capacity to connect students to the internet in support of student learning, they were also identified as the source of significant distraction for students and able to be used to facilitate negative social interactions, during both class and break times.

Following this period of consultation and taking into consideration independent research, our school has made the decision to create a phone-free learning environment during school hours in 2023, in order to improve student engagement with teaching and learning. This will be achieved using a secure phone-pouch system called 'Yondr'. The Yondr system has been successfully implemented in over 1000 schools across 21 countries globally.

A recent survey of its school partners was conducted by Yondr to measure the effects of creating phone-free educational environments. These schools achieved notable improvements in learning engagement and social behaviours, as follows:

- ✓ **65% of schools saw an improvement in academic performance**
- ✓ **74% of schools saw an improvement in student behaviour**
- ✓ **83% of schools saw an improvement in student engagement in the classroom.**

The Yondr system utilises a simple, secure pouch that stores a phone. Every student will secure their phone in a personally assigned Yondr pouch when they arrive at school. *Students will maintain possession of their phones but will not use them until their pouches are opened at the end of the school day.* Students are required to bring their Yondr pouch to and from school *each day* and are responsible for their pouch at all times.

To best serve your child, we appreciate in advance your full support of the Yondr system at our school. Under the system, if there is an emergency and you need to get in contact with your child, please call the school and connect with Student Services and they will assist you.

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the school directly at (07) 5489 8333.

Yours sincerely

Mr Anthony Lanskey  
PRINCIPAL

**Your child**

**Our student**

**One team**

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## The Yondr System



### POUCH

As a student enters school, they place their phone in their assigned Yondr pouch.



### SECURE

The pouch is closed and secured. Each student keeps their pouch throughout the day.



### EXIT

When leaving school, the student taps their pouch to an unlocking base to release their phone.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What if I want to reach my child during the school day?**

Students will have full access to their phones before and after school. If you need to contact your child during the school day, please contact Student Services by calling (07) 5489 8333.

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

In the event of a school emergency, students will be directed to safety first by following the school's emergency response plan. Provision for parent and care giver contact is included in this, if and when necessary.

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

Students will retain possession of their phone – locked in their Yondr pouch – for the entire school day. We will advise students to store the pouch in their backpacks. Students and parents are reminded that the school cannot guarantee the safety of an individual's mobile phone and that they bring it at their own risk. The safest place for a student's mobile phone is for it to remain at home.

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

The Yondr pouch is the property of Gympie State High School and is to be returned to the school at the completion of Year 12 or when a student unenrols. If a student damages their pouch, they will be issued a new one with the cost of the replacement being charged to their account and parents receiving an invoice for payment. Damage includes any signs that the physical integrity of the pouch has been compromised, whether intentional or unintentional, as determined by the school or Yondr staff.

### **What if a student is caught on their phone?**

If a student is caught with their phone, they will be required to submit it to Student Services where it can be collected by a parent or guardian at a later time. Repeated violation of the school's mobile phone policy in such a way will result in further consequences including a potential suspension from school.

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## The Yondr System

### Frequently Asked Questions, continued

***My child uses their phone to access their timetable and other online tools used by the school.***

Laptops can perform almost all of the functions that a mobile phone can and, since Gympie State High School is a laptop school, the compulsory requirement for all students to have a laptop negates the need for a mobile phone to access these resources.

***Are there any circumstances where my student can access their phone at school?***

At times, and at the discretion of the principal, students may be granted access to their mobile phone in an allocated place under the direct supervision of school staff to make a specific call or check their messages. On rare occasions, teachers may also allow and closely monitor students' use of their phones for a set period of time in class to achieve certain learning goals or to complete a specific task. This is more likely to happen in practical classes such as The Arts, Digital Technology and HPE, but will not be a common practice.

***My student currently uses their phone during breaks to pass the time. What will they do now?***

The school already provides a variety of extra-curricular options for students to engage with at lunch times and we will continue to maintain access to these, and will increase the availability of sports equipment and other facilities for student use as required. We also welcome input from students as to what opportunities they would like the school to offer them during break times.

***My child needs access to their phone during the day for reasons relating to their health, casual work, travel arrangements home, etc. Are there any circumstances where my student can access their phone at school?***

Students who need to make a specific call or check their messages for reasons like those listed above will be able to access their mobile phone during the day in an allocated place under the direct supervision of school staff. On rare occasions, teachers may also allow and closely monitor students' use of their phones for a set period of time in class to achieve certain learning goals or to complete a specific task. This is more likely to happen in practical classes like The Arts, Digital Technology and HPE, but will not be a common practice.

***What if my child has an Apple Watch or other Bluetooth devices like headphones? How are these affected by the change in policy?***

Mobile phones are to be switched off before they are locked in the Yondr pouch, which will eliminate their connectivity to smart watches and their messaging functionality. Headphones are to remain out of sight during class time unless teachers allow their use for learning purposes. It will be assumed that any student seen with headphones that are not connected to a laptop are using them in conjunction with a mobile phone and, therefore, will be subject to the consequences of that behaviour as stated in the new mobile phone policy.

***Your child***

***Our student***

***One team***