

A Phone-Free School Day at JKHS - Helping young people thrive, connect, and focus

At John Kyrle High School, we want every student to enjoy a school day free from digital pressure and distraction. That's why all students in Years 7–11 use **secure mobile phone pouches**, supplied and supported by **Odyssey Education**, a UK-based specialist in phone-free environments.

This isn't about being "anti-technology". It's about creating the conditions for **better learning, stronger friendships and calmer, happier young people**. Research shows that when phones are inaccessible during the day, schools see **improved academic engagement, better classroom behaviour**, and **reduced bullying and online harm**. At the same time, national evidence links constant connectivity with increased anxiety, sleep disruption and reduced attention.

Why We Use Phone Pouches

Independent research into phone-free school programmes shows clear improvements in student focus, wellbeing and readiness to learn.

A University of Cambridge study found that nearly half of British teenagers show signs of dependency on social media, with significant impact on mental health and resilience while a separate study from the London School of Economics showed that restricting phones can lead to measurable improvements in academic outcomes.

Parents also support this approach: national polling suggests that almost **eight in ten adults** favour reducing smartphone use in schools to support learning and wellbeing.

How the Pouches Work

Every student is issued with a secure pouch at the start of the year.

The system is:

- **Secure** – locked magnetically each morning
- **Student-held** – phones remain with students but inaccessible
- **Quick** – unlocking takes **under a second** at the end of the school day
- **Durable and water-resistant** – suitable for daily use

Daily routine

- **Morning tutor time:** phones are switched off and pouches locked.
- **During the day:** the pouch stays sealed and with the student.
- **End of day:** students unlock at designated stations as they exit.



Benefits for Your Child

Better learning

Phone-free classrooms show clear improvements in attention, engagement and learning behaviour.

Stronger friendships

Students talk, socialise and play more when phones are not accessible — helping build healthier, more confident peer relationships.

Improved wellbeing

Teenagers often report feeling more relaxed without constant notifications, aligning with research linking high phone use to anxiety and reduced sleep quality.

A calmer school environment

Less distraction means calmer corridors, smoother routines and a more respectful culture.

Find Out More

The full **Mobile Phone Policy** is available on our website, with clear guidance on routines, unlocking, emergencies, replacements and what to do if a child forgets their pouch.



Sources & Evidence

1. Academic achievement and the impact of mobile phone bans

London School of Economics – Centre for Economic Performance

Ill Communication: Technology, Distraction & Student Performance (Beland & Murphy, 2015).

<https://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1350.pdf>

2. Teen social media dependency (University of Cambridge)

Analysis of the Millennium Cohort Study showing that 48% of British teenagers feel addicted to social media:

- The Guardian summary:
<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2024/jan/02/social-media-addiction-teenagers-study-phones>
- The Independent report:
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/cambridge-university-of-cambridge-b2472528.html>

3. Social media use and wellbeing across adolescence

University of Cambridge – *Nature Communications* study

Identifies sensitive periods in adolescence where social media use predicts reduced life satisfaction one year later:

<https://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/scientists-find-that-the-impact-of-social-media-on-wellbeing-varies-across-adolescence>