



Malbank School & Sixth Form College

Rejoice in being the best that we can be.

Phone Pouch – Launch reminders

7th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we begin implementing our phone pouch system from today, I wanted to take the opportunity to remind parents of the arrangements that are now in place. Thank you for the support shown throughout the consultation and communication process and in the coming days as we go live with the new system. I fundamentally believe that having no access to a phone in school will give our young people the chance to feel freer and to be able to focus on what matters most at school: learning and connecting with each other in a traditional way without distractions. I am genuinely excited about how we are about to remove a nagging distraction from their day and the impact this will have on them in so many positive ways.

Students were given their pouch in form time today – it is clearly labelled with their school username, so it is unique and easily identifiable.

Members of SLT attended all form lessons today to support in the first use of the pouch. All students were shown how to put their phone in and were reminded what will happen at the end of the day when they go to unlock them. This all followed detailed explanations in their return to school assemblies last week including videos showing how to use the system. A short version of the video can also be accessed via our TikTok account: <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZN8YE3ch9/>

From the moment students put their phone in the pouch our new system became operative. They will unlock them at the end of the day today and will bring the pouch home with them every night – please take a moment to have a look at the pouch and talk to your young person about it. As one or two of the parents who attended the in-person drop-in session last term pointed out, as an added bonus, if you wish to use the pouch at home to ensure students do not use their phone late at night – feel free to lock it! Students will not be able to unlock them again until they arrive at school at the unlock stations at the front and back.

For ease of reference, I have reattached the Phone Pouch Policy and have also included a brief reminder of the two options that were made available to parents following my communication regarding sanctions at the end of last term. These have also now been added to the policy.

Please note: The following pages are taken from a previous letter written in response to five parental queries about sanctions related to *forgetting* a pouch. Please only read if you did not read the original letter or if you wish to be reminded about my solutions to the concern.

If you do not read on from this point, many thanks in advance for your support for this initiative.

Yours,

Mr Harrison – Headteacher – Malbank School.

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Why should the phone be confiscated if my child **forgets** their pouch?

I want to be very clear about this because it is an important part of how the system will operate at Malbank. Whilst I appreciate that not all schools run their systems in the same way, at Malbank if a student brings a phone to school but does not have their pouch, the phone will be confiscated and returned in line with our published policy, including overnight confiscation.

The reason for this approach is straightforward. The success of the system depends upon students taking responsibility for managing their pouch. Our students remember their uniforms – if they don't, there is a sanction. They remember essential equipment – if they don't, there is a sanction. Most importantly, the overwhelming majority *never* forget their phone. I therefore do not believe it is unreasonable to expect students to remember their pouch as well.

If we simply collected phones and returned them at the end of the day whenever a pouch was forgotten, we would effectively be removing students' responsibility and transferring it to school staff. The school would end up operating a giant "pouch service" for students who chose not to engage with the system properly. In practice, it would become very easy for students to stop bringing their pouch altogether and simply expect the school to solve the problem on their behalf.

That is not the lesson we should be teaching our young people. An important aspect of education is helping students develop organisation, accountability, and an understanding that actions sometimes have consequences. These are qualities that will serve our students well throughout their lives.

That said, I fully recognise that some parents have genuine concerns about children who may find organisation particularly challenging, particularly those with identified special educational needs. To support families in these circumstances, I would like to offer a practical solution.



As part of the September roll out - parents can purchase replacement pouches using the following link <https://store.schoolphonepouch.co.uk/cornovii> or QR code if a pouch is permanently lost or damaged meaning a replacement is needed. This transaction is direct between you and the company, and the cost of a replacement pouch will be £8.75 plus £1.99 postage and packaging, with delivery made directly to the pupil's home address.

Therefore, in answer to the concern raised - **if a parent has a genuine concern that their child may regularly forget their pouch, particularly if this is due to an identified special need, they are welcome to purchase a second pouch.** This can be clearly labelled with the student's name, brought to school, and stored securely in the relevant Key Stage office.

Should the student forget their primary pouch, they would then have a backup pouch available and would not receive the sanction. They would, however, need to return the spare pouch to

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the office at the end of the day, otherwise there is a risk that both pouches end up at home and the safety net disappears.

There is also a second alternative. ***If a student forgets their pouch, a parent or carer may bring it into school during the day before the start of lunchtime.*** In those circumstances, once the pouch arrives and the phone is secured appropriately, it would be entirely reasonable for the student to have their phone returned and continue their day as normal. Please note that if the pouch is brought in after the start of lunch (allowing us time to process the return of the phone during the lunch period) – the overnight confiscation sanction would still stand.

Before taking option one (or in the case of the 2nd option – considering what you may do if it happens), I would encourage parents to consider carefully whether it is the right decision. One of the key purposes of school is to help children develop resilience, responsibility, and independence. In my view, our students are entirely capable of remembering a pouch each day, just as they can remember a tie or a blazer. By providing them with a fall-back option, are we helping to build that responsibility long term or providing them with a quick fix that doesn't help build a very important habit? I am happy to state that I would want to use the system we will operate as a mechanism to *support* my own son (who is also occasionally forgetful) to take responsibility for his decisions and organisation. If he were to forget his pouch, I would want him to learn a lesson from it and not do it again. However, I am happy to leave this with families to debate and decide themselves.

Yours,

John Harrison
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