



HUNTER RIVER HIGH SCHOOL

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www.hunterriv-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/

Dear Parents/Carers,

In 2023 we will move our school to a phone-free space to improve teaching and learning using a system called Yondr. Yondr has been implemented in over 1,000 schools across 21 countries to facilitate an engaged learning environment.

We believe that this proactive approach will help our students:

- increase their engagement in learning
- increase learning time
- increase their safety and wellbeing
- improve their communication and interpersonal skills
- reduce mobile phone related distractions and anti-social behaviour

This will mean that mobile phones and headphones are not to be used during the school day (before school, in class, during breaks, excursions, sport or on other school-related activities). The new policy will be supported by the Yondr Program.

Phone use during class time has become an increasing distraction for students. We have utilised a “bag or box” system for phones during class time. Current data indicates that 20% of all behaviour referrals are linked to phones.

We recently conducted surveys with students, parents/carers and teachers and found the following information:

Students

- 100% of respondents check their phones during the school day.
- 59% check their phone between 5 and 40 times in a school day.
- 47% check their phone during class time.
- 38% have found out that peers have said something about them on social media at school.
- 45% have seen inappropriate photos/videos circulated on phones at school.
- 63% say their parents/carers phone or message them during class time.
- 65% say teachers spend too much time worrying about students on their phones during lessons.
- 44% do not use their bag or the technology box.

Parents and Carers

- 85% think mobile phones are a distraction during school hours.
- 47% believe the bag or box policy is ineffective.
- 73% contact their children on their phones during school hours.

Staff

- 100% believe phones are a distraction during school hours.
- 67% believe “bag or box” is ineffective.
- 92% believe mobile phones are an issue in lessons.
- 90% believe we need a different strategy to manage mobile phones.

We believe that phones have great utility. Schools that use Yondr have also found that learning and social behaviour improve drastically when students are fully engaged with their teachers and classmates.

The Yondr Program 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 and 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.

Yondr recently surveyed over 900 school partners to measure the effects of creating phone-free educational environments. These schools achieved notable progress in multiple areas:

- 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

Exemptions

Use of mobile phones will be permitted if a student requires a mobile phone or online service for medical reasons as part of their school health care plan.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via email – Deborah.dibley@det.nsw.edu.au

To provide a safe and respectful learning environment for your child, we appreciate your full support in the adoption of the Yondr Program at our school.

Kind regards,



Deb Dibley
Principal
12 December 2022



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How Yondr Works



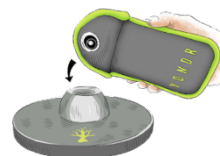
POUCH

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?

We want our students to be engaged in their learning. If you need to contact your child during the school day, contact the main office on 49872306.

What if there is a school emergency?

In case of a school emergency, we direct our students to safety first, following our school emergency preparedness protocol.

Will my student's phone be safe?

Students are in possession of their phone - in their Yondr pouch - for the entire school day. We will advise students to store the pouch in their backpacks where it is completely safe.

What if the Yondr pouch gets damaged or a student is caught on their phone?

The Yondr pouch is property of Hunter River High School. If a student damages their Pouch or is caught on their phone, the school will collect the phone/Pouch and call home:

- **1st Offense – Phone confiscated for the day**
- **2nd Offense – Phone confiscated for the day + behaviour contract**
- **3rd Offense – Phone confiscated for the day + formal caution**
- **4th Offense - Phone confiscated for the day + parent collect phone, in-school suspension (SCAP) or possible suspension**
- **If a student damages their Pouch a \$20 replacement fee will be given**

Note: Damage consists of any signs that the physical integrity of the pouch has been compromised, whether intentional or unintentional, as determined by the school.

Our policy can be found on our website - <https://hunterriv-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/>