



Press Release: The Willink School Launches Yondr Pouch Initiative to Support Student Well-being and Learning

Thursday, 19 June 2025

The Willink School is proud to announce the successful launch of Yondr pouches on Thursday 19 June 2025, marking a significant step forward in their ongoing commitment to student well-being, academic focus, and positive social interaction. This initiative ensures that The Willink becomes a fully mobile device-free school for students in Years 7 to 11 during the school day.

Aligned with their vision to “ensure that all students flourish and achieve their full academic and personal potential, as confident, respectful, and resilient global citizens,” the introduction of Yondr pouches serves to help create a focused and supportive learning environment. This initiative builds on The Willink’s existing mobile phone policy and reflects the school’s commitment to tackling the challenges posed by smart devices and social media. By securely locking their devices in tamper-proof pouches during the school day, students engage fully in lessons, foster even stronger social interactions as they develop resilience to achieve their ambitious goals.

Headteacher Ms Nicolle Browning commented:

“We are delighted to introduce Yondr pouches as part of our commitment to our school’s core values: Engage, Respect, and Achieve. This practical step further promotes positive mental health, strengthens focus on learning, and fosters richer face-to-face interactions. We believe that giving students the space to be fully present in their learning will enable them to thrive - both academically and personally - as future global changemakers. We’re impressed by the maturity with which our wonderful students have embraced the change.”

The Department for Education has highlighted the growing evidence of the negative impact of mobile devices on young people’s mental health, concentration, and well-being. The Willink’s adoption of Yondr pouches reflects this guidance, as well as research findings - such as those from the University of Cambridge - showing that nearly half of British teenagers feel addicted to social media. By implementing this initiative, The Willink aims to help students build healthy relationships with technology as an assistive tool whilst reducing potential anxiety and disengagement associated with excessive device use.

A visitor to the school this week commented on “how impressively calm the start to the day was with multiple opportunities for staff to welcome students before they even entered school site. It looked like a fully embedded routine”.



To ensure equal access for this initial roll out, The Willink has provided Yondr pouches at no cost to families. Students retain their pouches throughout the school day and unlock their devices only at the end of the day. Students will be expected to care for their pouch throughout their time at the school.

To support the launch, The Willink held an online Information Evening for parents and carers in April 2025 and shared a Frequently Asked Questions document. In the lead-up to launch day, students received information during assemblies, watched a detailed video demonstrating how Yondr works at the school and took part in competitive inter-House activities where they practised locking and unlocking their pouches.

Willink students have reflected on the launch:

“We didn’t use our phones in school but now it means that we don’t worry about missing out because nobody is sending messages. We’ve had six hours of focusing on other things.” Laisha, Year 8 Student

“It’s weirdly satisfying to unlock the pouch at the end of the day”. Nailah, Year 8 Student

“The pouches are a very good idea as it takes the distraction away from students and removes any temptation to look at our phones during the school day.” - Daisy, Year 9 Student

“The introduction of Yondr pouches is a good as it means students will want to be on their phones less and will be able to socialise more.” – Erin, Year 8

“Yondr pouches are a good thing because people won’t use their phones during school and then we can socialise with others!” – Xanthe, Year 8

With the support of the whole school community, The Willink’s introduction of Yondr pouches reinforces its commitment to a positive, focused environment where every student can thrive and build the confidence, respect, and resilience needed for success in the 21st century.

For media inquiries, please contact:

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About The Willink school:

The Willink, based in Burghfield Common, is a vibrant community school for over 1,200 students aged 11-18. As the preferred state school in the area, it attracts learners beyond their catchment, including Hampshire, Reading, and Wokingham.



Their broad and balanced curriculum has a strong international flavour, tailored to cultivate a global mindset in their students. Rooted in their heritage as a Language College, they teach three foreign languages which fosters linguistic proficiency and cultural understanding. Exceptional academic outcomes position them among Berkshire's top ten non-selective schools, reflecting their commitment to educational excellence.

As leaders in mathematics instruction, The Willink heads the Mobius Maths Hub, a national centre of excellence, thus extending their influence across Berkshire and Wiltshire. They maintain strategic partnerships with Teaching School Hub Berkshire, underscoring their dedication to exceptional education.

Above all, The Willink is a lively, welcoming institution encouraging high aspirations and expectations for their learning community.

For further information about The Willink School, please visit: www.willinkschool.org.uk.

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