Kotara High School
Mobile Phone Policy and Procedures

Purpose
The implementation of the YONDR Program at Kotara High School is designed to support students to use mobile phones, and adjacent technology in a responsible and ethical manner. It provides a 'phone-free' space which encourages students to develop the skills to interact positively with their peers and teachers, and to fully immerse themselves in the learning process.

Scope
This document outlines the policies and procedures which underpin the management of the YONDR Program, providing a consistent framework for the use of mobile phones in the school environment, relating to both students and staff, through the use of the YONDR phone pouch system.

The YONDR pouch system will be in place throughout the school day from 8.00am to 3.10pm and covers access to mobile phones and adjacent technology (e.g. earphones and smart watches) on school grounds, at school-related activities and outside of school where there is a clear and close connection between the school and the conduct of students. This procedure identifies that mobile phones are not considered an appropriate device under the Department's BYOD policy.

Our School's Approach
To support students in the development of positive relationships, social skills, learning habits and overall health and wellbeing, Kotara High School has implemented the YONDR pouch system to create a 'phone free' space for students whilst at school or when engaged in school based activities. This is the same system utilised at many venues worldwide, including concerts, restaurants, social functions and industries and is designed to increase engagement in the activity or event.

At Kotara High School, we recognise the potential impact of mobile phones on student learning outcomes, social skills and overall wellbeing. Whilst mobile phones can be used as a convenient tool for communication and access to information, they can also become unwelcome distractions, discourage the development of essential social skills and isolate young people from their peers. In some instances, this can lead to social conflict, sleep deprivation, mental and other health challenges.

The decision to implement the YONDR Program is based on evidence and has been made in collaboration with the KHS Parents and Citizens Association, Student Representative Council and teaching staff. 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.

Kotara High School is a BYOD school with CANVAS as our primary online learning platform. The Department of Education supports the use of laptop computers for this purpose and does not endorse mobile phones as a BYOD device. In these instances, teachers may be permitted to utilise a mobile device as a specific learning tool. For further information on the recommended specifications for BYOD devices at Kotara High School, please refer to the BYOD Policy available from the Kotara High School website:

https://kotara-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/learning-at-our-school/byod.html

All students enrolled at Kotara High School will be allocated a YONDR pouch free of charge. Students enrolling throughout the year will be allocated a pouch as part of their enrolment. If this is damaged or lost a replacement cost of $15 will be billed to parents/carers.

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.

Student Expectations

Each student will be allocated a uniquely numbered pouch and expected to have their phone SWITCHED OFF and secured in the pouch for the duration of the school day. Pouches are not to be marked in any way so they can be re-allocated in the future. Students are not permitted to have headphones, airpods or earbuds that connect to their device via Bluetooth. Gaming devices are not permitted for use whilst at school. For students who attempt to communicate via the use of a smart watch, these will be managed by staff the same as an unpouched device.

The expectation is that students follow the process below when entering and exiting the school:

1. Place phone in the pouch upon arrival and press the locking pin to secure device for the duration of the school day
2. Pouched phones are checked during roll call when roll is marked
3. Unlock pouches at one of the unlocking stations as students depart for the day

At the beginning of the school day, students will be required to lock their phone and adjacent technology (e.g. earphones) into their pouch. Staff will be on duty at the school gate to welcome students and assist in the locking process. Students without a phone are still to bring their pouch to school.

Classroom teachers and executive will regularly check that students have their phones locked in their YONDR pouch and random spot checks will be conducted during lessons throughout the day. For students who choose not to bring a phone to school, they must still bring their YONDR pouch. If requested, students are to present their pouch to staff at any stage throughout the day.

Students will not have access to their phones during break times. The school canteen will accept cash or card only. This is supported by the *Student use of digital devices and online services policy* and encourages positive interactions with students and staff in the playground.

At the end of the school day, students will be able to unlock their YONDR pouch using the unlocking stations situated at exits and strategic locations around the school. Students are then to secure their YONDR pouch in their bag for the following day. For students who require an early departure or late arrival, an unlocking station will be available at the front office upon signing in/out for the day. Students are reminded that even when their phones are released, they are still representing Kotara High School and responsible use of devices still applies.

Students arriving late to school or leaving early

Students who arrive late to school MUST pouch their phone at the gate and report directly to the front office to obtain a late slip. They are then to show their teacher a late slip and pouched phone upon arrival to class. Teachers will not admit students late to class without a slip and pouched phone. If a student arrives during break time, they are still to report to the front office to obtain a late slip and pouch their phone. Students who leave early report to the office to obtain a leave slip and unpouch their phone.

Senior students with early periods and/or early departures

Senior students will be expected to pouch their phones at locking stations upon their arrival to school and demonstrate that pouches are locked when entering the classroom. Executive staff will also do random checks to ensure phones are pouched and checking will take place again at roll call. If senior students finish for the day prior to 3.10pm, they are to report to the front office to have their phone unpouched if they leave during a scheduled period, or have their phone unpouched by the staff member on gate duty near the office during a break upon having their timetable checked. For students who have misplaced their timetable, a copy can be printed at the front office for a fee.
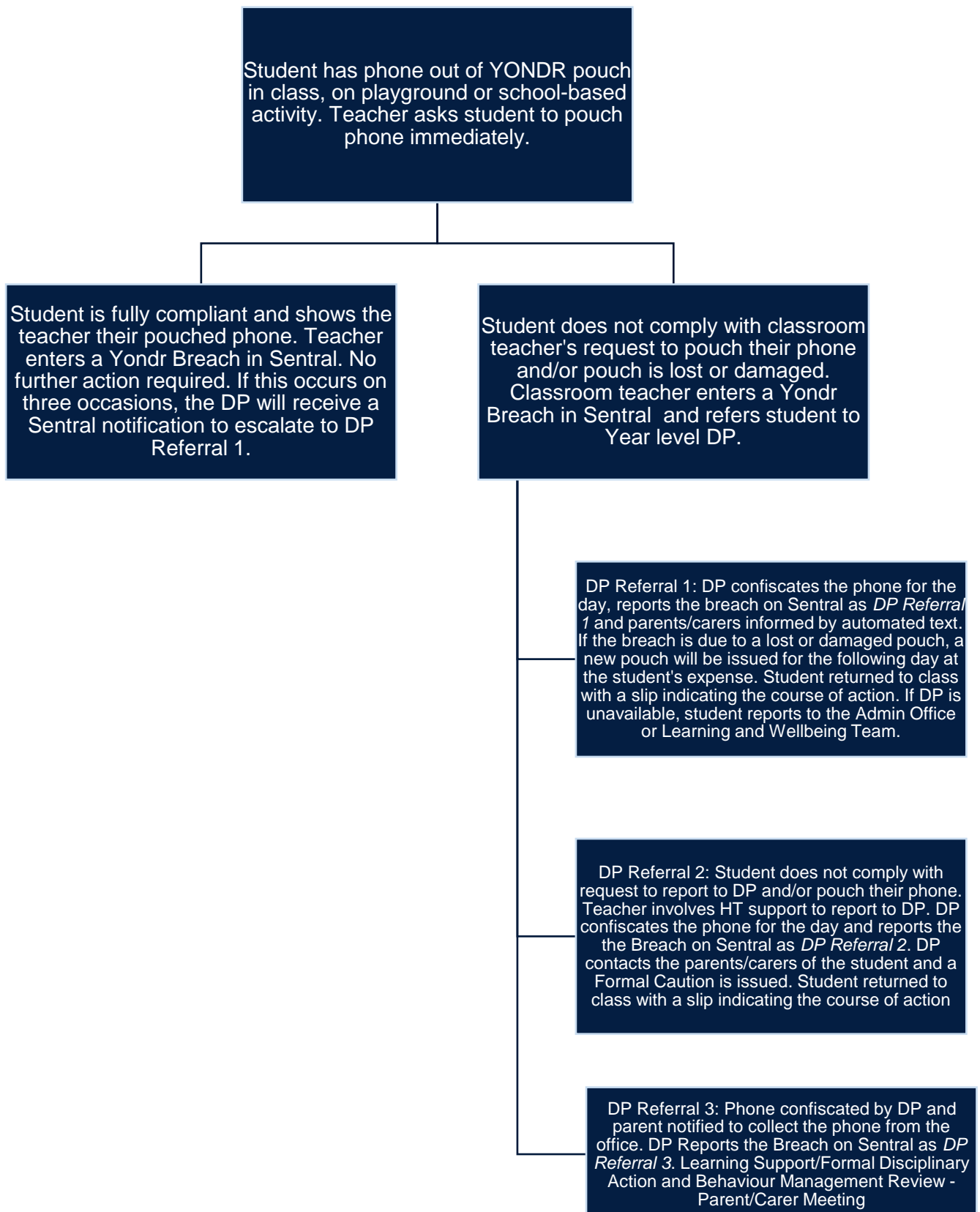
Excursions

Whilst off-site on school-based activities, the YONDR system still applies and students must keep their phone in their YONDR pouch, unless explicitly stated for a specific purpose. This includes school carnivals. Where students may not return to school at the conclusion of an event, the supervising teacher will bring a mobile unlocking station for students to release their phones prior to departure.

Adjustments

Adjustments to any part of this procedure may apply for some students under medical or exceptional circumstances, however full exemptions will not be provided. Parents and caregivers can request alterations and these will be considered on a case-by-case basis and granted when required by law or at the discretion of the principal. For students who wish to contact employers during the school day or vice versa, the school is willing to generate an official letter upon request indicating that students will not be contactable except through the front office.

Policy breaches

The following flow chart details the management procedures for students who breach the Mobile Phone Policy at Kotara High School. This is extended to earphones and other adjacent technology. In addition, if a student has their phone pouched and it buzzes or rings they will be required to take it to the Deputy Principal, where they can unlock it and turn it to silent before putting it back in their pouch. If this occurs repeatedly, the process will be escalated.

Student has phone out of YONDR pouch in class, on playground or school-based activity. Teacher asks student to pouch phone immediately.

Student is fully compliant and shows the teacher their pouched phone. Teacher enters a Yondr Breach in Sentral. No further action required. If this occurs on three occasions, the DP will receive a Sentral notification to escalate to DP Referral 1.

Student does not comply with classroom teacher's request to pouch their phone and/or pouch is lost or damaged. Classroom teacher enters a Yondr Breach in Sentral and refers student to Year level DP.

DP Referral 1: DP confiscates the phone for the day, reports the breach on Sentral as *DP Referral 1* and parents/carers informed by automated text. If the breach is due to a lost or damaged pouch, a new pouch will be issued for the following day at the student's expense. Student returned to class with a slip indicating the course of action. If DP is unavailable, student reports to the Admin Office or Learning and Wellbeing Team.

DP Referral 2: Student does not comply with request to report to DP and/or pouch their phone. Teacher involves HT support to report to DP. DP confiscates the phone for the day and reports the the Breach on Sentral as *DP Referral 2*. DP contacts the parents/carers of the student and a Formal Caution is issued. Student returned to class with a slip indicating the course of action

DP Referral 3: Phone confiscated by DP and parent notified to collect the phone from the office. DP Reports the Breach on Sentral as *DP Referral 3*. Learning Support/Formal Disciplinary Action and Behaviour Management Review - Parent/Carer Meeting

Damaged or Lost Pouches

Students who have lost or damaged their pouch are not to bring their phone to school until they have organised a replacement pouch. If the students' phone is seen then staff will follow the procedure outlined above. Students are required to pay a fee of $15 for the replacement of the damaged or lost pouch. Students who need their phone before or after school but have damaged or lost pouches can hand the phone to the DP each morning where it will be kept until a new pouch is issued. Students who damage school property related to supporting the YONDR Program will be managed in accordance with *Student Behaviour Procedures Kindergarten to Year 12 (2022).*

Responsibilities and Obligations

For students

- Be safe, responsible and respectful users of digital devices and online services, and support their peers to be the same.
- Respect and follow school rules and procedures and the decisions made by staff, knowing that other schools may have different procedures and rules.
- Communicate respectfully and collaboratively with peers, school staff and the school community and behave in the ways described in the Behaviour Code for Students.
- Should a student need to make a call during the school day, they must approach the administration office and ask for permission to use the school's phone.

For parents and carers

- Recognise the role they play in educating their children and modelling the behaviours that underpin the safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services.
- Support implementation of this policy, including its approach to resolving issues.
- Take responsibility for their child's use of digital devices and online services at home such as use of online services with age and content restrictions.
- Communicate with school staff and the school community respectfully and collaboratively as outlined in the School Community Charter (updated Feb 2020).
- Switch off or put their digital devices on silent when at official school functions, during meetings and when assisting in the classroom.
- Provide digital devices that meet school specifications where a school is participating in a bring your own device program and complete any related paperwork.
- During school hours, parents and carers are expected to only contact their children via the school office. If you need to collect your student we will send for them to meet you at the front office.

For the principal and teachers

- Deliver learning experiences that encourage safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services. This includes:
    - Establishing agreed classroom expectations for using digital devices and online services, in line with this procedure and departmental policy.
    - Identifying strategies to ensure that all students are able to engage in classroom activities including strategies to accommodate students without a digital device.
    - Reading and abiding by the Terms of Service for any online services they use in teaching, including those limiting use by age.
    - Educating students about *digital citizenship* - online privacy, intellectual property, copyright, digital literacy and other online safety related issues.

- Model appropriate use of digital devices and online services in line with departmental policy.
- Respond to and report any breaches and incidents of inappropriate use of digital devices and online services as required by school procedures, departmental policy and any statutory and regulatory requirements. This includes:
  - Reporting the creation, possession or distribution of indecent or offensive material to the Incident Support and Report hotline as required by the Incident Notification and Response Policy and Procedures and consider any mandatory reporting requirements.
  - Working with the department and the Office of the eSafety Commissioner (if necessary) to resolve cases of serious online bullying and image-based abuse.
  - Following the school's behaviour management plan when responding to any incident of inappropriate student behaviour relating to the use of digital devices or online services.
- If feasible and particularly as issues emerge, support parents and carers to understand strategies that promote their children's safe, responsible and respectful use of digital devices and online services.
- Participate in professional development related to appropriate use of digital devices and online services.

For School Administrative Staff

- Implement the administrative processes outlined in this policy
- Assist students to lock/unlock their pouches throughout the day when entering/exiting the school grounds where necessary
- Communicate with parents and carers and teaching staff where required to ensure the smooth implementation of the policy

For non-teaching staff, volunteers and contractors

- Be aware of the Department's policy, this procedure and act in line with the conduct described.
- Report any inappropriate use of digital devices and online services to the principal, school executive or school staff they are working with.

Communicating this procedure to the school community

Students will be informed about this policy and provided with updates regarding its implementation through Roll Call, Whole School Assemblies and via Canvas. Feedback will be collected on a regular basis through the Student Representative Council (SRC).

Parents and carers can access this policy on the school website or in hard copy form at the school administration office.

Complaints

If a student, parent or carer has a complaint under this procedure, they should first follow the school's complaint process. If the issue cannot be resolved, please refer to the Department's guide for students/ parents/ carers about making a complaint about our schools.

Review Process

The principal or delegated staff will review this policy on an annual basis in consultation with the Student Representative Council, Parents & Citizens Association, teaching, administrative and support staff.