

Dear Parents and Carers,

In line with updated legal requirements for schools, and continuing from the previous academic year, this is a reminder that we ask parents and carers of Waldegrave students to choose one of the following mobile phone options for their child:

- A smartphone with the blackout app installed
- A non-internet connected 'brick' phone
- No phone brought to school

This approach is mandatory for all students in Years 8, 9 and 10. Students in Year 11 are also invited to install Blackout on their smartphones if they wish. Year 7 parents and carers will be provided with details during the Year 7 parent information evening, once the students have settled into school life.

### **Parent form**

Please can I ask all parents or carers to complete the attached [google form](#) at their earliest convenience in order to inform the school which option their child will be taking in terms of phone use at school. This form will take less than a minute to complete.

### **Re-installation of blackout**

As the mobile phone situation for certain students and families may have changed over the summer holidays, we will be re-inviting all students in Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 to install Blackout.

After school tomorrow (Wednesday 9 September) students in Years 8 to 11 will be sent an email to their school email address. The email will contain a link to download the blackout app and a personal authentication code for installation.

**Please note:** This authorisation code will be different to the code sent last academic year.

### **Students bringing a brick phone or no phone to school can disregard the email invitation**

We ask that before school on Thursday, those students that will be bringing a smartphone to school install, with parental supervision, the blackout app on their phone whilst they are at home.

This should be more straightforward for students that have installed the app previously. In order to offer support for those who need it, staff will be available in the hubs on Thursday morning to support students and ensure that they have been able to activate their account..

The following information will be shared with students tomorrow morning. [Blackout - next steps](#)

Thank you for your continued support in helping our students develop healthier digital habits and the balance, focus, and confidence they need to thrive both in school and beyond. If you have any questions please contact the school using the [info@waldegravesch.org](mailto:info@waldegravesch.org) email address.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr I Goulbourne  
Deputy Headteacher

Please use this link to access further information: [What is blackout? Parents and carers](#)

### **What is Blackout?**

Blackout is a mobile app that helps students manage and limit their phone use during the school day. It blocks access to distracting apps during school hours, such as social media, games and web browsers, while keeping essential communication (calls and SMS) available. Blackout also disables cameras and recording features.

The app will only be active during the school day and does not have access to files, information, location details, personal information or any content through your child's phone nor are any school records shared with Blackout. The only information provided will be your child's name, school email address, year group and type of device, which are used for verification purposes.

The Blackout app is not invasive and no data or content will be visible to the school or app provider. It is a tool, aligned with our existing mobile phone policy that phones should not be used during the school day. Whilst we still expect all students to adhere to this approach, the Blackout app provides a structured support mechanism to reduce temptation and distractions during the school day.

We believe that working with Blackout is a proactive step in helping students remain focused on their learning, while supporting their well-being, relationships and academic progress. It will support our curriculum, by helping to educate students about healthy use of digital technology.

We believe that the app is very reasonably priced when compared to other similar, physical phone blocking resources (such as pouches or lockers). We are happy to report that due to support and funding from charitable causes, we will be able to offer the app completely free of charge until the end of the summer term, and potentially beyond.

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