HARROGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL
EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

RED KITE
LEARNING TRUST

6 November 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Roll Out of Blackout App

We have clear expectations around mobile phone use in school to ensure that pupils remain focused on learning, build positive relationships and fully engage in school life. All students are expected to have their phone turned off and away in their bag. However, in response to recent updated government guidance, which states that all schools should be mobile phone-free by default, we are strengthening our approach further through the use of the Blackout app.

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 mobile technology 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 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.

If you have not yet seen, or wish to revisit, there is a prerecorded webinar available, please click here.

Students have had an assembly about this and will be asked to download and set up the Blackout app on Monday 9 November 2026. We have also included a step-by-step guide with this letter for your information. **You do not need to do anything to set up Blackout on your child's device**.

When will Blackout block apps?

School sets the Blackout schedule, so your child doesn't need to do anything each day once the app is set up. Our current Blackout schedule is:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 8.50am – 3.32pm
Wednesday: 8.50am – 2.42pm
Term time only

During these times, distracting and non-essential apps, such as social media, games and streaming services, will be blocked automatically. Blackout also disables cameras and recording features.

Harrogate Grammar School Arthurs Avenue, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 0DZ
01423 531127 mail@hgs.rklt.co.uk HarrogateGrammarSchool @HarrogateGS
www.harrogategrammar.co.uk
Headteacher: Mr N Renton, Associate Headteacher: Mrs K Moat

Learning Trust Alliance Teacher Training Teaching School Hub

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Essential functions, including **phone calls, SMS, Wallet, Maps, Settings and Clock,** will remain available.

Outside the school's Blackout schedule, **normal smartphone functionality is automatically restored**, so your child will have full use of their phone before and after the agreed Blackout period.

If necessary, your child can temporarily disable Blackout during the school day. If they do, staff will be notified so they can follow up appropriately.

A few important things to know

- **Your child keeps possession of their phone.** Blackout does not require phones to be handed in, placed in lockers or locked inside physical pouches.
- Blackout **does not** track your child's location. It is schedule-based and does not use GPS or geofencing to monitor where students are.
- Blackout **does not** monitor what your child does on their phone. It does not collect browsing history, messages, photographs or location information.
- **Only the limited information required to operate the service is processed**, such as school email, year group, and technical information needed to ensure Blackout works correctly.

You can find more information about how Blackout handles personal data in their Privacy Policy.

If your child has a **medical, SEND or safeguarding need** that may require an adjustment to how Blackout is used, please contact your Year Manager.

Year 7 – Mr Thurley (ThurleyA@hgs.rklt.co.uk)
Year 8 – Mrs Wilkinson (WilkinsonK@hgs.rklt.co.uk)
Year 9 – Mrs Oliver (OliverM@hgs.rklt.co.uk)
Year 10 – Mr Inglis (InglisT@hgs.rklt.co.uk)
Year 11 – Mr Liley (LilyJ@hgs.rklt.co.uk)

Need help?

If you or your child have any questions or experience any issues during setup, please contact your Year Manager in the first instance.

Thank you for your support in helping make the rollout of Blackout as smooth as possible.

Yours sincerely



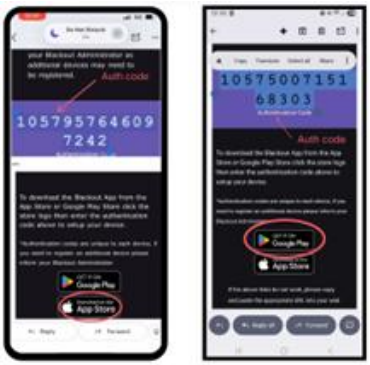
Miss K Smith
Deputy Headteacher

Student instructions – How to set up Blackout

1. Find your Blackout email

You will receive an email to your **school email address**. This email contains:

- Your **unique authentication code**
- Links to download the Blackout app from either the **Google Play Store** or the **Apple App Store**



Apple Phone Android Phone

2. Make a note of the authentication code

Please **write down or copy this code** from the email before continuing with the setup.

3. Download the Blackout app

In the email, click the relevant download link:

- **Android:** Click the **Google Play** icon
- **iPhone:** Click the **App Store** icon

The link will take you directly to the Blackout app.

Please note: Blackout is not publicly listed in the app stores, so the app must be downloaded using the link provided in your email.



You can also access the download links via the [Blackout Technologies website].

4. Complete the setup

Once the app has downloaded:

1. Open Blackout and **read and accept the Terms and Conditions**.
2. You will then be asked to allow several permissions.
3. **Please accept all of the requested permissions** to complete the setup.

These permissions allow Blackout to apply the school's scheduled restrictions correctly. They **do not give Blackout or the school access to your messages, photographs, browsing history or the contents of other apps**.

Once these steps are complete, **Blackout is ready to go.**