



**Policy:** Mobile Phones and Screen Policy

**Policy reference no:** 021

**Date:** September 2025

**Person responsible for policy:** Stephen Dean, Chief Executive Officer

**Authorised by:** Board of Trustees

**Review date:** December 2027

This Policy applies to all schools within the Primary QuEST Multi-Academy Trust. Primary QuEST is a Church of England Trust which seeks to ensure all pupils flourish, together in a supportive and caring environment.

### **Flourishing Together Through LIFE**

#### **Introduction and Aims**

The safety, welfare and well-being of our pupils is paramount. The aim of the mobile phone and screen policy is to allow users to benefit from modern communication technologies, whilst promoting safe and appropriate practice through establishing clear and robust acceptable mobile user guidelines. This is achieved through balancing protection against potential misuse with the recognition that mobile phone and screens are effective communication tools. It is recognised that it is the enhanced functions of many mobile phone and screens that cause the most concern, offering distractions and disruption to the working day, and which are most susceptible to misuse – including the taking and distribution of indecent images, exploitation and bullying. However, as it is difficult to detect specific usage, this policy refers to ALL mobile communication devices.

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to all individuals who have access to personal mobile phone and screens on site. This includes staff, volunteers, local advisors, trustees, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

This policy should also be read in relation to the following documentation:

- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policies

It is fully recognised that imposing rigid regulations on the actions of others can be counterproductive. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the setting, which is agreed to by all users.

#### **Personal Mobiles – Staff**

- Staff are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office
- During the school day, staff should leave their phones in the school's designated place (e.g. admin office, class cupboard, locker or staff room).
- Mobile phones should not be stored or used in a space where children are present.
- Use of phones (including receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. designated areas of admin office or staff room.
- It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions of their phone
- Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative), then staff should make the headteacher and office staff aware of this so messages can be relayed promptly

- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phone and screens, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and iPads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the headteacher.

### **Mobile phone and screens for work related purposes**

We recognise that Mobile phones provide a useful means of communication on off-site activities. However, staff should ensure that:

- Mobile use on these occasions is appropriate and professional (and will never include taking photographs of children)
- Mobile phones should not be used to make contact with parents during school trips – all relevant communications should be made via the school office. If a call is required out of school hours then a mobile can be used with no called ID shared or through the designated home contact. Teacher2parents enable parents to be contacted through a web-based system and is encouraged when the network permits.
- Where parents are accompanying trips they are informed not to make contact with other parents (via calls, text, email or social networking) during the trip or use their phone to take photographs of children.

### **Personal Mobiles – Pupils**

We recognise that mobile phones and screens are part of everyday life for many children and that they can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that they can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others. Therefore:-

- Pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones and screens at school or on trips.
- If in the rare event of a parent wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phones or screen to school to contact the parent before/after school:
  1. The parent must discuss the issue first with the headteacher
  2. If agreed the phone must be handed into the School Office, switched off first thing in the morning and collected from the office by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk).
- Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day.

Where mobile phones and screens are used in or out of school to bully or intimidate others then the headteacher does have the power to intervene 'to such an extent as is reasonable to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site'.

Pupils who bring mobile phones to school must hand them in to the office at the start of the day. Please note that phones are brought into school at the owner's own risk, and the school cannot accept responsibility for loss, damage, or theft, as they are not covered by our insurance.

### **Volunteers, Visitors, Local Advisors, Trustees and Contractors**

All Volunteers, Visitors, Local Advisors, Trustees and Contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone and screen policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises.

Contractors who use their mobile phone cameras to take photos, need to be accompanied and must not take photos in places where children are present.

On arrival, such visitors will be informed of our expectations around the use of mobile phones and screens.

### **Parents**

While we would prefer parents not to use their mobile phone and screens while on school premises, we recognise that this would be impossible to regulate and that many parents see their phones as essential means of communication at all times. We, therefore, ask that parents' usage of mobile phones, whilst on the school site is courteous and appropriate to the school environment. We do allow parents to photograph or video school events such as shows or sports day using their mobile phone and screens – **but insist that parents do not publish images (e.g. on**

**social networking sites) that include any children other than their own.** Parents are reminded of this at the start of every school performance, on sports day, etc.

### **Smart Watches**

Smart watches may be worn in school under the following conditions:

- **Connectivity:** Smart watches must be deactivated during the school day and not connected to mobile phones or other external devices.
- **Camera Use:** Smart watches with camera functions must not be used to take photos or videos at any time during the school day.
- **Safeguarding and Intimate Care:** Smart watches must not be worn by staff when supporting children with intimate care or when entering bathroom/changing areas, in line with safeguarding best practices.

Failure to comply with these conditions may result in the watch being removed during the school day and returned at the end of the day.

### **Dissemination**

The mobile phone and screen policy will be shared with staff and volunteers as part of their induction. It will also be available for parents and carers via the school office and website. The impact of this policy on staff workload has been considered. This Policy was reviewed by the Trust Board on a 2-yearly cycle and must be signed by the Chair of the Trust Board and the CEO.

### **Biblical Underpinning for Church of England schools**

Turning on a mobile phone is a temptation. In Luke 22.39-45 Jesus prays that the disciples "will not fall into temptation". Instead of staying on message and on duty Jesus finds them "asleep". Primary QuEST expects staff and students to be alert and focused on the job in hand, a life lived in the presence of God's love, even though it requires real character to do so.