



Mobile Phones: Policy and Procedures

Headphones are subject to the same rules as mobile phones

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1. Legal Framework

1.1 This document will have consideration for the following legislation and guidance:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- DfE, 2023, 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE, 2024, "Mobile phones in schools: Guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day"

1.2 This document operates in conjunction with:

- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

2. Mobile Phone Rationale (Headphones are subject to the same rules as Mobile Phones)

- Mobile Phones are banned items at Queensbridge School.
- The school expects the support of parents in this matter.
- In February 2024, the Government announced its plan to prohibit mobile phones in schools across England as part of their plan to minimise disruption and improve behaviour in classrooms.
- To this end, the Education Secretary has issued new guidance to all schools. Although Queensbridge School's policy on Mobile Phones being banned in school has not changed, to ensure compliance with this directive, the below guidance gives greater clarity around this to parents, students and staff.

Safeguarding

- Updated guidance with regards to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023' states that schools are responsible for monitoring the content that students are accessing online during the school day. This extends to content being accessed via mobile phones and not just school computers.
- As a school, we cannot ensure that all students are accessing appropriate content and cannot prevent them from distributing inappropriate content either.
- As a result of this, mobile phones greatly increase the risk of child-on-child abuse, cyberbullying, and data protection issues.

Wellbeing

- The average screen time for a young person is over 8 hours per day.
- Too much screen time can have significant detrimental effects on young people's wellbeing such as increased anxiety, poor sleep patterns, poor self-esteem, and mood swings. The recommended screen time is 2 hours per day, and research suggests there is a dose-response relationship, meaning the less time spent in front of a screen, the smaller the detrimental effect will be.

Socialisation

- Research tells us that three in ten pupils cite making and maintaining friendships and their mental health as a cause of worry, anxiety or depression. By removing mobile phones, children and young people can spend more time staying active and socialising face to face with their peers.

Outcomes for learners

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- Studies have shown a positive correlation between banning phones and improving outcomes. A London School of Economics Study found test scores of students increased by 6.4% in several UK schools that introduced a mobile phone ban. This is equivalent to adding five days to the school year or an additional hour a week.

Resilience

- There has been a rise in the number of occasions parents have arrived at school to discuss an incident because their child has contacted them during the school day. This undermines the authority of staff within the school to deal with issues as they arise.
- See point 29 –Emergencies – How Parents Can be Contacted during the school day.

3. Mobile Phone Procedure

- 3.1 Queensbridge School is strictly a mobile-free site. Irrespective of the time of day, students should ensure that their mobile phone is kept out of sight.
- 3.2 If a parent allows their child to bring a mobile phone on site, because, for example, they need to be contactable for meeting / travel home at the end of the school day, this is entirely at the student's own risk.
- 3.3 The device must be switched off and kept out of sight in the student's bag.
- 3.4 If for any reason, a student is not able to store their phone safely out of sight, it is to be handed in to the Head of Year immediately at the start of the school day.
- 3.5 Although the school takes the utmost care with student's property, the law clearly states that, in the unlikely event that a mobile phone, or any other electronic device, is lost, stolen or damaged while in a school's possession, the school is not liable.

4. Consequences for Non-Compliance

4.1 If a student is seen or heard on the school site at any time of day with a mobile phone, whether actively using or not, it will be confiscated immediately, with no argument.

4.2 The examples below are not acceptable excuses:

- Checking timetable or Edulink – all students are issued a timetable, Edulink can be accessed by form tutors or pastoral teams at appropriate times.
- Checking the time – use a watch or school clock.
- Pupils listening to music through headphones will not be allowed in any lesson. Atmospheric music to enhance learning, may be played at the teacher's discretion through classroom speakers.

4.3 Upon discovering a mobile phone, the following sanctions will apply:

- Phone confiscated and handed into Reception who will store in the school safe.
- Staff member involved will create a behaviour log for phone confiscation.
- Student will be issued with a same day detention for 30-minutes after school which should be completed with Head of Year.
- If a student already has a detention on the day of confiscation, then the detention will need to be completed on the next available day.
- Mobile phones will be returned to student on completion of detention.

4.4 Step-by-Step Procedure for Phone Confiscation Without Knowing the Pupil's Name

1. Ask the Pupil for Their Name Politely

- Approach the pupil calmly and ask:
"I'll need to take your phone due to the school policy. Can you please tell me your name so I can record it properly?"

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- Explain why it's needed: "We need to log who the phone belongs to and ensure it's returned to the right person."

2. If the Pupil Refuses to Give Their Name

- Do not escalate - keep calm.
- Inform them clearly:
"If you don't give your name, I'll need to hand the phone in to the main office, and it may take longer for you to get it back."

3. Request Support (if needed)

- If the student is still non-compliant or refuses to provide their name, involve:
 - A head of year
 - A member of the leadership team
 - A pastoral staff member
- These staff usually know the pupils or can identify them.
- Phone confiscated and handed into Reception who will store in the school safe.
- Staff member involved will create a behaviour log for phone confiscation.

5. If a student refuses to have their phone confiscated

5.1 After a short period of reflection and a conversation with a trusted adult, they will be given a further opportunity to make the right choice.

5.2 Any student who, despite this, persists in refusing to hand in their mobile phone to a member of staff upon request, or initially refuses on more than one occasion is at risk of external suspension.

5.3 As the DfE has introduced statutory guidance for schools on prohibiting the use of mobile phones, Queensbridge School expects the full support of parents in implementing this policy

6. Staff use of mobile phones

6.1 Most staff are asked to use phones in staffrooms, offices and workspaces only. Exceptions would need to be discussed with line manager (e.g. PE staff using mobile phone to complete registers on Edulink).

6.2 We would encourage all staff as a professional courtesy not to use phones in meetings, either internal or external.

7. Emergencies

7.1 If a student needs to contact their parents/carers, during the school day they will be allowed to use a school phone during break and lunchtime. This will be coordinated by the Head of Year. In this instance, student should go to the Pastoral Office as appropriate.

7.2 If parents/carers need to contact students urgently, they should phone the school office and a message will be relayed promptly.

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