

Mobile Phone & Device Policy

DOCUMENT INFORMATION – FRONT SHEET

Please note – the generic policy will be published on the Trust website with a School specific policy published on the individual School Website. Physically printed copies of this policy may be out of date. For the most up to date policy please go to the School Website.

POLICY DETAILS

POLICY OWNER/AUTHOR	NEW POLICY	CURRENT POLICY - REDRAFT/AMENDMENTS
Lara Hall – Director of School Improvement	No	No

VERSION HISTORY

VERSION NO & DATE	N/A				
VERSION DETAIL & CHANGES	2				
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APPROVAL INFORMATION

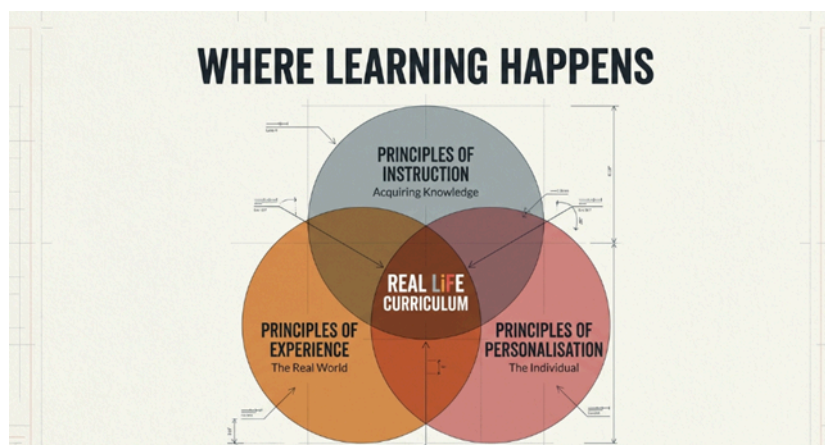
DATE APPROVED/REVIEWED	July 2026	APPROVED BY	Board of Trustees
UNION CONSULTATION REQUIRED	No	IF YES, PLEASE STATE DATE OF CONSULTATION	N/A
NAME OF LIFE MAT SCHOOL	The Winstanley School		

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LIFE MAT APPROACH

At LiFE MAT, our policies are anchored in our vision where every learner is empowered to thrive and develop agency through a steadfast commitment to equity. Our approach is operationalised through our Real LiFE Curriculum, which integrates the Principles of Instruction, Experience, and Personalisation to cultivate the diverse strengths and passions of each learner.



1. Purpose

- LiFE Multi-Academy Trust is committed to creating mobile phone-free learning environments where learners can feel safe, focused, connected and ready to learn.
- Mobile phones and personal smart devices create significant barriers to learning, wellbeing, safeguarding and positive relationships. They can contribute to distraction, social conflict, online harm, bullying, reduced concentration and increased anxiety.
- For this reason, LiFE MAT schools operate on the principle that learners should not have access to mobile phones or personal smart devices during the school day unless an agreed exception or reasonable adjustment applies.
- This policy establishes clear and consistent expectations across all LiFE MAT schools and reflects our Trust's commitment to safeguarding, high standards of behaviour and creating the best possible conditions for learning. Recent national guidance has reinforced the expectation that pupils should not have access to devices during lessons, breaktimes, lunchtimes or transitions between lessons.

1.1 Relationship to other policies

- Behaviour Policy
 - Searching, Screening and Confiscation procedures (school-level, aligned to DfE searching guidance)
 - Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy (KCSiE)
 - ICT Acceptable Use / BYOD (mobile phones excluded from BYOD)
 - Equality, SEND, Supporting Learners with Medical Conditions
 - Educational Visits / Trips Policy
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2. Scope and definitions

2.1 Devices covered

This policy applies to any personal device capable of communication, internet access, photography, audio recording, video recording, artificial intelligence functions, messaging, location tracking or the transmission of data.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- mobile phones and smartphones
- smart watches and fitness watches with communication functionality
- smart glasses and wearable technology (including Meta/Ray-Ban glasses and similar devices)
- augmented reality (AR) and artificial intelligence wearable devices
- devices capable of taking photographs, recording audio or recording video
- devices capable of accessing the internet through Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, mobile data or similar technologies
- any future technology which performs substantially similar functions

Schools may extend this to other devices (e.g., personal tablets) via their local schedule.

2.2 What “school day” means

The **school day** includes:

- lessons, transitions between lessons, breaktimes, lunchtime
 - Schools may also apply restrictions to before/after school while learners are under school supervision.
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3. LiFE MAT minimum standards

All LiFE MAT schools must:

1. Operate as a **mobile phone-free environment by default** during the school day. Any departure is **exceptional and justified**.
 2. Ensure learners do not access, use, display or interact with mobile phones or personal smart devices during the school day unless an approved exception applies.
 3. Set clear **sanctions**, including when **confiscation** is used, and ensure consistent enforcement.
 4. Include mobile phones/smart devices in the list of items that **may be searched for** (within legal powers) and align practice to searching guidance.
 5. Build in **reasonable adjustments/adaptations** for learners who need access because of disability/SEND or medical needs (e.g., diabetes monitoring), with individual plans.
 6. Set expectations for **staff conduct** (staff should not use phones for personal reasons in front of learners during the school day, with defined exceptions).
 7. Ensure that mobile phone expectations are enforced consistently and that breaches result in a graduated response involving both sanction and support.
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4. Local school implementation choices (School Implementation Schedule)

4.1 Trust Expectation

Schools may determine the operational system used to manage mobile phones. However, all systems must achieve the same outcome: learners must not have access to mobile phones during the school day.

4.2 Device state rule

In accordance with government guidance published in February 2024, the Winstanley School does not permit the use of mobile phones on site. Students can keep possession of their mobile phones only on the strict condition that they are never used, seen or heard during the school day (8.30am til 3.05pm). We know some students like to use their mobile phones on their way to and from school, which is still permitted, but we will ensure that phones are switched off when they enter the site and placed at the bottom of their school bag. Failure to adhere to these expectations will result in the following consequences:

- For the first breach of this policy, the device will be confiscated and placed in an envelope in reception ready to be collected at the end of the school day by the student.
- For a second breach of this policy, the device will be confiscated and placed in an envelope in reception ready to be collected at the end of the school day by the parent.
- For a third breach of this policy, students will be prohibited from having these devices on site and may be searched each morning before entering the premises.

4.3 Parent contact arrangements

Parents have an important role in supporting the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and should be encouraged to reinforce and discuss the policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.

Where parents need to contact their child during the school day, they should be directed to the school office, where staff will pass on the message to the student.

If a pupil breaches the mobile phone policy, they will be contacted by email informing them so.

4.4 Trips and outside normal hours

Mobile phones will be permitted on school trips but must be used in an appropriate manner as indicated by the trip leader.

5. Expectations and rules

5.1 Learners

Learners must not:

- use phones/smart devices during the school day (including breaks and transitions)
- record audio/video or take photos on site unless explicitly authorised for curriculum purposes
- display mobile phones or personal smart devices
- use smart watches for messaging, social media, internet access or communication
- use mobile devices to contact parents, carers or peers during the school day

Learners should be taught:

- risks of phone use (distraction, disruption, bullying) and benefits of phone-free culture

5.2 Staff

Staff play a vital role in modelling the expectations set out within this policy and creating a culture where learning, relationships, wellbeing and safeguarding are prioritised.

Staff must:

- consistently enforce the school's expectations regarding mobile phones and personal smart devices
- model appropriate and professional use of technology at all times
- ensure personal devices do not interfere with teaching, supervision or engagement with learners
- avoid unnecessary personal mobile phone use in the presence of learners

Staff may wear smart watches or similar devices. Brief and discreet interaction with a smartwatch (for example, to check the time, a work-related notification or an urgent communication) is permitted where it does not disrupt teaching, supervision or engagement with learners.

Staff must not use personal smart devices to record, photograph, livestream, monitor or transmit information relating to learners, staff or school activities unless expressly authorised for a legitimate professional purpose and in accordance with school procedures.

Staff must not wear or use smart glasses, augmented reality (AR) glasses, artificial intelligence (AI) enabled glasses, or other wearable devices capable of recording, photographing, transmitting, processing or displaying information whilst undertaking duties involving learners.

This includes devices such as Meta/Ray-Ban smart glasses and any similar wearable technology.

LiFE MAT recognises that wearable technologies are evolving rapidly and may present safeguarding, privacy and data protection risks. Any exception to this expectation must be expressly authorised by the Headteacher for a specific professional purpose and be compliant with safeguarding, data protection and information governance requirements.

Where staff are required to use personal devices for authentication, communication or operational purposes, this should be undertaken discreetly and only where necessary to support their professional responsibilities.

5.3 Parents/carers

- Parents should support the policy and direct daytime contact via the school reception
- Parents should understand any exception plans and reinforce expectations at home

6. Graduated Response, Sanctions and Support

First Breach

Where a learner is found using, accessing or displaying a mobile phone or prohibited smart device during the school day:

- the device will be confiscated and stored securely
- the learner may collect the device at the end of the school day
- a behaviour consequence will be applied in line with the school's Behaviour Policy
- expectations will be revisited with the learner

Second Breach

Where a learner breaches the policy for a second time:

- the device will be confiscated
- parents/carers will be informed
- the learner will be required to hand their device into school at the start of each day for a period of ten school days
- the device will be returned at the end of each school day
- behaviour consequences will be applied in line with the school's Behaviour Policy

Repeated or Persistent Breaches

Repeated breaches of this policy indicate that additional intervention is required.

Where concerns continue:

- a meeting will be held with the learner, parent/carers and an appropriate school leader
- barriers to compliance will be explored
- additional support and expectations will be agreed
- a personalised behaviour and support plan may be implemented
- an extended hand-in arrangement may be introduced
- further sanctions may be applied in line with the school's Behaviour Policy

The purpose of this stage is to ensure that both accountability and support are in place to enable the learner to successfully meet expectations.

6.3 Refusal to hand over

Refusal to hand over a mobile phone when requested by a member of staff will be treated as a failure to follow a reasonable instruction and will result in escalation through the school's Behaviour Policy.

Certain types of conduct, bullying or harassment can be classified as criminal conduct. The school takes such conduct extremely seriously and will involve the police or other agencies as appropriate.

Such conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexting (consensual and non-consensual sharing nude or semi-nude images or videos)
- Upskirting
- Threats of violence or assault
- Abusive calls, emails, social media posts or texts directed at someone on the basis of someone's ethnicity, religious beliefs or sexual orientation

7. Searching learners (summary statement)

- Headteachers (or authorised staff) have statutory powers to search where there are reasonable grounds and where items are prohibited by school rules; schools can identify mobile phones as an item that may be searched for within the behaviour policy.
 - All searching must follow the school's Searching, Screening and Confiscation procedures aligned to [DfE searching guidance](#).
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8. Reasonable adjustments and exceptions

8.1 Core principle

A phone-free environment is the default, but schools **must** meet legal duties and make **reasonable adjustments**.

8.2 Typical exceptions (examples)

- **Medical needs** (e.g., diabetes monitoring via phone) where preventing use would be unreasonable
- **Disability/SEND** where access is necessary to avoid substantial disadvantage (Equality Act)
- Other exceptional circumstances assessed case-by-case (e.g., young carers)

8.3 How exceptions work

Where Parents/Carers or other adults believe their child requires their phone for any of the above, they should contact a member of the school's inclusion team. Exceptions are expected to be rare and must be proportionate, clearly documented and reviewed regularly. If approved the following will be clearly communicated to parent/carers, staff and learner:

- permitted purpose
- permitted times/locations (e.g., Head of Year office)
- supervision arrangements
- how to minimise wider access/distraction

9. Safeguarding, online safety, and incidents

- If phone misuse raises concerns that a learner may be at risk of harm, staff follow safeguarding procedures and involve the DSL

10. Implementation, communication, and review

10.1 Implementation expectations

Each school must:

- brief staff and train on consistent enforcement
- educate learners on rationale and expectations
- publish the policy and communicate it clearly to parents

10.2 Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Director of School Improvement for LiFE Multi-Academy Trust.