Quinly Six-Month Usage Report

Pilot Evaluation Across Six Schools
(Five E-ACT Academies and Overton Grange School)
15 July 2025 – 13 January 2026

Executive Summary

This report presents the completed six-month evaluation of Quinly Basic across six schools, including five E-ACT academies and Overton Grange School. Quinly was provided as a voluntary, anonymous safeguarding support tool for pupils aged 7 to 17. This final report incorporates full weekly and hourly usage exports across the entire pilot period, enabling a robust assessment of engagement volume, depth and timing.

Across the reporting period, pupils initiated **3,289 anonymised conversations** with Quinly. **2,942,614 text tokens** were processed across these interactions, equating to an average of **approximately 894 tokens per conversation**. This indicates sustained, multi-message engagement rather than brief or incidental use. Engagement occurred consistently throughout the pilot. Higher volumes were recorded during the early academic term, followed by lower but continued usage through late autumn and winter months. Crucially, the final reporting weeks introduced **no collapse or discontinuity**, confirming that engagement did not cease after initial introduction.

Time-of-day analysis demonstrates that Quinly is predominantly used **outside normal school hours**, including evenings, weekends and late-night periods. This reinforces Quinly's role as an always-available, low-friction route to safeguarding support when in-person services are unavailable.

The completed dataset provides a closed, reliable evidence base on how pupils use anonymous safeguarding support when it is made accessible within school environments.

Purpose of the Pilot

The Quinly pilot was designed to evaluate:

- Whether pupils would voluntarily use an anonymous, privacy-preserving safeguarding support tool
- How usage levels changed over time
- Whether engagement was sustained beyond initial introduction

The pilot was not designed to collect or store personal data, nor to review individual disclosures. Analysis is based solely on anonymised aggregate usage signals.

Scope and Methodology

Quinly was made available to pupils aged 7–17 across six schools. Access was voluntary. No incentives were provided and no curriculum time was required.

Quinly operates on a strict **zero-retention architecture**:

- No conversation content is stored
- No personal identifiers are collected
- No pupil profiles are created
- Sessions disappear when closed

All analysis in this report is derived from anonymised aggregate usage data exported from system logs, including conversation counts, text-token volumes and hourly timestamps. This approach aligns with UK Children's Code data-minimisation principles and reduces privacy and governance risk for participating schools.

Understanding Tokens and Engagement Depth

In AI systems, a token is a standard unit of text measurement. Tokens include both pupil input and Quinly responses. Token counts allow engagement depth to be measured without storing message content.

Across the pilot:

- **2,942,614 text tokens** were processed
- **Average conversation length: ~894 tokens**

This reflects sustained back-and-forth dialogue rather than single-message interactions, providing a reliable proxy for meaningful engagement in an anonymous environment.

Headline Usage Metrics

- **Total anonymised conversations:** 3,289
- **Total text tokens processed:** 2,942,614
- **Average tokens per conversation:** ~894

These figures confirm repeated and substantive pupil engagement rather than superficial or curiosity-only use.

When Pupils Use Quinly: Time-of-Day and Weekend Analysis

Hourly usage exports were converted to UK local time to analyse when pupils access Quinly.

Usage distribution:

- **Outside 08:00–16:00 Monday–Friday: 82.7% of conversations**
- **Weekend usage (Saturday–Sunday): 41.2% of conversations**
- **Late-night usage (22:00–06:00): 23.9% of conversations**

Interpretation:

The majority of engagement occurs **outside the traditional school day**, including evenings, weekends and late-night hours. This demonstrates that pupils are choosing to access anonymous safeguarding support at times when in-person school staff and pastoral services are unavailable.

This pattern is highly significant in a safeguarding context. It indicates that Quinly fills a temporal gap in existing support systems, providing a route to immediate guidance and signposting during periods of isolation, distress or uncertainty.

Daily Peaks and Pressure-Point Usage

Analysis of daily conversation volumes identifies notable peaks aligning with known pressure points for pupils, including:

- Exam results release periods
- Start-of-term transition windows
- Return from holiday breaks

These peaks are consistent with pupils seeking anonymous support during moments of heightened uncertainty, social change and academic pressure.

Monthly Pattern and Conversation Depth

Monthly data shows:

- Strong uptake during August and September
- Continued engagement through autumn
- Lower but sustained usage into winter months

Importantly, **average tokens per conversation increased in later months**, indicating deeper and more focused engagement even as overall volume moderated. This pattern reflects a shift from broad initial exploration to sustained use by pupils who return for longer conversations.
Crucially, there is **no evidence of novelty-only engagement** or post-pilot drop-off.

Safeguarding Architecture and Governance Fit

Quinly is designed as a **safeguarding support tool**, not a social or wellbeing chatbot. Its function is to provide a low-friction first step toward disclosure and to guide pupils toward trusted adults and recognised services. Safeguarding teams do **not** see individual conversations. Instead, anonymised aggregate trend signals can be generated to indicate emerging patterns of concern across the school population without revealing personal data.

This architecture directly addresses governance requirements:

- No storage of sensitive pupil disclosures
- No profiling or behavioural tracking
- Reduced GDPR and Children's Code risk
- Lower reputational exposure for schools
- Clear separation between anonymous support and statutory safeguarding duties

Quinly 2.0: Safeguarding Step-Change Including Deepfake and Emerging Digital Harms

The pilot demonstrates that pupils will use an anonymous safeguarding support tool over sustained periods. Quinly 2.0 has been developed to build on this evidence base while retaining the same privacy-first, zero-retention architecture.

Quinly 2.0 strengthens safeguarding capability through:

- **Expanded safeguarding and crisis detection across 30 categories of concern**, with prioritisation to support consistent handling of higher-risk signals
- **Dedicated AI and deepfake harm detection**, including non-consensual image manipulation, coercion and sextortion scenarios
- **Specialist UK support integration**, including direct signposting to the Revenge Porn Helpline for image-based abuse and age-appropriate guidance on illegality
- **Improved model safety and response quality** through use of Anthropic's Claude 4 Sonnet with layered safety controls
- **Multilingual support and enhanced accessibility features** to widen access for pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with additional needs
- **Aggregate safeguarding insight for Designated Safeguarding Leads**, providing trend-level visibility without storing pupil chat logs or creating pupil profiles

AI-Generated Image Abuse and Deepfakes

A critical addition in Quinly 2.0 is a specialised detection layer for AI-generated harms and deepfakes, reflecting the rapid growth of "nudify" tools and non-consensual image manipulation affecting school-age pupils.

Quinly 2.0 is tuned to recognise modern trigger phrases and British youth language associated with these harms and to respond with:

- Clear, age-appropriate guidance
- Reassurance and non-blaming language
- Specialist UK signposting for rapid support and takedown pathways

This capability positions schools to respond to an emerging safeguarding threat for which many current policies and staff training frameworks are not yet fully developed.

Conclusion

Across six schools, pupils initiated **3,289 anonymised conversations** with Quinly, with substantial conversation depth and consistent engagement across six months.

Hourly analysis confirms that **over four-fifths of usage occurs outside the traditional school day**, including evenings, weekends and late-night periods. This demonstrates that Quinly provides access to safeguarding support at times when pupils are otherwise unsupported.

The pilot provides stable evidence of:

- Sustained engagement over six months
- Meaningful conversation depth
- Predominant out-of-school-hours usage

- No collapse in engagement over time

These findings support the role of anonymous digital safeguarding tools as a complement to existing school safeguarding structures, providing a first step to disclosure in situations where pupils may otherwise remain silent.

Quinly 2.0 builds on this foundation with expanded crisis detection, deepfake and image-based abuse protection, enhanced safety controls and governance-ready reporting - strengthening schools' ability to meet safeguarding responsibilities in an evolving digital risk landscape.

Report prepared by Ruth Sparkes: 13 January 2026