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## 1st Bernwood Forest Scout Group

#### Mobile Phone Policy

Dear Parents / Guardians,

It is the policy of 1st Bernwood Forest Scout Group, that young people should not be bringing mobile phones to weekly meetings, camps, or other Scouting activities. If a young person has to bring a mobile phone with them for any reason, then it should remain stored away, switched off, throughout a meeting, camp, or other activity. The reasons for this policy are many and not limited to the following:

1. Activities which young people take part in will often involve actions that could damage mobile phones, such as devices falling onto the ground or getting wet. They do run around a lot!!
2. The Scout Group does not have insurance cover for mobile phones and therefore can not accept any responsibility or liability for this damage. Nor does the Scout Association have insurtance cover for mobile phones.
3. The Scout Association has procedures for contacting parents, carers, emergency contacts, and where necessary; the emergency services; should the need arise during a Scouting activity. For our group and each section (Beavers, Cubs and Scouts), our primary resource is OSM – Online Scout Manager. We encourage that contact details, emmergancy and temporary contact details are updated in OSM.
4. Most phones have cameras and internet access. There is a potential that actions taken by young people, however innocent the intent, could lead to a Child Protection or Safeguarding issue. This is particularly true if photographs are taken without consent or are inappropriate and the subsequently broadcast on social networks.
5. Mobile phones can provide a source of distraction for young people, which can interfere with the activities they are taking part in, as well as interrupting those activities for all other young people and Leaders.
6. If a young person, for whatever reason, does need to use a phone during a weekly meeting, Scouting activity, or camp, then this should be discussed with a section leader, who will decide on a case-by-case basis the best course of action to take.
7. If the need should arise for a parent or carer to contact a young person during Scouting activities, then an ‘on call’ phone number will be made available prior to that activity taking place, in line with the Scout Association’s ‘InTouch’ policy. For weekly meetings, this is normally the section leaders’ mobile phone, or if needed, the Group Scout Leader.

We hope this helps clarify the use of mobile phones. If you have any questions, please contact the Group Scout Leader.

Yours in Scouting

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