

Mobile Phone Policy

It is the policy of 9th Worthing Scout Troop that Scouts should not be bringing mobile phones to weekly meetings, camps, or other Scouting activities. If a Scout 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 as follow:

1) Activities which Scouts take part in will often involve actions that could damage mobile devices, such as devices falling onto the ground or getting wet. The Scout Group cannot accept any responsibility for this damage, so use of unnecessary electronic devices is strongly advised against.

2) The Scout Association has strict procedures for contacting parents, carers, emergency contacts, and where necessary, the emergency services, should the need arise during a Scouting activity.

Use of a mobile phone by a Scout could compromise these procedures, potentially leading to misinformation being given out. It could also lead to scenarios where leaders may be unaware of an arising situation entirely.

3) Now that most phones have cameras and internet access, there is a potential that actions taken by Scouts, however innocent the intent, could lead to Child Protection and Safeguarding issues. This is particularly true if photographs are taken without consent or are inappropriate and then subsequently broadcast on social networks.

4) Mobile phones can provide a source of distraction for Scouts, which can interfere with the activities they are taking part in, as well as interrupting those activities for all Scouts and Leaders.

If a Scout, 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, which may include escalating the case to the Group Scout Leader to make a decision.

Any Scouts found to be using a mobile phone during a weekly meeting, camp, or other Scouting activity, outside of any agreed circumstances, may be withdrawn from that activity and parents or carers may be asked to collect them immediately.

If the need should arise for a Scout to have to use a mobile phone, for example, to contact a parent or carer, the section leaders will have a designated phone for this, as well as the relevant contact information or, if the Scout has a mobile phone stored away, then they may be permitted to use it in such a situation.

If the need should arise for a parent or carer to contact a Scout during Scouting activities, then an 'on call' phone number will be made available prior to the activity taking place, in line with the Scout Association's 'InTouch' policy.