

It is 1st Crowmarsh Gifford Scouts Policy for all children attending to **not bring mobile phones** to any Scouting activity including weekly meetings in and outside the Crowmarsh Village Hall as well as overnight events **unless expressly requested by a leader**.

We owe it to our children to do what we can to create an environment that is free from distractions so that the children can be fully present and engaged whilst at Scouts.

Parents should ensure that young people do not arrive to any meeting or event with their mobile phone.

Policy Explanation

There are three important reasons that 1st Crowmarsh Gifford Scouts have adopted this policy.

1. Communication with parents

1st Crowmarsh Gifford Scouts follows [The Scout Association's InTouch system](#) for communication. When joining the group, section leaders will inform parents how to contact them during and in between meetings.

For each overnight event/activity, a phone number will be provided for use in an emergency. This may be a central group number or leader's own mobile phone number depending on the event. For each overnight event, an additional form is completed by parents with their contact details which allows leaders to contact them should the need arise.

When it comes to incidents, Leaders are required to follow the [Scout Policy, Organisation and Rules Emergency procedures](#).

If young people can use their mobile phone this system can be bypassed.

Young people should make their leaders aware of issues/incidents so that appropriate action can be taken to resolve any problems. Young people directly contacting their parents can cause undue distress and concern to all parties involved.

2. Social media and internet usage

However innocent the intent, an action, message or photograph can be misinterpreted, leading to unintentional safeguarding issues. For example, a photograph may be posted on

social media without consent which can cause upset to the young people involved as well as safety concerns.

By removing mobile phones from 1st Crowmarsh Gifford Scouts we can create a safe space where the children are protected from the risks and dangers associated with social media and cyber-bullying, as well as the peer pressure and possible stigma associated with owning what are often expensive devices.

3. Disruption and security

Phones can be a major distraction during meetings and can cause disruption to the entire section when used to take calls, message, play games or listen to music. This makes it difficult to run a safe, exciting and educational programme.

It should be noted that the Scout Association or 1st Crowmarsh Gifford Scouts cannot take responsibility for any loss or damage to devices, whether they are in a young person or leaders' possession.

Our Position & Expectations

At 1st Crowmarsh Gifford Scouts we cater for Beavers through to Scouts. It is expected that all children are dropped off and collected until they are old enough to walk safely alone without a mobile phone.

It is not the volunteer leaders responsibility to take responsibility for mobile devices in addition to the children and the activities being run.

As described above, parents and leaders have a communication system in place. It is the parents responsibility to ensure that the group has up to date emergency contact details to ensure this communication is effective. This can be updated at any time on OSM ([Online Scout Manager](#)), our administrative and communication tool.

Consequences of Having a Mobile Phone Without Approval

If a young person is found to have a mobile phone in their possession without prior approval, it may be confiscated for the duration of the event and they can be withdrawn from the activity/event. Section leaders may use their discretion to choose appropriate action.

Concerns

If you wish to discuss any part of this policy, please speak to your section leader who will be happy to discuss matters.