**Broadstone Scout Group Smartphone Policy**

# Purpose

This policy aims to explain how Broadstone Scout Group manages the risks of young people using smartphones inappropriately while scouting.

# Scope

This policy applies to all young people who are members of Broadstone Scout Group and all young people looking to become members of Broadstone Scout Group. This policy also applies to any young leaders who volunteer at Broadstone Scout Group. This policy should be made available to all team leaders, team members, as well as parents and carers of young people. This policy is owned and managed by the Trustee Board.

# Commitment

Broadstone Scout Group is a fast-growing scout group, currently with 9 sections (a Squirrel Drey, 2 Beaver Colonies, 3 Cub Packs and 3 Scout Troops), providing scouting for around 200 young people every week.

Broadstone Scout Group is led by the district-appointed GLV and is governed by the Trustee Board, on which the GLV sits. It is the dual responsibility of the GLV and the Trustee Board to ensure that risks to young people are identified and that policies and procedures are put in placement to minimise any identified risks.

This policy has been created in response to the growing potential for smartphones to be used inappropriately, which new features such as AI, becoming increasingly accessible.

# Policy

Specifically, it is the policy of Broadstone Scout Group to:

* Prohibit smartphone use for Squirrels, Beavers and Cubs while scouting
* Restrict smartphone use for Scouts and Young Leaders while scouting
* Accessibly publish this policy

# Application of the Policy

**Squirrels, Beavers and Cubs**

Scouting is all about experiencing new things and spending time with others. In line with other schools and youth groups, and considering we do not allow Squirrels, Beavers or Cubs to attend or depart from their sections alone, we will prohibit smartphone use for Squirrels, Beavers and Cubs while scouting. Any young person of this age should not bring a smartphone to their section and if this does occur then the smartphone will be confiscated and handed back to the young person’s parents/carers at the end of the session/event.

**Scouts**

Considering the reality that many scouts will have smartphones, and that they can be useful for some activities, we will not set out to ban smartphone use for scouts. However, to minimise the potential for inappropriate use we will ask that smartphones are not taken out of pockets/bags unless there is pre-planned, volunteer-run activity which would benefit from their use (such as geocaching). Sections include in weekly/event emails what they will be doing in advance. Activities that can involve smartphones will be highlighted to parents/carers in this way.

**Young Leaders**

# In the Spring Term of 2025, following concerns, an email was sent to all parents/carers of young leaders setting out our group’s expectations for young leaders. Among attending in uniform and remaining focused on young people, inappropriate smartphone use was addressed. It was made clear that young leaders, as with scouts, are expected to leave smartphones in pockets/bags unless there is a pre-planned, volunteer-run activity which involves their use.

**Additional Controls**

Every section should have a code of conduct that they review regularly (at least termly) with their young people. The principles of this policy should be covered within section codes of conduct.

The group remains committed to keeping young people safe and equipping young people with skill for life. One such skill of life that we will endeavour to cover is cyber-safety. We will promote the planning of activities on this topic both routinely within sections, and in response to any concerns that arise in specific sections.

**Note**

The group cannot take responsibility for any smartphones brought to sections or be liable for any loss or damage of smartphones brought to sections.

# Responsibility and Accountability

1. The GLV is accountable to the Trustee Board for
   1. The group wide promotion of this policy
   2. Monitoring section compliance with this policy, through ongoing liaison and review with appointed section Team Leaders
2. The Trustee Board is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this Policy.

# Implementation

This Policy comes into force on 16th September 2025 and will be reviewed annually