



Our ref: LD/DLE/cc/MobilePhoneReminders

30th November 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Barr Beacon School  
www.barrbeaconschool.co.uk

With new risks related to mobile phone usage emerging all of the time, we are more committed than ever to being a No Mobile Phone school. We need your support in making sure we are keeping our pupils safe. **My staff are regularly conducting checks**, including searches of pupil bags and their other belongings, to ensure that everybody is following this most important rule. You can support us by making sure your child never brings a mobile phone into school and talking with them about why this is so important.

I know that the majority of people reading this letter will be nodding their heads with agreement when I say that mobile phones can lead to a multitude of serious safeguarding/child protection issues. You have probably heard me say this many times in person already! So I will be very understanding if you decide you are too busy to read the remainder of this letter.

However, it cannot be said often enough: mobile phones greatly increase the chances of peer on peer abuse, cyberbullying and data protection issues (for instance, taking or distributing images of other pupils or staff). Furthermore, a child in possession of a mobile phone on their way to and from school is making themselves a target for thieves. Phones can also undermine classroom discipline and lead to pupils being significantly less focused, meaning their learning will be impaired. The following article summarises some of the most recent international research on how banning mobile phones leads to improved outcomes for children:

<https://theconversation.com/banning-mobile-phones-in-schools-can-improve-students-academic-performance-this-is-how-we-know-153792>

If any child brings in a mobile phone to Barr Beacon, **we will confiscate** it in accordance with Section 94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This states that schools are permitted to confiscate pupils' property, including mobile phones. And although we take the utmost care with confiscated property, the law clearly states that, in the unlikely event that a mobile phone is lost or damaged while in a school's possession, the school is not liable.

Barr Beacon School being a No Mobile Phone school is one of the many reasons parents and carers cite for wanting to send their child to Barr Beacon. They recognise that not allowing pupils in Year 7 to 11 to bring in phones helps keeps everyone safe. As you are probably aware, we are very oversubscribed and I regularly hear from parents whose children are on the waiting list that they wish they could send their child to Barr Beacon because of our No Mobile Phone policy. Sadly, a small minority of parents whose children attend Barr Beacon sometimes question our policy, despite this being something we explicitly and repeatedly communicate to any parent who is thinking of sending their child to Barr Beacon. A few have even attempted to intimidate my staff by threatening them with Police action. When I call these parents back, I have to make them aware of the facts: the Police will support us fully in searching pupils for prohibited items and confiscating them.



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If a mobile phone is confiscated, it must be checked in the presence of a member of the Senior Leadership Team to ensure it has not been used inappropriately in the time it was in school. This is to safeguard all of our pupils and staff. A meeting will be arranged at a time which is mutually convenient for everyone.

I would urge you to ensure that you know all pass codes for your child's phone and that you are checking this at home on a regular basis. This is deemed to be best practice in terms of keeping children safe as it will enable you to monitor him/her for age-inappropriate content and to monitor the communication your child may be having with others, including any potentially 'risky' adults. I would ask that you reinforce with your child the need to leave their phone at home and that their phone will not be brought onto Barr Beacon School site and that if they choose to break this rule, you and your child are clear about our procedure.

For the latest information on risks related to mobile phones, please check out our dedicated webpage:

<https://barrbeaconschool.co.uk/parental-guides/>

You may wish to refamiliarise yourself the relevant sections of our Behaviour Policy which are related to mobile phones: <https://barrbeaconschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Barr-Beacon-Matrix-Behaviour-Policy-2021-V1.pdf>

I thank you again for your continued support in this most important safeguarding matter.

Yours sincerely



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Headteacher



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