

Our ref: KHI/JP/JC/MobilePhoneReminders

20th January 2023



Dear Parent/Carer,

Barr Beacon School
www.barrbeaconschool.co.uk

Barr Beacon School is a No Mobile Phone school. This is communicated with all parents/carers on Open Evening and is made clear on the school website and in our Prospectus. We need your support in making sure we are keeping our pupils safe. 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.

Mobile phones can lead to serious safeguarding or child protection issues. 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.

Please find the below links that summarise 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-15379>

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. Many reasons parents and carers cite that being a no mobile phone school is one of the reasons that they choose to send their child here to learn. They recognise that not allowing pupils in Year 7 to 11 to bring in phones to school helps to keep everyone safe. We are very oversubscribed school. There are many parents/carers whose children are on the waiting list and they want to send their child to Barr Beacon School because of our No Mobile Phone policy.

Unfortunately, a minority of parents/carers whose children attend Barr Beacon School sometimes question our policy, despite this being something we explicitly and repeatedly communicate to any parent/carers who is thinking of sending their child to Barr Beacon School. In a very few circumstances we have had parents threaten our staff with the police. The Police will support us fully in searching pupils for prohibited items and confiscating them.



Barr Beacon School
Old Hall Lane
Aldridge
Walsall
WS9 0RF
West Midlands



Matrix
Academy Trust
EDUCATION WITHOUT EXCEPTION

0121 366 6600



Barr Beacon School



@barrbeacon.school



postbox@barrbeaconschool.co.uk





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.

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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 your child's access to age-inappropriate content and to monitor the communication your child may be having with others.

Please reinforce with your child they need to leave their phone at home, that they must not bring their phone onto Barr Beacon School site and that if they choose to break this rule, you and your child understand 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 re-familiarise yourself the relevant sections of our Behaviour Policy which are related to mobile phones:

<https://barrbeaconschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Behaviour-Policy-Barr-Beacon-Matrix-Final-Sept-22.pdf>

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

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Hibbs
Headteacher

