

Chapter 1

Getting involved with Scouting (as a parent or guardian)

Scouting - What it 'is' and 'does'

This chapter should help parents and guardians understand more about Scouting.

Background

Scouting is an international Movement with over 25 million Members worldwide spread through 217 countries and territories. The number of countries recognising the values of Scouting and accepting its principles is steadily increasing.

The Scout Association in the UK accepts Members of all major faiths and offers equal opportunities to all young people in the community, no matter what their social, religious or ethnic background may be. Scouting is not a religious body. It is an organisation with a religious policy which encourages young people to grow spiritually and develop within their own faith and denomination. It has a positive policy of integration and welcomes children and young people who have physical and mental disabilities.

There are about 500,000 people in Membership throughout the United Kingdom. This includes about 100,000 adults who have taken up Appointments as voluntary Leaders, Administrators and Supporters.

During 1991, girls were admitted to the Beaver Scout, Cub Scout and Scout Sections. This complemented the admission of young women to the Venture Scout Section in 1976.

During the Spring of 2002 The Scout Association launched a new Programme for young people aged 6-25. This was the largest change to our curriculum for nearly 40 years. A careful strategy of change

management was devised to help people move forward into delivering a totally new way of providing Scouting, particularly the 14-25 age range. Two new Sections were created to replace Venture Scouting. Explorer Scouts (14-18) and the Scout Network (18-25). This coincided with a complete re-branding of The Scout Association.

The five Sections

At whatever age, a young person in the Movement is a 'Scout'.

The Balanced Programme spans the 6-25 age range which is made up of five training Sections. Each Section has its own identity, ethos and style. They all have adult support which varies in style in the different age groups.

A Beaver Scout Colony has members aged between six and eight,

A Cub Scout Pack has members aged 8 - 10½.

A Scout Troop is for young people aged from 10½ - 14 years.

These are all part of a Scout Group.

An Explorer Scout Unit is for young people from 14-18 years old. Explorer Scout Units are part of a Scout District, although some are attached to groups.

A Scout Network is for young people aged 18 - 25 years old. Scout Networks are the responsibility of the Scout County or Area.

The Purpose of Scouting

Scouting in the UK is organised through The Scout Association. The Scout Association has a clear purpose:

'To help young people achieve their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential as individuals, as responsible citizens and as Members of their local, national and international communities'.

Even if we can't solve all the problems in the world, we can help to make it a better place. We do this by helping young people to develop as active members of the community.

Scouting makes a positive contribution to society by helping young people to develop as active members of the community:

- who are self reliant
- who are caring
- who are responsible
- who show commitment.

Scouting works well when young people enjoy learning by doing in partnership with adults. They do this by:

- taking part in a variety of activities and new experiences
- exploring the outdoors
- participating in teams
- taking responsibility.

Our method for giving young people the opportunity to learn by doing is called the Programme. The Programme is a seamless progression of training, activities and awards that covers everything that young people do in Scouting from the ages of 6 to 25.

All adults in Scouting have a responsibility to make sure that the Programme is fun and exciting. We must also make sure that it is safe. The Scout Association's policies, rules, code of behaviour, advice on Child Protection and safety policy are there to help adults make sure the young people in their care stay safe while they enjoy themselves and learn.

The Scout Promise

Everyone in Scouting expresses their Membership and acceptance of the three key Principles by taking the Promise and following the Scout Law. Cub Scouts have their own special Promise and Law, suitable for their age range. Beaver Scouts have their own Promise.

The three key principles are:

- Duty to Self
- Duty to God
- Duty to Others

These can be seen in the Promise as follows:

*On my honour,
I Promise that I will do my best
To do my duty to God and to the Queen
To help other people
And to keep the Scout Law.*

From its inception, Scouting has had a simple and positive Promise that is required to be made by all its Members. Together with the Law, this gives a distinctive ethos to the practices of the Movement, and acts as a bond with Scouts in other countries.



The Principles of Beaver Scouting are:

- having fun
- making friends
- keeping the Promise
- sharing
- making progress
- using a variety of groupings.

These underpin all that is done in the Colony. Using a variety of methods, Beaver Scouts are guided to:

- learn about themselves
- get to know people
- explore
- care
- be creative.

Leaders are encouraged to approach each of these areas in a variety of ways by including activities sometimes close to the Beaver Scouts' own experiences, sometimes based in the local community and sometimes introducing them to issues in the wider world.



By progressing through Cub Scouting, each Cub Scout will be encouraged to make choices and learn to work as part of a small team; the 'Six' to which they belong.

Cub Scouts:

- make a Promise
- help others
- play games
- go on outings and visits
- go camping and learn about the outdoors
- look after their surroundings
- gain badges
- go hiking
- create things
- become Scouts.



The cornerstone of the Scout Section is the 'Patrol System'. A Scout is first and foremost a member of a Patrol. The majority of activities will take place in the Patrol, which is led by an older Scout called the Patrol Leader. It is likely to be the Patrol Leader who will teach most of the basic Scouting skills and it is a committee of the Patrol Leaders called the Patrol Leaders' Forum that will make the key decisions about which activities form part of the Troop programme.

The range of activities available to Scouts is extremely large and needs to show a balance of physical, intellectual, spiritual and social activities. A successful Troop will ensure that these are lively, challenging and interesting. Some will be organised by the Patrols themselves and others will involve the Troop as a whole. The culmination of a year's work is often the summer camp or expedition which provides an opportunity for the skills learnt to be brought together and put into practice.



With the guidance of adults...

At all stages, Leaders work with the young people they lead. They provide young people with exciting and challenging experiences and then help them use those

experiences in their personal and social development.

The Association naturally places great emphasis on safety when arranging challenging and adventurous activities and in ensuring that all of the young people involved are safe from harm.

The varying styles of leadership in the Movement are quite distinctive. For Beaver Scouts, the Leader must normally be more directive than a Leader working with and supporting Explorer Scouts who can and should plan and carry out many of their own activities.

Leaders are encouraged to develop their own skills through formal and informal learning experiences and sharing ideas with each other. A network of specialist Trainers, Developers and Administrators supports this. A professional team of Field Development Officers directly supports the work of volunteers in the Counties/Areas, Districts and Groups.

Thus, Leaders work with young people through the Balanced Programme to meet the Aim of the Association.

Structure

The administrative structure of the Association enables the effective delivery of the programme. It is organised at four levels:

- The Scout Group
- The Scout District
- The Scout County/Area
- National Headquarters

In many ways, each level operates independently, with the larger unit providing facilities and activities beyond the resources of the smaller.

The Scout Group

The Scout Group is where Scouting happens locally for the first three Sections. In some cases Explorer Units may be affiliated to the local Group. Scout Groups are the bases for the 'family' of Scouting for those aged 6 to 14. Younger Members are able to feel confident and happy about moving through the Sections at this local level. It is within this framework of the Scout group that the Law and Promise are

fulfilled. The Group also provides a secure base for the development on the individual young person.

Scout Groups work because they offer a close level of support for the young people in their care. They know the community and the needs of its young people.

When a young person joins a Section their parents are usually expected to:

- support the young person
- interest and support the Sections' activities
- support the local Group in fundraising, social activities, offers of skills and other help.

What makes Scout Groups successful is their ability to:

- deliver enjoyable high quality programmes for young people
- focus on the fun and friendship that Scouting brings
- involve parents/carers
- respond to local needs
- be positive and progressive

Ideally, the Group will be lead by a Group Scout Leader (GSL) who will make every effort to ensure that each Section in the Group has an adequate leadership team. They will also ensure that the development of the young people is co-ordinated throughout their progress in Scouting. An essential part of this process is support to all of the adults who are involved in Scouting.

The GSL is helped by those adults who work directly with the young people and by the Group Chairperson. The Chairperson leads the Group Executive Committee which provides support to the Group through administration, fundraising and a very wide range of support activities. Once a year the Group must hold an Annual General Meeting of the Group Council (consisting of all adults connected to the Group together with the Patrol Leaders) . The AGM reports on the year's events and elections of the Group's Officers and Executive will take place. This provides a forum for comment and future planning.

Fundraising is an important part of the Group's activity as money will be necessary for:

- maintenance and repair of the Group Headquarters
- equipment for camping and expeditions
- events - activities and outings
- training of Leaders
- day to day activities - indoor and out
- administration and insurance cover.

The Group should be an integral part of the community that it serves, both providing help to the community and receiving support from the community to carry out its work with young people.



An introduction to the Beaver Scout Section

Who is the Beaver Scout Colony for?

Beaver Scouts officially became Members of The Scout Association in 1986 and have since gone from strength to strength.

Beaver Scouting is for young people aged 6 to 8 years. It is open to those of all major denominations, faiths and all who can make the Beaver Scout Promise, which is:

I promise to do my best
to be kind and helpful
and to love God.

As a parent or guardian, you can be helpful by encouraging your child to learn these words, and understand what a promise is; then together you can make this Promise become real.

Beaver Scouts make this Promise after a few weeks in the Colony and hopefully you will receive an invitation to your child's Promise Ceremony. They will require their uniform for this occasion. On joining, each young person is required to pay a subscription to help cover the cost of premises, resources needed to run the activities and also to cover the National Membership fee. Beaver Scout Colonies may be mixed sex or single sex, the decision having been taken by the local Scout Group.

Who runs the Colony meetings?

The Colony is run by people who freely give up their time to organise weekly activities for young people.

The Colony Leaders undergo training and receive support from other Leaders and Commissioners locally. In addition to the Leaders, there are Skills Instructors, Assistants, Administrators, Committee Members, fundraisers and so on.

Your local Scout Group will, no doubt, require help and support with these roles; so if you can spare a little of your time, please speak to the Beaver Scout Leader or the Group Scout Leader.

What do Beaver Scouts do?

Beaver Scouts usually meet once a week and take part in fun activities like making things, singing, playing games, going out on visits, investigating nature, listening to stories, learning how to be safe and most importantly, making new friends. As a parent or guardian, you can help your child to take a full part in the activities, and to offer to contribute your skills and hobbies to the programme activities. The Colony Leader team would welcome hearing from you.

Within the Colony, the young people are put into small groups, sometimes called Lodges. At other times, other groupings will also be arranged, such as: those of a similar age, special interest topics, friendship and so on.

Beaver Scouts are encouraged to contribute their ideas for Colony meetings and activities. Taking part in an active and balanced Colony programme is recognised by the presentation of the Beaver Scout Badges. Here again, any encouragement and support you can offer would be valued. We hope you will be part of the Scouting Family, and continue to support your child into the Cub Scout Section.

There are certain badges and awards that Beaver Scouts can gain whilst in the Section. These are:

- The Membership Badge
- Activity Badges
- Staged Activity Badges
- The Bronze Chief Scout's Award
- The Moving-On Award
- The Joining-In Award
- Challenges.



An introduction to the Cub Scout Section

Who is the Cub Scout Pack for?

Cub Scouting is for young people aged between 8 and 10½. Many will have been Beaver Scouts and will go on to become Scouts, Explorers and members of the Scout Network.

How is it organised?

The Cub Scout Leader runs the Pack with a team of Assistants who all give their time freely and have had special training to help them do an effective job. Hopefully, there will be other adults who also help either regularly or with particular activities.

Many Cub Scout Packs use Rudyard Kipling's story *The Jungle Book* as their theme. This means they use the characters and events as inspiration for activities and names (such as Akela for the Cub Scout Leader).

Cub Scouts work in small groups called Sixes, led by an older Cub Scout called the Sixer. Whilst the Leaders are responsible for planning and running the programme of activities and games at Pack Meetings and for other events, the Cub Scouts are encouraged to contribute their ideas and suggestions.

What do Cub Scouts do?

Hopefully, have a great deal of fun and adventure. The Cub Scout Programme can include activities such as:

- Camping
- First Aid
- Exploring
- Helping other people
- Taking care of the environment
- Being creative
- Fire lighting and cooking.

It is all designed to provide an interesting and challenging programme. By fully participating, Cub Scouts will develop as individuals. Badges and awards are given in recognition of the effort made by each youngster at their own level of development.

The Cub Scout Programme

When a young person joins the Pack, they are introduced to Cub Scouting and to the Balanced Programme. This has been designed to offer young people the opportunity to experience a wide range of subjects, within which Cub Scouts will have the opportunity to gain awards and badges.

The Cub Scout Membership Award is for young people who are joining the Cub Scout Pack after the age of eight and who have not been a member of the Beaver Scout Colony. It helps young people understand the history, traditions and practices of Cub Scouting.

The Joining in Award is a special award given at regular intervals throughout the year to Cub Scouts as recognition for their participation in the Balanced Programme.

The Chief Scout's Silver Award is the highest award in the Cub Scout Section. To complete this award Cub Scouts must gain:

- the outdoor challenge
- two other challenge awards
- and complete a personal challenge

The Cub Scout Moving On Award is awarded to Cub Scouts before they move on to the Scout Troop. It includes information about the smooth transition of moving up to the Troop.

In addition, Cub Scouts can work towards a series of Activity Badges each covering a particular activity or interest.

Pack Holidays and Camps

The weekly Pack Meeting is only part of the Cub Scout experience. It is through the opportunity of living and learning together in the great outdoors where the real development and fun begins. Many Packs go away for a weekend but others go away for longer, either indoors as a Pack Holiday or under canvas to camp. There may also be opportunities to join with Cub Scouts from other Packs in these activities.

Adults who lead camps or Pack Holidays will have had special training before they are allowed to take Cub Scouts away. There will often be the need for extra help at these events e.g. assisting with the catering or providing transport. Please do offer.

How do you know what is planned?

Most Packs rely on the Cub Scouts bringing home notes and their natural enthusiasm for what is planned. Sometimes there is a Group newsletter and you can always speak with the Leaders at the end of the meeting.

What do Cub Scouts wear?

Cub Scouts wear a uniform consisting of a practical green sweatshirt and a Scout Group scarf. The scarf is held in place with a woggle, which is also used to distinguish to which Six the Cub Scout belongs. The colour and style of nether garments are agreed locally in consultation with the Pack, parents and the Group Scout Leader.

How can you help?

First, by showing interest and giving encouragement to your Cub Scout. Please remember that Cub Scouting is about joining in and so those who do not attend regularly can find themselves only on the edge of things and they lose out.

Second, by being prepared to help. This does not necessarily mean every week but perhaps occasionally. There are many ways of providing support and we all have skills that are useful either directly to Pack Programme or to the whole Group. The parents' committee would welcome your help with any of the following:

- catering at a Pack Holiday
- preparing refreshments for an event
- sharing a skill or hobby
- supporting the Groups social events
- fund raising
- providing transport.

Third, make sure that your Cub Scout arrives on time and that you are there on time to collect them after the activity. The Leaders will be ready for a rest!

Cub Scouting is fun for the adults too if we all give it our support. So get involved!



An introduction to the Scout Section

Who is the Scout Troop for?

Scout Troops are for young people aged between 10½ and 14. Many will have been Beaver Scouts or Cub Scouts before joining the Scout Troop. Hopefully, they will go on to become Explorer Scouts and members of the Scout Network.

Scout Troops are guided by volunteer Leaders who will have a commitment to work to the national standards and principles of The Scout Association. They have an obligation to undertake training.

The person responsible for the Troop will be the Scout Leader and they may have a number of Assistant Scout Leaders and Troop Assistants.

What are we trying to do?

We are working to help young people to develop so that they achieve their full potential physically, intellectually, spiritually and socially. Fun is a vital element, so the Scouts play many games, which help develop physical skills as well as teamwork. There is also a Programme, which becomes more challenging to the individual as they get older.

We aim to help the Scouts run their own programme and involve themselves in the planning and organisation. The extent to which the Scouts can take responsibility will depend on the stage of development of the Troop and of the Scouts themselves. Helping them to aim towards this is a vital element of our method with this age group. We do not simply run an adult led programme - that would be too easy! We do this so that the young people become better individuals, responsible citizens, and members of the community.

How?

There are a number of important things, which make Scouting different from other youth organisations:

- We are a uniformed Movement
- We use groupings (in the Troop these are Patrols of about six Scouts to work together, learning from and supporting each other
- We involve Scouts in decision making as part of their development.

We set out to provide a variety of activities, with Scouts progressing through a Balanced Programme.

Scouting has a reputation as an outdoor organisation based on strong traditions of camping and other pursuits. It offers a range of activities away from home during the year, and a number of camps, including wherever possible a longer camp in the summer. These are an important part of the Scouting experience and we ask you to encourage your child to take part.

As with the other Sections, there are a number of badges and awards that the Scout can gain. These are given in recognition of the effort made by each young at their own level of development.

If a Scout has come up from the Cub Pack, they should have had the opportunity to gain the **Moving-On Award**. They will have attended a number of meetings, and got to know the members of the Troop. They will also have found out about the traditions and ceremonies of the Troop, and learnt about the Law and Promise.

The Moving-On Award is designed to ease the process of moving from the Pack into the Troop.

Young people, who are new to Scouting, will work for the **Membership Award**, which is very similar to the Moving-On Award.

The Scout Leader needs to keep a record of when each member of the Troop first joined Scouting. This is because every year on this anniversary each young person should receive a **Participation Award**, for taking part in a Balanced Programme. The Scout may have already received similar badges (The Joining In Award) in the Beaver Scout Colony and the Cub Scout Pack.

In addition, Scouts can work towards a series of Activity and Challenge Badges each covering a particular activity or interest.

The Patrol...

The Scout Patrol is essential to our method of working with Scouts. A Patrol typically consists of about six Scouts who will work together in many activities.

- One Scout in each Patrol will be the Patrol Leader and take responsibility for some aspects of Troop life
- The adult Leaders will work with the Patrol Leaders in setting the programme and decisions affecting the Troop.

Money...

Scout Groups are run entirely by volunteers and are self-financing. A Membership Subscription is payable for each Member to meet some local and national support costs.

Most Scout Troops ask for Members to pay a regular subscription, perhaps monthly, to meet some of the costs of running the Scout Troop. Scout Groups need support from parents and the community to raise funds for equipment, premises and other facilities. Parents will be expected to do what they can to help here in their own way. A little help from many both spreads the load and demonstrates interest in what the Scouts are doing. Because of the considerable commitment asked of Leaders in working directly with the youngsters, we prefer Leaders not to be responsible for fundraising events.

Safety...

The Scout Association takes pride in its safety record. Guidance is provided to Leaders through their District and County/Area support. Safety issues are covered in our Leader Training. For more adventurous activities such as water sports, caving, and mountaineering, we have special authorisation arrangements to ensure Scouts are in safe hands.

How can you help?

The Scout who feels parents and family are interested in, and support their Scouting, will achieve more. Support might be with fundraising, with transport, or it might be in offering to share a skill or hobby with the Troop. Some Groups or Districts run a family camp where a parent can join in too!

More information...

Obtain more information from the Group Leaders or any of a large number of publications available from The Scout Association's Information Centre (0845 300 1818) and Outdoors (www.outdoors.ltd.uk) For information on addresses, ask your Scout Leader or the Group Scout Leader.



An introduction to the Scout Fellowship

So what is the Scout Fellowship?

The Scout Fellowship is a group of adults who have one thing in common - a wish to support Scouting. A Scout Fellowship welcomes men and women of all ages, interests and backgrounds. There is no need to have been in Scouting or Guiding before. All that is required is a willingness to give some of your time to Scouting. In return you will make friends and be able to join with others doing whatever you decide. A Scout Fellowship has its own social and activity programme.

Scouting is an international Movement with over 28 million Members worldwide spread across 217 countries and territories. The Scout Association accepts Members of all major faiths and offers equal opportunities to all young people in the community, regardless of their social, religious or ethnic background. There are over 370,000 young people in Membership throughout the United Kingdom, and these are supported by nearly 100,000 adults who have taken appointments as voluntary Leaders, Administrators and Supporters.

The aim of the Scout Fellowship is to provide active support at all levels of the Association from the local Scout Group to National level.

So what do we mean by 'Active Support?'

Active Support encompasses the talents of the Scout Fellowship of all ages and abilities, whether it is physical, mental, geared to a particular technical skill or general support. In fact just about anything! You could say that they are the backbone of the Scout Movement - supporting the young people and voluntary leaders where ever help is required. The key to its success is its flexibility - it's there to help.

So who belongs?

A Scout Fellowship may be based around a Scout Group, District, County or a particular task, like canoeing, caving or gangshows. The members are likely to be:

- existing and former Leaders
- existing and former Administrators
- parents of Members and former Members
- Scout Network Members
- friends that would like to come along and enjoy themselves.

In fact, just about anyone!

Members of the Scout Fellowship are Associate Members of the Movement and may become full Members if they by making the Scout Promise. There is a small fee to pay which goes to pay the Membership Subscription and to fund activities.

How is it organised?

This rather depends on the size of the Fellowship and tradition. Most Fellowships have someone who co-ordinates the activities, usually a Chairperson, who in turn has the support of a Secretary and Treasurer. In a larger Fellowship there may well be a small committee who turn the Members' ideas into a programme; in a smaller group this may be done by the Members working together.

What are the benefits?

A Scout Fellowship provides an adult with the opportunity to become connected to Scouting.

A Scout Fellowship can help an individual find their own place in Scouting by providing links and introductions within the Group, District or County.

A Scout Fellowship meets regularly but Members can join in, in a way that suits them.

A Scout Fellowship can provide active support to Scouting either through regular commitments or through responding to calls for help on specific issues.

Keep in touch with friends you have made in Scouting and make new ones.

What will you have to do?

Since the Scout Fellowship is intended to provide active support to Scouting, you are expected to show support in a way that suits you. Perhaps to give up the occasional evening, or a day or two each year to help organise, run activities, support the young people, Leaders and other adults. You will also find yourself drawn into the social activities of the Scout Fellowship and may spend the occasional evening wining and dining or walking with new friends. The truthful answer is that we ask you to take part as much as you feel you are able to; but, like our uniformed Leaders, we recognise that you are giving your time and skills voluntarily.