



Membership Policy

Overview

This policy outlines 1st Holgate Scout Group's processes for managing membership including place allocation, attendance and subscription arrears.

Version Control

Version	Author	Date	Reason for Change
3	Jackie Armitage	04-Nov-2024	Drafting for Trustee Approval
3.1	Chris Rodaway	12-Nov-2024	Trustee meeting edits
4	Nate Simpson	14-Nov-2024	New template and Re-format

Review

This document will be reviewed at least annually to confirm it still fulfils the group's needs. The next review is due a year from last update

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Background

The Group is fortunate to have a high demand for places. The Board and Operations team continue to look at ways of meeting this demand taking into consideration our capacity in terms of meeting times, venue availability, health and safety and the number of volunteers.

It is therefore important to everyone involved in the Group that we manage our membership well, to achieve this we will ensure–

- that places are allocated and made available in a fair, transparent and equitable way
- that the process of place allocation and membership management is delivered effectively, and
- that our members attend meetings and pay subs in accordance with our policies, to ensure smooth running of the Group

The Group has reviewed and expanded the existing Joining Policy to cover all aspects of membership.

The Group shall have an open and mixed membership in accordance with the rules of the Scout Association (Policy Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association (POR)).

The Group supports the Scout Association's diversity policy and will not discriminate against any member or prospective member on the grounds of age, gender, disability race, religion or sexual orientation.

The Group follows the rules relating to age ranges as set out in POR. Age range flexibility will be used when deemed necessary by the Team leader, in consultation with Membership Coordinator or at the discretion of the Group Lead Volunteer (GLV) or District Commissioner's (DC) discretion.

The GLV delegates responsibility for the membership of the sections to each respective Team Leader.

The GLV will retain ultimate responsibility for Group Membership in accordance with POR 3.3.1

Group Sections

Section	Ages	Section Count	Young People per	Totals
Squirrels	4- 6	2 Dreys	20 Squirrels per Drey	40
Beavers	6-8	3 Colony	24 Beavers per Colony	72
Cubs	8 -10½	3 Packs	28 Cubs per Pack	84
Scouts	10 – 14	3 Troops	28 Scouts per Troop	84
Explorers	14 – 18	2 Units	24 Explorers per Unit	48

Waiting List Policy

Despite our efforts, there are occasionally more children on the joining list than we may be able to take at that time and when certain meetings prove more popular.

Where a space becomes available we will offer places from the Joining List in the following order of precedence:

- 1) Looked after young people
- 2) Young people with family actively volunteering within the Group (for at least six months)
- 3) Young people with family prepared to join a section leadership team
- 4) Existing youth members moving up to the next section
- 5) Young people on the joining list who already have siblings within the Group
- 6) Young people already in Scouting within another group requesting a transfer
- 7) All remaining places are allocated according to the child's age and the length of time they have been on the list.

The above is at the discretion of the GLV in consultation with the Board of Trustees and DLV.

By adding your child to our Joining List you consent to us holding the details you provide for Scouting purposes only. We may occasionally contact you regarding Scouting opportunities that become available.

We will contact you to request your meeting preferences in the school term that you join the Joining List or up to three months prior to your child becoming of age to join 1st Holgate. Flexibility as to which meetings you can attend will help to secure a place more quickly.

We will be transparent and open about the size of our Joining List and make suggestions of other groups where we feel there is a low chance of being offered a place with 1st Holgate.

Where a place becomes available, the Membership Coordinator will contact you in the term leading up to your start date with the Group.

For data protection purposes your personal details will be held on the Online Scout Management System (OSM) in accordance with Group's Data Protection Policy.

Where attempts have been made on three occasions to offer a place via email and telephone and there has been no response from the parent/carer, the Group will remove their details for OSM

Movement between Sections

The Group follows the rules relating to age ranges as set out in POR. Members move to the next section according to age:-

Squirrels	–	4 years to 6 years
Beavers	–	6 years to 8 years
Cubs	–	8 years to 10 and a half years
Scouts	–	10 and a half years to 14 years
Explorers	–	14 years to 18 years

The Group cannot guarantee that a place will be available in the above section for the same meeting night your child currently attends. For example, a Squirrel attending our Monday night Squirrels meeting will not automatically be offered a place at our Monday night Beavers meeting.

The Membership Coordinator will contact children of age to move up to the next section during the half-term leading up to their start date in the next section, to obtain meeting preferences.

For example, a Squirrel moving up to Beavers will be contacted towards the end of the half term prior to their child turning six, when they will be old enough to join Beavers.

The Group may offer an earlier move to help address demand for a particular meeting. If offered an early move to the next section, you do not have to accept this offer and your child may stay in their section until they are of age to move up.

Likewise, if a parent/carer feels that their child would benefit from staying in a section for longer, the Group will consider keeping a member within a section. This is dependent on demand for places within their current meeting. You should speak with your Section's Team Leader in the first instance.

Movement takes place between sections over the appropriate half term period. Information will be sent via OSM to members welcoming them to their new section. Members will then be able to access and view the programme and receive correspondence via OSM from their new section.

Swapping a Meeting Night

You should request a move with your Section's Team Leader who will liaise with the Membership Coordinator and new Section Team Leader regarding place availability. Where practicable, meetings can be swapped during term time. Otherwise, a move will take place during the half term period. Notification will be confirmed via email.

Attendance

This policy does not apply to attendance on camps and trips that are additional to the termly programme.

Attendance to the termly programme is monitored via OSM which is managed by the Team Leader at each meeting.

The Group recognises that members may occasionally be unable to attend a meeting.

Where possible, you should register your child's absence via OSM by updating attendance against the relevant programme meeting. You can include a reason for absence, but this is optional.

Registering non-attendance helps leaders run the meetings more efficiently.

The Group recognises that young people sometimes change their mind about Scouting and no longer wish to take part.

You should let your Leader know of your intentions to stop attending Scouting. This can be done by email, telephone or in person. You have the option to return your child to a waiting list (current or next section).

The Membership coordinator will monitor attendance via OSM on a half termly basis and liaise with your Section Team Leader where attendance is low.

Where absence of over 50% of a term is recorded we reserve the right to cancel your child's place. The Membership Coordinator will contact you via email followed by a telephone call to enquire about your intentions for your child's place. Where we do not hear from you within 14 days the Group reserves the right to cancel the place and remove your child from 1st Holgate Scout Group on OSM.

A child that is relocated to a waiting list will be considered as joining that waiting list on the date transferred and a place will be offered in accordance with our Joining List Policy, above.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions payments are important to secure the ongoing running of the Group's programmes and meeting of overheads, including venue hire, insurance and equipment maintenance. Scouting is a not for profit organisation and we aim to keep our running costs as low as possible.

Subscriptions are requested monthly, on the first of the month, including the month of August. This is because we continue to offer activities outside of the termly programme and have ongoing overheads throughout the year, including school holidays.

Subscription payments are managed via OSM. Where a member is set up for monthly direct debit payments these will be taken on the first of the month automatically. You will receive a confirmation email via OSM.

Where no direct debit is in place, OSM will generate a request for payment to your registered email accounts on the first of the month. You will receive a reminder email on a weekly basis and your payment status on OSM will show as 'unpaid'.

The Membership Coordinator will monitor subscription arrears on OSM and liaise with the relevant Section Team leader prior to contacting members who fail to make two consecutive payments, or where a subscription payment is not paid within two months.

The Membership Coordinator will contact you via email to enquire about your outstanding payment(s) and your intentions for your child's place.

Where we do not hear from you within 14 days the Membership Coordinator will contact you by phone to discuss the outstanding payment.

The Group reserves the right to cancel the place and remove your child from 1st Holgate scout Group if no agreement is made with regards to outstanding payments.

Discretionary Fund

We do not want any child to be prevented from joining in with Scouting, therefore if you have problems in meeting the cost of subscription, please speak with your Section Team Leader or contact the Group Lead Volunteer.

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