

# Membership Policy

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Scouting in Fulwood is very popular, and we have a substantial waiting list, which means we can't always offer a place to potential members. Further, our section leaders provide experiences that the children enjoy and so very few children leave the Group before they are 14 years old when they move on to a District Explorer Unit

To try to be transparent and open, we have defined the criteria of how we offer places to children. We have also set out guidelines for movement within the Group

We operate within the equal opportunities policy of the Scout Association and welcome all children, aged from 6 to 14 years, subject to spaces being available and the section having sufficient adults to run. The safety and well-being of all children is of utmost importance and if a member has special needs then their membership will be dependent the support which they need in order to enjoy Scouting fully and to be safe being provided.

## Definitions

- Section - This Group has three sections: Beaver Scouts (6 – 8 years), Cub Scouts(8 – 10.5 years) and Scouts (10.5 – 14 years) There are 2 Beaver Colonies, 3 Cub Packs and 3 Scout Troops. The ages give in brackets are define as 'Core' ages by the Scout Association (POR rules 3.7.j,3.8.j, 3.9.j )
- The Group - A Scout Group has three age related sections: Beavers (6 to 8 years), Cubs (8 to 10.5 years) and Scouts (10.5 to 14 years.)
- The District – A Scout District is a geographical area encompassing all the groups in that area. Our group is part of Hallam District which extends from the river Sheaf to the river Don
- Section Size Colonies have 18 children, Packs have 24 children and Troops have 24 children. This ensures a smooth progression between colony, pack and troop. These sizes may vary for a short period if necessary.

## Joining the Group

### Request for a place:

To request a place, parents and carers must complete the 'Request for a Place' form which is on our website.

### Single waiting list

We operate a single waiting list for the Group.

### Minimum and maximum ages

We accept requests for places in our Group on behalf of children up to the age of 13 years.

Requests for children who are over 13 years old are re-directed to the District Explorers

### Selection criteria

When selecting children from our waiting list, we consider the following in this order:

#### *Children with a parent who is a leader in the group:*

Ultimately the Group would not exist without volunteers. Children whose parents are already leaders in the group are given priority when places are allocated.

#### *Existing members of Fulwood Scout Group:*

Children who are already a member of the Group, moving up to the next section, i.e. Beavers to Cubs, Cubs to Scouts.

#### *Time on waiting list*

We accept requests for places at any time but calculate the time on the waiting list from two years before the date when the child would be eligible for a place. Thus for a place in Beavers, we calculate the time on the waiting list from the child's fourth birthday

#### *Proximity to the Group's premises:*

Our catchment area is defined by the area outlined on the map in Appendix 1. When offering places, we will give priority to children living in the area defined.

#### *Age*

The age of the child

#### *The age profile of the section*

We endeavour to keep a good spread of ages across the age range for the section concerned

#### *Siblings*

We will give some priority to children with siblings already in the Group

#### *People moving into Fulwood:*

##### *Moving in to the area*

We do accept transfer requests for young people who have been members of the Scout Association outside the District. However, we do not guarantee places but we will make reasonable efforts to accommodate newcomers.

##### *Transfer requests from local Scout Groups:*

We will not normally accept requests for transfer as our waiting list is usually extensive. In exceptional circumstances and in consultation with the District Commissioner, who 'looks after' all groups in the area, we may add the child to our waiting list.

### **Offer of a place**

The Group welcomes new members at the start of September and January and March. Most new members join the Beaver Section after their sixth birthday.

We will contact **by eMail** the named parent on the waiting list with an offer of a place in the first half term before the place becomes available. We will allocate a place in the appropriate section and will not normally accede to specific requests.

If a place is declined or the offer not acknowledged within the period set out in the offer, the place will be offered to another child on the waiting list

We will inform the named parent that we do not have a place for their child once we have received responses from those offered places.

### **Parents' responsibilities**

Parents are responsible for keeping us informed of changes to contact details, especially eMail.

### **Second opinion**

If you feel your application has not been treated fairly, you are welcome to send us a message, addressed to the Group Scout Leader who has responsibility for the Group Membership.

## Allocation of Colony, Pack or Troop

Warranted leaders have first priority to choose the colony, pack or troop they would prefer their child to attend.

The following guidelines apply to young people joining the Group and moving on to a senior sections.

### Where places exist in only one colony, pack or troop:

#### *Existing Members eligible for a place in a senior section*

- All youth members will be offered a place in the next senior section within the Group.
- Places in the 'meeting' with vacancies will be offered to all children due to move from a younger section.
- Should the offer be rejected e.g. due to prior commitments the child has, difficulties in getting the child to or from the meeting time, the child will leave the Group.
- Any child who needs to leave the group can have a place on the waiting list. However, no special preference will be given to that child when offering future places
- Any remaining places will be offered to people on the waiting list.

### Where places exist in more than one meeting:

- Parents and children will be asked to express a preference either for a particular pack or troop, or a child they would like to be with (either someone also moving or someone already in the new pack or troop).
- Where siblings will be in the same pack or troop for more than two terms priority will be given to putting them together if requested. Where it will be for less than two terms no additional preference will be given.
- Any remaining places will be offered to children on the waiting list.
- Should the offer be rejected e.g. due to prior commitments the child has, difficulties in getting the child to or from the meeting time, the child will leave the Group.
- Any child who needs to leave the group can have a place on the waiting list. However, no special preference will be given to that child when offering future places
- Places are allocated by the GSL in conjunction with the relevant colony, pack or troop leaders.
- Exceptional circumstances may apply, for example because of health issues, which fall outside of these guidelines. These will be treated on a case by case basis.
- Parents can appeal to the GSL against the way these principles were applied, but not appeal against the principles which have been agreed. Appeals should be lodged 2 weeks before the start of the term when the child will join the new section. The GSL's decision then stands.

## Movement between meetings

Changing sections will be considered by the GSL if requested. When considering a request, the numbers in the relevant colonies, packs or troops will be considered:

Movement will normally be at the start of a term

## Moving Ages

The Scout Association sets a range of ages for joining a section:

	Scout Association Guidelines	Group Policy
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	Minimum Start Age	Core Start Age	Core Transfer Age	Maximum Age	Start date	Transfer date
Beavers	5¾	6	8	8½	At the start of the term after their 6 <sup>th</sup> birthday	At the start of the term after the 8 <sup>th</sup> birthday
Cubs	7½	8	10½	11	At the start of the term after the 8 <sup>th</sup> birthday	At the start of the term in which their 11 <sup>th</sup> birthday falls
Scouts	10	10½	14	14½	At the start of the term in which their 11 <sup>th</sup> birthday falls	At the start of the term after their 14 <sup>th</sup> birthday
Explorers	13½	14	18		At the start of the term after their 14 <sup>th</sup> birthday	

Where a child's birthday falls at the start of a term (e.g. within 2 weeks) they may join at the start of that term.

Where it is in the child's interests to move outside the Scout Association guidelines, the GSL will seek the approval of the District Commissioner to do this.

The Group policy is flexible. For younger children, the move to the next section may be amended by the GSL where a parent requests this. For Scouts moving to Explorers, this is a decision for the scout

## Appendix 1

### Catchment Area

The area set out on the map below is designed to include children who live near the Group's HQ on Fulwood Road and who attend either Hallam School or Nether Green Schools. This latter criterion is to enable friends at the same school to be members of our Group. The boundary includes addresses on both sides of the road.

