

# The key policies of The Scout Association



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## Introduction

This factsheet states some of the key policies of The Scout Association so you have them together in one document for ease of reference.

## The Fundamentals of Scouting

### *Purpose*

The Purpose of Scouting is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities.

### *Method*

The Scout Method provides an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training, based on the Scout Promise and Law, guided by adult leadership. In practice the Method is best seen when young people, in partnership with adults, are:

- enjoying what they are doing
- learning by doing
- participating in varied and progressive activities
- making choices for themselves
- taking responsibility for their own actions
- working in groups
- taking increasing responsibility for others
- taking part in activities outdoors
- sharing in prayer and worship
- making and living out their Promise.

## Religious Policy

The Scout Movement includes Members of many different forms of religion. The following policy has received the approval of the heads of the leading religious bodies in the United Kingdom.

All Members of the Movement are encouraged to:

- make every effort to progress in the understanding and observance of the Promise to do their best to do their duty to God
- belong to some religious body
- carry into daily practice what they profess.

## Equal Opportunities Policy

### *Young people*

a) The Scout Association is committed to extending Scouting, its Purpose and Method to young people in all parts of society.

b) No young person should receive less favourable treatment on the basis of, nor suffer disadvantage by reason of:

- class
- ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race
- gender
- marital or sexual status
- mental or physical ability
- political or religious belief.

All Members of the Movement should seek to practise equality, especially in promoting access to Scouting for young people in all parts of society. The Scout Association opposes all forms of racism.

## The Scout Information Centre

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Note: With reference to gender, Membership of the youth Sections of the Association is open to girls and young women of the appropriate ages subject to a process of local self-determination in each Scout Group as to whether existing single-sex provision should become co-educational.

### **Leaders and other volunteers**

To carry out its work the Association seeks to appoint effective and appropriate Leaders, and to involve other volunteers in supporting roles, all of whom are required to accept fully the responsibilities of their commitment. Within the constraints imposed by the need to ensure:

- the safety and security of young people
- the continued development of young people and
- equal opportunities for all.

No person volunteering their services should receive less favourable treatment on the basis of, nor suffer disadvantage by reason of:

- class
- ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race
- gender
- marital or sexual status
- mental or physical ability
- political or religious belief.

#### *Note*

Paedophilia is a bar to any involvement in the Scout Movement.

#### *Note*

With reference to religious belief, the avowed absence of religious belief is a bar to appointment to a leadership position.

### **Safety Policy**

It is the policy of The Scout Association to provide Scouting in a safe manner without risk to health, so far as is reasonably practicable.

It is the responsibility of all those involved in Scouting to seek to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that:

- all activities are conducted in a safe manner without risk to the health of participants
- the provision and maintenance of equipment and buildings for Members and others is safe and without risk to health and adequate for their welfare
- information, instruction, training and supervision is provided with the object of ensuring the health and safety of all those involved in Scouting activities or who may be affected by them
- appropriate arrangements are made to ensure safety and the absence of risks to health in connection with the use, transport, storage and handling of equipment, and substances which are inherently or potentially dangerous.

### **Child Protection Policy (Young People First)**

It is the policy of The Scout Association to safeguard the welfare of all Members by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.

#### *Code of Behaviour:*

- Do put the Young People First guidance into practice.
- Do treat everyone with respect.
- Do provide an example you wish others to follow.
- Do plan activities, which involve more than one other person being present, or at least are within sight or hearing of others.
- Do respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
- Do have separate sleeping accommodation for Leaders and young people.
- Do provide access for young people to talk about any concerns they may have.
- Do encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes and behaviours they do not like.

- Do avoid situations that compromise your relationship with young people and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust (e.g. sexual relationship between a Leader and a youth Member over the age of consent).
- Do remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned.
- Do recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying, bereavement or abuse.
- Do not permit abusive peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying).
- Do not play physical contact games with young people.
- Do not have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others.
- Do not jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- Do not allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes.
- Do not show favouritism to any individual.
- Do not make suggestive remarks or gestures, even in fun.
- Do not let suspicion, disclosure or allegation of abuse, go unrecorded or unreported.
- Do not rely on just your good name to protect you.
- Do not believe 'it could never happen to you'.

#### **What happens If you suspect a child is being abused?**

1. Immediately inform your Group Scout Leader or District Commissioner.
2. Record the facts as you know them and give a copy to your District Commissioner.
3. Ensure that the child has access to an independent adult.

4. Ensure that no Scouting situation arises which could cause any further concern.

...if a child tells you about abuse by someone else?

1. Allow the child to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
2. Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
3. Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
4. Same steps as 1-4 as in suspecting a child is being abused.

...if you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself?

1. Immediately inform your Group Scout Leader or District Commissioner.
2. Record the facts as you know them and give a copy to your District Commissioner.
3. Try to ensure no one is placed in a position, which could cause further compromise.

You must refer; you must not investigate.

#### **Responsibilities and commitments of an Appointment**

Each new Appointment will involve a number of responsibilities and commitments. These should be outlined, and explained, by your line manager when agreeing your job description.

#### **Training obligations of the Appointment**

It is likely that while you will already meet many of the requirements of your new Appointment, there will be other areas where you will need further learning. In addition to this there may also be subjects for which training is obligatory. Your line manager should discuss appropriate training and learning requirements and opportunities with you.