



1st Merrow Scout Group

Waiting List and Membership Policy

Child Protection

1st Merrow Scout Group is part of The Scout Association

The Child Protection Policy of The Scout Association

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

We will comply with the Child Protection policy of The Scout Association, which can be found on its website: www.scouts.org.uk

Membership

Overall membership of the Scout Group is under the control of the Group Scout Leader (GSL). The respective leaders manage their own sections on a day-to-day basis. The membership secretary manages the waiting list. All members and their parents/guardians must abide by the rules and policies of the Scout Group and the relevant sections.

Although young people may visit section meetings to see if they like Scouting and the activities, they are formally admitted only once they have been invested into the Scout Group. Prior to investiture, a potential member must have completed the appropriate paperwork, purchased the required uniform and paid the appropriate membership fees.

The group cannot run efficiently without support from parents/guardians. There are many opportunities to support the group, including help at maintenance working parties or group activities (such as the May Fair), helping occasionally at section meetings or fundraising. The Executive would like each family to commit half a day per year to help the leaders provide the best possible scouting experience to our young people.

Details of all members and potential members on the waiting list are kept on our membership and administration system, Online Scout Manager, and on Compass, the scout association's membership system. Access to both systems is limited to those approved by the GSL. By applying to join the group, parents/guardians accept that the details submitted will be kept on these systems.

Waiting List

Parents or guardians can add young people to the group's waiting list at any time, by completing the form on our website (<http://www.1stmerrow.org.uk>). **This is the only way of accessing the waiting list.** We will acknowledge all applications by automated eMail: it is therefore vital parents/guardians ensure this acknowledgement is received to confirm that the young person has been added to the list.

We run multiple beaver colonies and cub packs; however, we do not offer the opportunity to stipulate a preference at the time of joining the waiting list. If places become available in more than one colony or pack at the same time we will, if possible, accommodate any preferences at that time.

Where places become available within a section, we will offer them to young people who have reached the necessary age for that section. The GSL, in conjunction with the appropriate section leaders, is responsible for determining how many places are offered and to whom, taking account of the needs of the section and the longer-term impact upon subsequent sections.

In general, the admission priorities will be:-

1. existing members of the group transferring to the next section i.e. beavers to cubs and cubs to scouts
2. children whose parents/guardians have been formally working in the group as a warranted Leader, Section Assistant or appointed officer for at least three months and who will be continuing to work with the group
3. young people who have been on the 1st Merrow Scout Group waiting for the longest time, with the exception that we will not usually offer a place if their age means they cannot spend at least six months with the section. In these circumstances, they will be given priority to the next section up where possible.

When young people become too old for one section without the offer of a place (e.g. Beavers), they will remain on the list and may be offered a place at another section (e.g. Cubs).

There may be certain circumstances in which an exception to the priorities set out above may be invoked. These may include, but are not limited to, specific family circumstances, special educational, medical or other needs. The GSL, relevant section leader group executive chairman and membership secretary must approve all exceptions and they must be informed to, and recorded in the minutes of, the group executive committee.

For young people moving into the area that have been a member in other Scout Groups, all transfer requests must be made to the Guildford East District Commissioner, and not to 1st Merrow.

Fees

The Executive sets membership fees. The membership year runs from 1 January to 31 December and the membership secretary collects the annual fee in January. Payment is due for the whole year and is not normally refundable if the young person decides to leave the group after they have been invested. A refund may be made in exceptional circumstances; e.g. the young person has left the area so can no longer attend the meetings.

Where a young person joins part way through the year, fees are payable on a pro-rata basis.

If parents/guardians are not able to pay for the whole year in one payment, the annual fee can be phased with the agreement of the membership secretary. This would normally be over three months but can be longer in exceptional circumstances.

There is a small bursary fund available for parents/guardians who wish to apply. They have to complete a form explaining why the bursary is required. Any award is for one year only and has to be approved by the GSL, Chairman of the Executive and the Treasurer.

Children and grandchildren of warranted leaders do not have to pay membership fees. This concession does not apply to other relatives of leaders (e.g. siblings, nephews or nieces).

Each year, section leaders are able to nominate those frequent helpers they feel should benefit from a reduction in fees for their children/grandchildren for the following year and the amount of reduction they feel is appropriate. These nominations will be considered by the GSL, Chairman of the Executive and Treasurer who will agree a discount if appropriate. This is to ensure consistency across all sections.

Termination of membership

Membership will be terminated under the following circumstances:-

- when a parent/guardian informs the leaders that the young person is leaving
- when a young person has failed to attend for four consecutive weekly meetings without explanation

Where a member does not pay any due fees or fails to abide by the Code of Behaviour, they will be deemed to have excluded themselves. Parents/guardians will be consulted should this seem likely to occur and the final decision made by the GSL under these circumstances.

Equal Opportunities Policy

We will comply with the Equal Opportunities Policy of The Scout Association, which can be found on its website: www.scouts.org.uk

Approved by Executive: 9 November 2015