



## 2<sup>nd</sup> Upminster (St. Laurence) Scout Group

### Information for Parents and Carers

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## Welcome

Hello, and welcome to what we hope will be an enjoyable time for your child and your whole family. Scouting prides itself on being accessible to all ages, cultures and abilities we welcome you to our Scout Group.

Scouting numbers nationally are on the increase. In Hornchurch District alone there are over 1,000 members, and the programme of activities offers challenge and adventure to young people from 6 years upwards. The Scouting formula is simple: using volunteer adult leaders and basic facilities, Scouting helps young people from all backgrounds to develop universally valued qualities of trust, empathy, confidence, integrity and a spirit of adventure. Life skills are learned to help young people become tomorrow's happiest, healthiest and most productive citizens, some of whom will be tomorrow's leaders.

## Membership

Our Scout Group has three sections – Beavers, Cubs and Scouts – and provides weekly scouting activities for members from 6 to 14 years of age. We all share the same Promise: **'...to do our best, to our duty to God and the Queen, to help other people and to keep the Scout Law'**

Members automatically move from one section to the next at the appropriate age (Beavers to Cubs at 8 and Cubs to Scouts at 10½). When Scouts reach 14 they are encouraged to transfer to one of the District's Explorer Scout Units where they can continue Scouting until they reach 18 when they may become members of the Scout Network.

We are a church sponsored group and our members are required to attend the following church parades and special service:

- Mothering Sunday (March or April)
- St. George's Day (April)
- June Church Parade
- Harvest Festival (September)
- Remembrance Sunday (November)
- Christingle (December)

If you do not want your child to attend church parades we can put you in touch with an open Group that will not require participation in church activities.

To enable us to operate effectively and communicate with you and your child we keep various details including names, addresses, family contacts etc. together with some sensitive information such as health details. We also maintain details of your child's progress through Scouting.

To hold this information we need your explicit consent and this can be given by completing and signing the enclosed Application for Membership & Personal Information Form.

## Weekly meetings

Our sections usually meet in the Main Hall at St. Laurence Church on the following evenings during school term times:

Beavers	Monday	5.30 – 6.45
	Tuesday	6:00 – 7:15
Cubs	Thursday	6:15 – 7:40
Scouts	Friday	7:00 – 8:45

However, please speak to the section leaders to confirm exact dates for the start and end of term and any half-term break. If your child misses a meeting please contact your section leader to check if anything is needed for the meeting and to confirm the location.

## Child Protection

The Scout Association has a clear policy to safeguard the welfare of all members by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm. All leaders are subject to background checks both by the DBS and against The Scout Association's own database.

## Involvement of Parents and Carers in Group Activities

Many of our Scouting activities provide opportunities for parents to be involved; in fact, without parental help the continued existence of the Group would be endangered. However, in line with The Scout Association's child protection policy, parents can only participate once they have completed background checks by the Criminal Records Bureau and The Scout Association.

We encourage all parents to complete an Occasional Helper form when their child joins the Group as this ensures they are already cleared when their first opportunity for involvement arises. Please return completed Occasional Helper forms to your section leader and bring with you the required proofs of identity. (Ask your section leader what evidence is required or visit [www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk/id](http://www.crb.homeoffice.gov.uk/id))

If working with the children is not your thing then please consider helping with general support work or administration. There are a wide variety of roles which need to be undertaken such as Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.

## Security at Meetings and Events

Parents are reminded that children should not be left at meetings or events until they have ascertained that two leaders are present.

Youngsters will not be allowed to leave at the end of activities until collected by a responsible adult. If you want your child to leave on their own you will have to complete and sign a form authorising this.

The Beaver and Cub sections operate a 'one-way' system when collecting youngsters; please enter the Main Hall from the foyer, collect your son and exit through the side door. If all parents support this, we can ensure that the boys leave with the goodies they have made, their letters for you but above all, with an adult.

## Uniform

You don't need to buy any uniform for when your child first starts attending, suitable casual clothes and footwear will be fine. Once they've decided that Scouting is for them, they'll need to wear the official uniform so they can be formally invested into the group. The leaders will tell you which items of uniform are required for their section and where you can get it. We try to recycle second hand uniform where possible; if this interests you please speak to your section leader.

## Subscriptions

The uniformed leaders and Group Executive run our Scout Group on an entirely voluntary basis but we still need to charge subscriptions to meet the costs of holding meetings, purchasing and maintaining equipment and Group administration. Subscriptions also cover District and County contributions and the Scout Association capitation. A separate charge is normally made for special events, camps and other outings.

Subscriptions are payable from when you and your child decide to join the Scout Group and will be approximately a month from when your child first visited; this will precede them being an invested member of their section following their attendance at Church parade. We charge £10.50 per month throughout the year which is payable by standing order. The same subscription is payable in all sections so the standing order does not need to be changed when your child moves from one section to another.

We are a registered charity so we ask you to complete a Gift Aid declaration because that allows us to turn each £1 of subscription into £1.25 at no additional cost to you.

Please complete the combined Gift Aid declaration and standing order form included with this pack.

## **Financial hardship**

If you have difficulty paying membership subscription or additional charges relating to outings, camps etc. please speak to your section leader or the Group Scout Leader as financial assistance may be available.

## **Complaints**

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of Scouting at 2nd Upminster please speak to the appropriate section leader or contact the Group Scout Leader whose name and other details are shown on the front page. If you are still unhappy you may contact the local District Commissioner at: 07940 545068 or [dc@hornchurchscouts.org.uk](mailto:dc@hornchurchscouts.org.uk)