20th April 2015



**Ash Green Scout Group**

**Policy Document**

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**1. GENERAL POLICY**

##### The Group

1. The Ash Green Scout Group was founded in 1972 and is registered with the Scout Association (Reg. No. 16073). The Group fully adopts the policies of the Scout Association as defined in their Policy Organisation and Rules.
2. The Group is also a registered charity.
3. The Group consists of two Beaver Colonies, two Cub Packs and two Scout Troops. A District Explorer Scout Unit is accommodated by agreement with the District, and intends to begin in January 2016 at the Group's premises.
4. The Group Colours are Green and White.
5. The Group is led by the Group Scout Leader (GSL) who is responsible for the maintenance of standards. The GSL will chair a bi monthly meeting of all leaders.
6. The Administration of the Group is led by the Group Chairman and exercised through the Group Executive Committee.
7. The Executive Committee will consist of the Group Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, GSL, all AGSL’s, all section leaders, Chairman of the Sub-Committees, Group Quartermaster and any persons nominated by the GSL or co-opted by the Committee. A Quorum for the committee shall be two officers, the GSL or AGSL and three other members. The nomination of members will be done in accordance to POR and Charity commissioner guidelines.
8. The Executive Committee will set a membership fee for all members for each year. For young people this will be payable monthly by standing order only.
9. The Group will maintain a good set of records in the form of minutes of meetings from the AGM, Executive, Sub-Committees and Scouters' meetings.
10. A basic record giving name, address, telephone number, date of birth and any special medical condition will be maintained for each young person in the Group. This record will be kept on a computer. No information contained on the computer will be given to any other body outside of Scouting. All members, parents and guardians will be informed of this and will be given an opportunity to object.
11. The Group meets at New Ash Green Youth Centre and pays a termly rent for the hire.
12. The Group owns all equipment held by the Group and its sections. This equipment is primarily for Group use. Equipment can only be loaned with the permission of the Group Quartermaster or GSL. Where equipment is loaned out a reasonable donation will be expected.
13. All Leaders, Executive Members and Occasional helpers will have completed relevant and valid DBS checks.

##### Aims

1. The aim of the Group 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. The method of achieving the Aim is by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training and activities based on the Scout association Promises and Laws and guided by adult leadership team and POR.
2. The Group aims to ensure that no young person is excluded from Scouting activities on financial grounds, when we have the ability to assist them. This will be agreed by the GSL and GEC Treasurer only.
3. The Group aims to minimise the cost of direct scouting to parents and guardians by indirect fundraising activities that encourage companionship and enjoyment for its supporters.
4. The Group aims to encourage future leadership from within its own group membership and provides all essential leader training at no cost to the individual. Adventurous Activity and further training will be assessed on an individual basis in consultation with the district.
5. The Group aims to maintain all its facilities and equipment in the best possible condition and to strive to improve them where possible.
6. The Group considers all parents to be part of the Group and expects parents to participate and support the aims. The Group expects parents to support the key events of the year including the AGM, Scouts' Own Services and Fundraising Events.
7. The Group aims, through the Group Executive, to ensure the continued financial security of the Group, both in the short term and the long term.
8. The Group aims to support children with special needs where possible, subject to the availability of trained leaders and applicable equipment and facilities.

##### Membership

1. The Group is an 'Open Scout Group' i.e. not related to any other organisation and having a policy of unrestricted recruitment.
2. All sections of The Group are open to both male and female membership.
3. All leaders and children should attend meetings punctually and in full uniform unless otherwise stated.
4. Young people will ‘feed’ to the relevant next Section as agreed by leaders. In extenuating circumstances young people can ‘feed’ to a different Section but only with the GSL permission.
5. Young people will only ‘move on’ to the next section when they are of the correct age. In extenuating circumstances young people can only be held back or pushed forward with the GSL permission.

**a. SPECIFIC POLICIES**

##### aa. Use of Premises - general

1. All activities must be organised to provide minimum disturbance to our neighbours.
2. All activities must be organised and run in accordance with Scout Association POR and properly risk assessed.
3. The premises must be used with care and any activities avoided which might cause damage.
4. Where possible members should avoid being on the premises on their own.
5. The section or group of members using the premises are responsible for ensuring the headquarters is properly locked when vacated, all lights switched off and the premises including the field and kitchen left in a clean and tidy state.
6. Any keys to the premises must be returned when any person relinquishes their post with the Group.
7. Any damage to the premises should be reported as soon as possible to the GSL.
8. No rubbish is to be dumped on the site. Rubbish must be placed in the bins provided.
9. No smoking is allowed in any of the buildings or on the premises in any area.
10. The use of television sets/computers on the premises is permitted with prior permission from the Youth Centre trustees. No TV Licence is held by the premises
11. The Youth Centre provides Internet access on site which will be protected against inappropriate website access and supervised by leaders.

##### ab. Use of Premises- sections

1. Members under 18 years of age **must** not be on the premises without a leader or adult present.
2. Other than for regular and pre-planned meetings, the Youth Centre should only be used by agreement with the GSL with prior permission of the Trustees.
3. The facilities contained in the Youth Centre can be used with prior permission from the Trustees.
4. **Finance**
5. All subs payments must be paid by standing order unless agreed by the Group Scout Leader
6. A reminder will be issued if a child’s subs are in arrears of two months. If arrears and subs are not forthcoming, or the parent has not discussed the issue with the Section Leader, then the child should be suspended until all subs are up to date. After a further month the child’s place will be offered to a child on the waiting list.
7. There is a £15 joining fee – either by cheque or cash in an envelope that clearly states the child’s name. This must be handed in with the other forms before the child can be registered and invested. This is to cover the cost of scarf, investiture badges, woggle and publication.
8. There will be a £5 fee for moving between sections to cover new publication. This must be paid in the form of a cheque or cash in an envelope that clearly states the child’s name. The books will not be issued unless this fee is paid.
9. Replacement badges will be charged at £1 each, Scarves at cost, Woggles at 50p with no exceptions.
10. Direct bank payments are not accepted. Payments must be made via OSM, cash or cheque in a named envelope with full details of payment written on. Leaders WILL NOT accept payments unless it properly annotated.
11. New leaders will be given a £20 voucher towards uniform plus a group scarf. Other uniform will be at their expense.
12. All activities are booked via Online Scout Manager. There is a final deadline for amending the booking (usually three/four weeks before the event takes place). If parents withdraw their children after the deadline, they will still be liable for payment in full should we not be able to sell on the place to another child.
13. Camps/Events under £50 must be paid in full at time of booking unless a specified other date is agreed by Leader in charge of event.
14. Camps/Events over £50 will require a 25% non-refundable deposit paid at time of booking. Balance paid in full at specified time agreed by Leader in charge of event.

##### Expenditure

**Group Executive Committee**

1. The Group Executive Committee is responsible for the control of **all** Group expenditure (including that by sections) and the propriety with which it is spent.
2. The Group Executive Committee will set an annual budget for each section to cover the purchases necessary for the weekly activities of the section, and the section is expected to control expenditure in such a way as to ensure that the agreed budget is not exceeded
3. All activities by a section (camp, outings etc) must be self-financing - directly through payment by parents etc, and possibly (where appropriate, and where finances permit) part subsidised from the section budget. Where, exceptionally, the cost of the camp/activity is likely to be unduly prohibitive, the Section leader should approach the Executive Committee BEFORE promoting the activity/camp and negotiate a Group subsidy. If Section Leaders exceed the recommended POR ratio of Leaders at camp, permission must be agreed by the GEC to cover any shortfalls.
4. Group funding covering camp fees for Leaders (and Parent supporters) and any of their children below Beaver age. Leaders asked to pay for food and activities for themselves and those children. Non-Scouting children of Beaver age or older to be paid for in full (non-subsidised) by the leader/parent concerned.
5. The Group Executive Committee will set the level of subscription for all members.
6. The Group Treasurer must be a signatory to all bank accounts along with at least one other member of the GEC.
7. No other account or credit facility must be opened in the section name without the approval of the GEC.

**d. Discipline/Behaviour**

1. All sections operate a discipline policy. In the case of repeated bad behaviour the group operates the following system: After a verbal warning to the child the Leader can take the decision to approach the parent. If no improvement the child can be suspended for one/two weeks. If bad behaviour re occurs the child can be dismissed from the group.
2. No Beaver Scout, Cub Scout, or Scout may be dismissed from the Group without the approval of the Group Scout Leader.
3. Any member who is dismissed has the right of appeal to the District Commissioner. If so requested by the person dismissed, the District Commissioner may appoint a committee to hear the appeal.
4. If a child is dismissed, the GEC should be informed by the GSL at the next available meeting, and the fact that a child has been expelled should be minuted as a permanent record. The GEC do not need to know the name the child. It is expected that the GSL will normally support the Section Leader's decision to exclude / expel a child unless there are overwhelming reasons why the exclusion/expulsion should not take place.
5. Bullying, swearing or inappropriate actions are not tolerated. All incidences must be reported to the section leader.
6. Any complaints must first be bought to the Section Leaders attention. If no satisfactory conclusion can be reached the GSL must be contacted.
7. Disagreements between children at camp or in meetings should in the first instance be dealt with by the uniformed leader team. Parents must NOT approach children or other parents directly. Leaders will attempt to resolve issues between children and approach and speak to parents privately where necessary. If this is not adhered to the adults involved will be asked to leave.
8. Adults responsible for members are in no way allowed to use threatening, bullying or unacceptable behaviour towards Leaders, young people, or other responsible adults of Ash Green Scout Group. This is in any format ie in person, via email or facebook. Failure to abide by this policy could result in their child being excluded from the group.

##### e. Alcohol/Smoking/Substances

This policy is intended to set down the Group's rules regarding the provision and consumption of Alcohol during all Group activities. The basis of the policy is that UK law must prevail in all circumstances. However where some interpretation or flexibility is allowed this policy should be adhered to.

This policy has been approved by the Group Executive and the Group Scout Leader.

**Rules**

1. No alcohol may be sold to persons less than 18 years of age.
2. Alcohol may only be sold where an appropriate licence has been obtained.
3. There is to be no alcohol consumed during a formal meeting.
4. Under no circumstances are persons under 18 to be offered or allowed to drink alcohol during any Group activity.
5. Where alcohol is to be consumed by leaders as part of an activity where persons under 18 are present at least one leader should refrain from alcohol in order to take charge of any emergency.
6. No alcohol must be provided or consumed during any hazardous activity.
7. Persons under 18 are not to be taken into licensed premises as part of an activity without parental consent. In no circumstances are they to be bought or allowed to purchase alcohol whilst on the premises.
8. Any person arriving at a Group event who is considered to be drunk will be refused entry and any person showing signs of being drunk during an activity will be asked to leave.
9. Where there is no specific rule to cover the situation leader discretion may be used but the UK law must be observed and the spirit of this policy implemented.

##### Smoking

1. The Policy of the Group is to attempt to protect the young people in its care from the effects of smoking and to discourage young people from smoking. 'Smoking' in this context includes the use of electronic cigarettes or tobacco substitutes in any form.
2. Smoking is strictly forbidden in any of the buildings on the group premises.
3. Smoking in front of young people is to be avoided.
4. Young people under 18 are not to smoke during any activity organised by or in the name of the Group.

##### Substance Abuse

1. The taking or inhalation of any classified substance, unless medically approved, is strictly forbidden during any activity organised by or in the name of the group or on the group's premises. Any person found doing so would be asked to leave the Group immediately.

##### f. Health & Safety

1. It is the policy of the Group to provide Scouting in a safe manner without risk to the health of its members or any visitors so far as is reasonably practicable.
2. It is the responsibility of all those involved in the group to seek, as far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure:
3. that all activities are conducted in a safe manner without risk to the health of the participants; that the provision and maintenance of equipment and buildings both for members and others is safe and without risk to health and adequate for their welfare; that 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; that 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.
4. The Executive Committee is responsible for the Health & Safety policy of the Group. All persons involved with the Group are responsible for the operation of the Group's policy.
5. For all camps and outings outside of the local area parental permission is required giving the leader permission to act 'in loco parentis' when a parent cannot be contacted and giving details of any medication to be administered to the child.

##### g. Accident Reporting

1. All accidents that take place at the premises or on a scouting activity must be recorded via the relevant online form and sent to the GSL who is responsible to keep copies. The responsibility for completing the entry lies with the person in charge of the meeting or activity.
2. In addition any accident which requires that the individual concerned be treated by a doctor, dentist, at a hospital or requires a rescue by the emergency services, must be reported to Scout Association HQ immediately. This should be done by contacting the Scout Association Information Centre tel. 0845 3001818. Having taken the basic details the information centre will issue a form, which must be completed and returned as soon as possible. The entry in the accident book should record that HQ has been informed and a copy of the completed report form passed to the GSL.
3. Where a separate accident book has been maintained for an event (such as a camp), it is sufficient to enter a reference to this in the Group Accident Book providing the original record is maintained.

##### First Aid Kits

1. A first Aid kit is housed within the premises in the Group designated area. Leaders are responsible for informing the GSL if supplies are low. Where items are used from the kit it would be helpful if this were noted in the accident book.
2. All sections undertaking an activity out of the HQ should consider the need to carry a first aid kit. For camps this is essential.

##### Fire Safety

1. All sections are required to ensure that their members are familiar with the instructions 'in case of fire’ and carry out a fire drill at least twice a year. The instructions are displayed in the main hall, office and other prominent places.
2. In the event of a fire the priority must always be the safety of the people on the premises particularly the young people. The second priority is to call the fire brigade where necessary. Only when the person responsible for the meeting or event is certain all people are safe should there be any attempt to extinguish the fire. This should only be done where the person concerned is sure there is no danger to themselves.
3. Flammable materials such as gas, methylated spirit, paraffin Petrol, Diesel etc are not to be stored in the premises at any time.

##### h. Child Protection Policy

1. The Group will apply the child protection policy of the Scout Association.
2. It is the policy of the Group to safe guard the welfare of all members by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.

**The Group is committed to:**

1. taking into account in all its considerations and activities the interests and well-being of young people;
2. respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of the young people with whom it is working; taking all reasonable practicable steps to protect them from physical sexual and emotional abuse;
3. Promoting the welfare of young people and their protection within a relationship of trust.
4. All adults aged 18 and over within the Group are responsible for the operation of the Group's protection policy.

**It is the responsibility of all adults to ensure that:**

1. their behaviour is appropriate at all times;
2. they observe the rules established for the safety and security of young people and set out in the guidelines 'Young People First'; they follow the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse; they recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed; in every respect, the relationships they form with the young people under their care are appropriate.
3. The Group Scout Leader must be satisfied that all those who assist in the Group are 'fit and proper' persons to carry out the tasks given and are aware of their responsibilities under the Group's child protection policy. In accordance with Scout Association policy all adult members will be checked with Scout HQ and the Criminal Records Agency.
4. Leaders should restrict communications on Scouting matters between leaders to the Leader Facebook page only, and not use the general Group facebook page for inter-leader communication. The general Facebook page should be used for general communication to Parents. No private e-mail or chat room conversations to any child at all. Email (only if absolutely necessary) to children via parent's e-mail in every case.

##### Complaints:

1. Current SA Factsheets will provide the course of action to be taken. Chapter 15 of POR provide all information in how to deal with complaints.
2. Concerns and issues raised by parents about weekly meetings should be raised to the section leader. If this is not suitable or parties involved are not able to resolve the issue then complaints should be made in writing/email to the Group Scout Leader.
3. An investigation will take place and if necessary advice from the District commissioner, County commissioner and / or The Scout Association will be sought.
4. In General (but not all cases) the GSL will aim to complete and finalise a complaint within 4 weeks and keep all parties notified of progress.

## i. Group Website

1. The Group website is www.ashgreenscouts.org. The website is maintained by the current cub Leader and overseen by the GEC Chair and GSL. The aim of the website is to advertise the Group and its activities both to members and potential members.
2. No personal telephone numbers or personal E-mail addresses are to be published on the site. The site has the ability to make use of linked E-mail addresses.
3. Enquiries for membership etc. will be forwarded to the GSL.
4. No pictures of named individuals will be used.
5. Only pictures of 'good taste' will be used.
6. Care should be taken when advertising events and camps to ensure that young people are not put at risk.
7. No information copied from other sources is to be used. In particular no information which may have a copyright may be used.

 **APPENDIX A R ISK ASSESSMENTS**

In order to ensure that all potential hazards have been considered in relation to the equipment and facilities, a Risk Assessment process will be used by the all Leaders when planning activities. It is simply a way of looking at what could go wrong and finding ways of preventing or minimising these potential problems.

Risk Assessments do not always have to be written but Leaders should go through a mental checklist to ensure activities are carried out in a safe manner.

However, if the activities include camps, hikes and other adventurous activities then the Risk Assessment MUST be in a written format and sent to the GSL and AGSL for approval. If the activity includes a Nights Away element tem it MUST also be signed off by a Nights Away Permit holder if the person submitting it does not hold such a qualification.

The accepted format forms Appendix B

Appendix B – accepted Risk Assessment Format

Appendix B – Risk assessment Form

**All adventurous/hazardous activities must have a risk assessment.**

**Ash Green Scouts Risk Assessment Form**

**Activity:**

| **What are the hazards?** | **Who might be harmed and how?** | **What are you already doing?** | **Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?** | **Action by whom?** | **Action by when?** | **Done** |
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