

# Waiting List Policy

Guide to offering places to young people joining the Group

Executive Committee approval Date

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##

## Version Control

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| Version | Author/ Editor | Release Date |
| 1.0 | Alison Stead |  |

##

## Background

We are a strong, vibrant Scout Group, committed to providing a positive Scouting experience to young people in our community.

From time to time as a result of strong interest in joining the Scout group there are times when one or more sections become oversubscribed. This waiting list policy explains clearly our approach to waiting lists versus our joining list and seeks to ensure that as many young people as possible are able to access Scouting.

## Capacity

Availability is limited by our current capacity.

Our Beaver Colony caters for children between the ages of five and three quarters and eight. The colony has a maximum capacity of 22-24 children.

Our Cub Pack caters for children between the ages of eight and ten and a half. The pack has a maximum capacity of 30-32 children.

Our Scout Troop caters for children between the ages of ten and a half and fourteen. Our troop has a maximum capacity of 32-34 children.

Our Explorer Troop caters for children between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. Our unit currently has ten young people.

The lower level capacity is the one to which we work for allocation of new joiners. The upper limit allows us flexibility for exceptional circumstances and movements between the sections.

## Joining List going forward

We have been managing a joining list of children and young people where there are many children who contact us in advance (in some cases over two years) of joining age. Most of the time, children would have been added to our joining list with the expectation of a guaranteed place in the Group when they reached the joining age. We are now (December 2021) oversubscribed for over a year in advance in Beavers and some other sections, so we have to start a more formal waiting list approach.

## Waiting List

A waiting list of young people wishing to join the Scouting movement at Elvington Scout Group is managed by a dedicated software programme on Online Scout Manager (OSM). All section leaders and others adult volunteers (as per approval from the GSL) have access to this waiting list function. This programme will ensure all places offered are done so using a fair and transparent approach. The waiting list function also allows us to see where are peaks and troughs are in relation to section numbers.

Inclusion onto the waiting list is by email request to the Group Administrator clearly providing name of child, date of birth, carer name, an email and telephone contact number.

The overarching concern is to manage the composition of each Section bearing in mind capacity, resourcing (which might vary in case of shortage of leaders), the particular needs of the current members and the person on the waiting list, and any other relevant factor, particularly a factor affecting safety or wellbeing.

We work one term ahead (including half term joiners/movements in that term). This is because we believe it is only fair to offer places in advance, so that a child can get excited about joining or if a place is not available, commit to a place with another group or seek out other groups for a place. We will offer additional places if they become available as soon as we can.

Each section has their own waiting list. Inclusion on the list is by email request to info@elvingtonscoutgroup

 clearly providing name of child, date of birth, carer name, an email and telephone contact number.

## Prioritisation on Waiting List

Assuming exceptional circumstances do not arise such as those referred to above (and we will endeavour to use our capacity flex for this), places are offered to individuals meeting the following criteria in order of descending priority as follows:

1. A person who is already a member of the Group and is moving up to the next Section i.e. Beavers to Cubs; Cubs to Scouts. We feel it is important that a person, once they have embarked on their Scouting adventure, is able to see through their Scouting time with their current Group and progress through their badges and awards without interruption.
2. A person who has moved into the Elvington area due to family relocation, so that they now live closer to Elvington Scout Group than any other group, and who has previously been actively involved in Scouting in their previous local community.
3. A person whose parent/guardian is already volunteering as Section Leader, Section Assistant, Executive Member, Active Support Member or another formal role in supporting the Group. No Group can exist without volunteers, and we feel that it is reasonable that someone who is willing to invest time in supporting the Group should be able to include their children.
4. A person with one or more siblings who are already members of the Group. Siblings of existing members would undoubtedly feel left out if they were not able to experience the same fun that they see their brother or sister enjoying. We also appreciate the convenience to parents of being able to drop-off and collect at the same time or same place. Parents must still register each child on the waiting list.
5. A person who has been in the group previously, left due to other commitments and now wants to rejoin.
6. A person whose parent/guardian newly volunteers to actively help the Group. The level of commitment required is expected to attend meetings regularly, (three out of four) for at least a year from start date.
7. Time on the waiting list. It is appropriate that, after the above priorities, a place should be offered to the person who has been waiting longest for a place to become available. A person will not usually be invited to join a Section if their age means that they cannot spend at least 1 year with that Section as they will not have the opportunity to settle in and progress in earning badges – however they will be given priority joining the next Section where possible.
8. Group discretion. If none of the previous criteria can be used to differentiate between two candidates for a place then it will be at the discretion of the Group as to which person is offered a place. The Group Secretary would normally consult with the Group Scout Leader, If, for any reason, a parent/carer feels they have not been treated fairly and/or in accordance with this policy, they can appeal to the Group Chair at any time. The Group Chair will listen to the parent/carer’s concern and review the situation objectively with the Group Secretary and Group Scout Leader. The Group Chair will come back to the parent/carer within 2 weeks, and their decision with rationale is final (not disclosing any confidential information).

## Offering Places & Joining

Before a place is offered, we will also check that there are places in the next age group section, without going over capacity in that section.

All children who are offered a place will be sent a standard joining or moving up email and welcome pack by the appropriate Section leader.

## Our commitment to you

We will be transparent and open about the size of our waiting list and will update all parents/carers on the status on a termly basis. We will make suggestions of other groups (eg. Dunnington. Heslington ) that parents/carers might want to consider, especially if we feel there is a low chance of being offered a place.

On a termly basis (one term in advance), places will be offered to children on the waiting list who are old enough to join in accordance with our prioritisation criteria. If we are not able to offer your child a place within a year of becoming old enough to join, we will offer you two options:

1. To join the waiting list for the next section up (eg Cubs, Scouts)
2. As an alternative, you may wish to find another local Scout Group which may have
spare capacity; in such an event, at the parent/guardian’s written request, the Group Secretary will make an introduction to their counterpart at your chosen group to explain the circumstances of the referral.

We feel this represents the best way of keeping waiting list numbers manageable and also ensuring that your child is given the opportunity to participate in Scouting in the local area.