** Waiting List Policy**

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**Policy Owner –** Sarah Rands – Group Lead Volunteer

**Date of Policy –** February 2024

**To be Reviewed;** Every 12 months

**Version - 1**

**Policy Applicable to:** All Leaders including Trustee Board Members, Young Leaders, Volunteers, Suppliers, Contractors and members of the Public who are involved with 1st Topcliffe Scout Group.

 **In Brief**

This policy outlines the guide to offering places to young people joining the group.

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# Version Control

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# Background

We are very lucky to be a strong and healthy Scout Group, committed to providing a positive Scouting experience to young people in our community.

As a result of strong demand, there are times when one or more sections become oversubscribed. This waiting list policy has been drawn up to clearly explain our approach to waiting lists and to ensure as many young people as possible are able to access Scouting.

# Capacity

Availability is limited by our current capacity as shown below.

Our Squirrels Drey cater for children between the ages of four and six. The Drey has a maximum capacity of 20-24 children.

Our Beaver Colony caters for children between the ages of five and three quarters and eight. The colony has a maximum capacity of 20-24 children.

Our Cub Pack caters for children between the ages of eight and ten and a half. The pack has a maximum capacity of 30-36 children.

Our Scout Troop caters for children between the ages of ten and a half and fourteen. Our troop has a maximum capacity of 24-28 children.

The lower capacity number 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.

# Waiting List

We manage our waiting list of children and young people using Online Scout Manager waiting list area. Consideration is also given to the capacity of the sections, internal resourcing (leader availability), the needs of current members and those on the waiting list alongside other factors such as safety and wellbeing. Places are allocated in a priority order as detailed further below.

Members move from one section to another on or around their birthday. Places are offered throughout the year to fill these places as they become available. We will offer any additional places if they become available as soon as we can, this is usually when a member has decided to no longer continue with the group.

Due consideration of the safety and welfare of young people and adults will be given to the maximum number of young people with additional needs per section.

# Prioritisation on Waiting List

Places are offered to individuals meeting the following criteria in order of priority as follows:

1. Priority order for the allocation of places were discussed and agreed as below
	1. A person who is already in the group and is moving to the next section i.e.

 Squirrels to Beavers.

* 1. A person whose parent/carer is volunteering with the group as a Team

 Leader, Team Member or another formal role with the group. If this is a new

 volunteer starting at the same time as their child there is the expectation

 that the adult will make a long-term regular commitment to the group.

* 1. A person with one or more siblings who are already members of the group

 and have been for at least 2 months.

* 1. A person who is already in Scouting or Guiding within another group who require a transfer from their current group. This will be assessed on a case by case basis by the section leader and Group Lead Volunteer.
	2. Time on the waiting list, it is appropriate after the above to offer a place to the person who has been longest on the waiting list subject to them meeting the age criteria.

* 1. A person who has been in the group previously, left due to other commitments and now wants to re-join.
	2. Group discretion. If none of the above can be used to differentiate between to candidates for a place, then it will be at the discretion of the group as to which person is offered a place. The Group Lead Volunteer would be consulted in this situation; their decision would be final.
1. The process followed to offer places are as follows

* 1. Email send inviting the child to join.
	2. If no response after one week- a 2nd email is sent.
	3. If no response is received after a further week of the 2nd email been sent, the

 child is removed from the list. If a response received – child is moved to the

 relevant section, Section leader advised and welcome information sent by

 section team.

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 respond to the parent/carer within 2 weeks, and their decision with the associated rationale is final (not disclosing any confidential information).

# Offering Places & Joining/Moving Up

Before a place is offered, we will also check that there are places in the next age group section, so that accepting a new member will not cause the next section to go over capacity.

The ages of moving up are as follows:

Squirrels up to Beavers: around 6th birthday

Beavers up to Cubs: around 8th birthday.

Cubs up to Scouts: approximate age 10 ½ years

Scouts to Explorers: around 14th birthday

All children who are offered a place will be sent a standard joining or moving up email by the Section team.

# Our commitment to you

We will be transparent and open about the size of our waiting list. We will make suggestions of other groups that parents/carers might want to consider, especially if we feel there is a low chance of being offered a place at 1st Topcliffe Scouts. As places become available, they will be offered to children on the waiting list who are old enough to join in accordance with our prioritisation criteria. We feel this represents the best and fairest way of keeping waiting list numbers manageable and ensuring that your child is given the opportunity to participate in Scouting in the local area.