



Hardship Policy

1. For the purposes of this policy the following definitions will apply:
 - “the Group” means the 1st Upton St Leonards Scout Group,
 - “Member” means any adult or young person (including Young Leaders) who is an invested member of one of the sections within the Group.
2. The Scout Group recognises that there are circumstances where members of the Group may be unable to take part in certain Scouting activities or trips due to being unable to meet the financial commitments. This policy outlines a framework for handling cases of financial hardship. Hardship cases will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Group Executive Committee, and where appropriate support will be provided where the Group has sufficient funds available.
3. **Confidentiality:** Information relating to hardship applications will be treated as strictly confidential with only a select group of Executive Committee members involved in the process. This will normally comprise the Group Chair, the Group Scout Leader, the Treasurer and in certain circumstances the relevant Section Leader.
4. **Commitment to Scouting:** In order to access this fund, the Group would expect that the applicant has shown a regular commitment to the Group. The minimum requirement is:
 - Membership of the Scout Association
 - Regular attendance confirmed by the relevant Section Leader
5. **Items the Fund can cover:**
 - Support towards the cost of additional activities and trips
 - Support towards membership subscriptions
 - Support towards the purchase of uniform (where no second-hand uniform is held by the Group) and/or other personal equipment (e.g. boots, rucksack, sleeping bag, waterproofs etc)
6. The fund will aim to support up to 50% of the cost of additional activities, trips, uniform, subscriptions or other equipment.

7. Any funds agreed will be paid directly to the provider of the cost that has arisen.
8. **Eligibility:** The criteria used for the Hardship Fund align with the criteria for receiving Free School Meals in Gloucestershire which at the time of writing includes if a family receives any of the following:
 - Income Support
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
 - Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
 - Universal Credit
9. **Exceptional Circumstances:** If you do not meet the above criteria but due to exceptional circumstances a member of the Group may be unable to take part in certain Scouting activities or trips due to being unable to meet the financial commitments, please follow the application process below. Some examples of Exception Circumstances could be a recent financial situation change or multiple children attending an event.
10. **Application Process:** In order to make an application to the Hardship Fund please send an email before the event takes place to:
chair@uptonscouts.org.uk with the following details:
 - Name:
 - Telephone Number:
 - Purpose for which Funds are being applied for:
 - How you meet the above criteria or exceptional circumstances:
 - Which section your child attends.
11. The application will then be reviewed by select members of the Executive Committee and a response will be provided as soon as possible.

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