

## **8<sup>th</sup> Darlington (Cockerton Green) Scout Group – Leader Appointment and Vetting Policy**

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Reviewed by: Executive Leadership Team

### **Purpose**

The Leader Appointments and Vetting Policy of the 8th Darlington (Cockerton Green) Scout Group aims to:

- Ensure new volunteers understand and accept the values, policies, and promises of the Scouts.
- Support leaders in understanding the requirements of their roles.
- Provide information on where to seek support within the organisation.
- Ensure individuals are appropriate leaders for a youth organisation.

### **Time frames**

- If an adult volunteers at a section for more than three weeks per term, it is suggested that they become a leader.
- Appointment panels will be convened on an ad-hoc basis to assess the suitability of potential leaders to work with children.

### **Location**

- Appointments Panel meetings must be held in-person at the Scout HQ.

### **Composition of the Appointments Panel**

- The Appointments Panel will consist of at least two members of the Executive Leadership Committee and at least one leader.
- The Safeguarding Lead and Compliance Lead should always be part of the panel.
- Diversity and skills should be considered when forming the panel.

### **Invitation to the Appointments Panel**

- Volunteers will receive information on Scout Values, Key Policies, and Promises in advance of the meeting.

### **Following the Panel**

- The panel's recommendation will be communicated to the Group Scout Leader.
- If the panel does not recommend appointment, further discussions may be needed.
- The outcome will be communicated to the volunteer and their section leader, including any additional support identified.

### **Step-by-Step Onboarding Process**

#### **Step 1: Initial Contact and Welcome**

1. **Acknowledgement of Interest:** Upon expressing interest and spending up to three nights visiting a section to witness the running of a section and what being a leader entails, the prospective leader receives a welcome email or phone call from the Group Scout Leader (GSL) or a designated onboarding coordinator.
  - **Content:** Brief introduction to the group, gratitude for their interest, and next steps.
2. **Information Pack:** Send an information pack via email or post, including:
  - Introduction to the 8th Darlington (Cockerton Green) Scout Group.
  - Overview of the Scout Values, Promise, and Key Policies.
  - Role descriptions and expectations.
  - Contact information for key personnel.
  - A form asking for two references (one character reference and one who can speak to the individual's ability to work with children)
3. **Note on religion:** Inform the potential volunteer that our Scout Group is a secular organisation that welcomes members of all faiths and none. As part of our commitment to supporting each Scout's personal growth, brief prayers or reflective moments may be included during opening ceremonies at some meetings. Participation in these is entirely optional, and we respect each member's choice to join or not.

This approach aligns with our aim of fostering spiritual fulfilment, offering Scouts a moment to reflect in a way that feels meaningful to them. We believe that every member's journey is unique and encourage respectful, open-minded attitudes towards diverse beliefs and practices within our community.

## Step 2: Informal Meeting

1. **Informal Meet-and-Greet:** Arrange an informal meeting at the Scout den or via Zoom.
  - **Purpose:** To meet current leaders, get a feel for the group, and address any initial questions.
  - **Participants:** GSL, existing leaders, and the prospective leader.

## Step 3: Reference Check

1. GSL / Safeguarding lead to check references from returned form.

## Step 4: Appointment Panel

1. **Appointment Panel Meeting:** Convene the Appointment Panel to assess suitability.
  - **Preparation:** The prospective leader receives Scout Values, Key Policies, and Promises to review before the meeting.
  - **Meeting Format:** Follow the structured format outlined in the Leader Appointments and Vetting Policy.
2. **Panel Decision:** Communicate the panel's decision to the prospective leader.
  - **If Approved:** Proceed with the next steps of onboarding.
  - **If Not Approved:** Provide feedback and discuss potential for future involvement or alternative roles.

## Step 5: Induction and Training

1. **Welcome and Induction Session:** Conduct a formal induction session at the Scout HQ or via Zoom.

- **Content:** Detailed introduction to the group, role-specific training, safeguarding training, health and safety procedures, get DBS check done, and an overview of the support structure.

### Step 6: Shadowing and Mentoring

1. **Shadowing Period:** Arrange for the new leader to shadow an experienced leader for a few sessions.
  - **Purpose:** To observe and learn the practical aspects of the role in a real-world setting.
2. **Mentoring:** Assign a mentor to the new leader.
  - **Role of Mentor:** Provide ongoing support, guidance, and feedback during the initial months.

### Step 7: Regular Check-ins and Support

12. **Regular Check-ins:** Schedule regular check-ins with the new leader to address any concerns, provide feedback, and ensure the new leader feels supported.
13. **Feedback Mechanism:** Establish a feedback mechanism where the new leader can share their experiences and suggestions for improvement.

## Appendix 1: Format of the Appointments Panel Meeting

### Welcome and Introduction

1. **Introduction:** "Can you please share your name and the specific group or section where you'll be volunteering?"
2. **Purpose of the Meeting:** "We're delighted to have you here today! The purpose of our meeting is to warmly welcome you to our Scout group and to ensure that we cover all the necessary steps for your appointment process. How are you feeling about joining our team?"

### Clarifying the Volunteer's Role

3. **Role Discussion:**
  - "Could you tell us a bit about the role you'll be taking on within our Scout group?"
  - "What attracted you to volunteer with our organisation, and what are you hoping to achieve or contribute in this role?"
  - "Have you had a chance to discuss your role with someone from our group? Are there any questions or clarifications you need about your responsibilities?"
  - "Do you know where to go to report a safeguarding issue?"

### Getting the Most out of Volunteering

4. **Motivation and Goals:**
  - "What motivated you to volunteer with Scouts, and what are your personal goals or aspirations in this volunteering journey?"
  - "Are you aware of the training opportunities provided for volunteers, and do you have any specific training needs or preferences?"
  - "How do you see your role fitting into this structure, and what support do you think you might need to fulfil your responsibilities effectively?"

## Discussion on Scout Values, Promise, and Policies

### 5. Values and Policies:

- "Have you had a chance to review the Scout values, promises, and key policies? What are your thoughts on these, and why do you think they're important?"
- "Are you comfortable agreeing to follow these values and policies, including making the promise if applicable to your role?"

## Closing the Conversation and Next Steps

### 6. Next Steps:

- "Do you have a clear understanding of what comes next in the appointment process and any actions you need to take?"
- "Is there anything else you'd like to discuss or ask before we conclude our meeting?"

### 7. Conclusion: "Once again, thank you for your time and commitment to volunteering at the 8th Darlington (Cockerton Green) Scout Group!"

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## Implementation and Compliance

This policy aims to ensure a consistent and fair approach to the appointment of leaders within the 8th Darlington (Cockerton Green) Scout Group, fostering a positive and supportive environment for all volunteers.