



Dear Parent / Guardian

The Section Leaders and the Group Executive would like to welcome you to the 1st Blackhill Scout Group.

This pack will give you some information about the Group, which we hope you will find useful and informative however much more information about Scouting in general can be found on the Scout Association Website.

This pack also contains a number of forms requesting information about your child and yourself that we ask you to complete and return. I know that it seems to be a lot of paperwork just for your child to join a Scout Group, but it is required to ensure that the safety and welfare of your child is maintained at all times whilst with the group and that we have sufficient information to deal with any given situation. Please take the time to read through and then complete the forms at the end. You can get a paper copy of the form from a leader. Please return the forms to your Section Leader as soon as possible.

The first three sessions introducing your child to Scouting are free and do not require a uniform to be worn but clothing suitable for games and activities is advised. Your child will require a uniform for their investiture into 1st Blackhill Scout Group. At this point they become a member of the Scouting Association and an annual membership subscription is required to be paid, spread across the year.

We hope that your child settles into Scouting quickly and has fun. If, however you decide that your child does not wish to accept a place within the Section please let us know so that we can offer the place to someone else, but otherwise we will keep your waiting list place open for a few weeks.

Do consider how you can help the Group perhaps on a Leader support rota basis; with fundraising or by running an activity, perhaps related to a skill or hobby of yours. Scouting is very rewarding and can help develop your skills too.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to speak to the Section Leader or the Group Scout Leader who will be only too happy to help.

Yours in Scouting,

George Nash (Group Scout Leader)

For information please refer to our website: www.blackhill.org.uk or scouts.org.uk

1st Blackhill Scout Group Welcome Pack

1. Scouting

The aim of Scouting is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential, as individuals, as citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities. The Group aims to achieve this by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training, based on the Scout Law and promise and guided by adult leadership.

Scouting is inclusive. 1st Blackhill Scout Group is open to boys and girls aged between 6 – 14 from the local area not just Blackhill.

1st Blackhill Scout Group is based in Consett, the address as below:

1st Blackhill Scouts
Constance Street
Consett
Co Durham

Please note that 1st Blackhill and 1st Consett Scouts Groups share the same scout building however are separate groups and operate on different nights.

1st Blackhill is one of 6 scout groups within the Derwentside District. This in turn is part of the Durham Scouts County, which in turn is part of the largest youth organisation in Britain, the Scout Association of the United Kingdom. This is affiliated to the World Scout Association.

The Group is split into three sections of varying ages and meets on the following:

Section	Ages	Day	Time
Beavers 	6 to 8	Tuesday	6 – 7pm
Cubs 	8 to 10 ½	Tuesday	6.30 – 8pm
Scouts 	10 ½ to 14	Friday	7 - 9pm

Please note sections *only meet in school term time*

Should your child wish to continue in the Scouting organisation after Scouts they will move onto Explorer Scouts (ages 14 to 18) which meet at a District Level in Dipton on a Monday night. Scouting continues further at County Level for young people age of 18 to 25, this is known as Scout Network.

2. Admission

There is normally a waiting list for children wanting to join each section and if you are keen to have your child in 1st Blackhill Scout Group please contact us to see if there is availability or be put on the waiting list.

Children with siblings already in the Scout Group or moving up through the Sections will always be given priority over any new members.

In addition, due to the need for adult support within the group we offer children of adults who are actively involved in assisting the Scout Group preference if a waiting list is in operation.

3. Subscription and Cost

Through investiture your child becomes a member of the Scouting Association and 1st Blackhill Scout Group. Each member has to pay an annual subscription, which is spread as 12 monthly payments. Please note this does mean that you will be paying for periods when your child does not attend the scout group.

As at January 2018, membership is £120 paid via direct debit in £10 calendar month instalments.

Prior to your child being invested you will receive a request to join OSM (Online Scout Manager) from the Group Scout Leader. OSM allows parents/guardians to pay online for the subscription together with camps and events. OSM will automatically send emails advising when payment for individual activities or subscriptions are due.

As Scouting is membership based there are no refunds. Please contact your Leader should you have any issues or concerns regarding any of the above.

4. Investiture

Investiture officially welcomes a young person in the Scouting movement. The Investiture ceremony entails the young person standing up in front of their Section Leader, with the rest of the group watching and making their promise. The promise varies depending on the section they are in. Their leader will help children if needed. During the ceremony they will be awarded their County, District and Group name badges together with their Group Necker and woggle. Please feel free to come and watch the ceremony which usually occurs at the end of a section night.

Children are typically invested after their 3-week introductory session and until such time do not need a uniform, but should wear appropriate robust clothing for the activities. A uniform is however required for investiture and all subsequent meetings.

Scouting Promise

Beavers I promise to do my best to be kind and helpful and to love God.

Cubs I promise that I will do my best to do my duty to God and to the Queen to help other people and to keep the Cub Scout Law.

Scouts On my honour, I promise that I will do my best to do my duty to God and to the Queen to help other people and to keep the Scout Law.

There are different variations of the promise to take into account different religious obligations or non-religious beliefs. If you/your child wants to make an alternative promise, please speak to the section leader.

For guidance on the placement of badges please see diagram at the end of the information pack or the Scout Association website.

5. Uniform

The Scout Association is a uniformed organisation and all members are expected to wear the correct uniform at all meetings and formal events, such as AGM meetings, parades etc. It is also to be worn at the start and end of camping events, changing into more appropriate clothing for the activity they are undertaking such as hikes, canoeing, climbing camping etc.

There is a different uniform for each section:

Section	Official Scouting Top	Bottoms
Beavers	Turquoise crew neck sweatshirt 	Dark coloured trousers (eg tracksuit bottoms, leggings)
Cubs	Dark green crew neck sweatshirt 	Dark coloured trousers (eg tracksuit bottoms, leggings)
Scouts	Teal long sleeve shirt / blouse 	Navy blue official scouting trousers 
All Sections	Red Group Necker and Woggle	

For Beavers and Cubs the official Scouting sweatshirt is the minimum uniform that is acceptable, Scouts are required to wear both the shirt/blouse and trousers as a minimum. There are further items of official scouting clothing available for children, e.g. polo tops, caps, hoodies, belts however these are not essential. If you need support in acquiring the uniform please talk to the Leader.

You can get a wide range of uniforms and accessories from the Moor House Adventure Centre in Durham, DH4 6QY or online at shop.scouts.org.uk, scoutstore.co.uk both of which are available through Amazon.

You can also get a limited range from some major stores, e.g. Salto in Prudhoe (NE42 6PL, 01661 835 240) or the uniform section of John Lewis in Newcastle.

If upon leaving the group or transitioning between sections you wish to recycle a uniform please give it to a section leader and it will be given free to anyone who asks. On moving up e.g. beavers to cubs etc, you can sew badges earned in previous sections onto a camp blanket.

6. Activities / Badges

The Scouting Programme covers a level of progressive award schemes relevant and appropriate to each section of the group. These schemes focus on the physical, intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual development of the child and encompass all activities that the members take part in from camping and outdoor activities to games and ceremonies. The award and challenges usually culminate in individual or staged activity badges and challenge badges.

The activity badges allow your child to demonstrate their progress in various pursuits, and help them to form new interests. They are usually awarded when a young person has completed a challenging yet achievable set of requirements. There are also a number of Challenge Awards, which focus on more ambitious tasks and are themed around the zones of the Scouting Programme. There is a wide range of activity badges available for the child to experience.

Please refer to the Scout Association website for a list of all the activity and challenger badges together with guidance on the placement of badges. A diagram has been included at the end of this information pack for your reference also.

The programme is based on the aims and principles of Scouting. The performance of the Group in meeting these aims is monitored at District and County level to ensure that it maintains appropriate standards.

Scout programmes are, by their very nature, practical and involve activity in the widest sense. For all activities and games there is a requirement for common sense and responsibility. All activities involve risk, but with good training, proper equipment and responsible leadership, these risks can be minimised to provide adventure and fun for all members of the Group.

The Group must comply with National Scouting regulations before undertaking any activity. This normally means that the Leader, or other person/instructor, responsible for the activity must have received the appropriate training to lead the activity and be approved by the Scout Association.

For more information see: <http://members.scouts.org.uk/supportresources/search/?cat=767>

7. Attendance

As Scouting is a membership organisation your child is expected to attend meetings and organised activities whenever possible, ensuring that they arrive and are collected on time.

Please note all electronic devices (phones, tablets, etc) are not permitted at Beavers and Cubs sessions. All members are responsible for their own belongings which are to be taken home at the end of each session.

The Group has a policy that any member who misses three consecutive meetings, without letting the Leader know of a valid reason for the absence, can, at the Leaders discretion following consultation with the Group Scout Leader, have their membership terminated.

The Group, or Section Leaders of the Group, do not accept responsibility for members outside normal meeting hours, unless the member is participating in a specifically arranged event, e.g. camp, visit or outdoor activity that they and their parent have been notified about in advance. Parents/ guardians are responsible for the safety of their child prior to being handed into the care of their Leader and again upon leaving the scout building. Should the child be making their own way home, we ask that parents/guardians write confirming this.

Important dates in our Calendar for parents' attendance with their children:

- St George's day (23rd April). All the scout groups in the district attend a joint service
- Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is usually held in July or September. All parents and members should attend. We must present our accounts, updates (including from each section) and usually badges and elect trustees
- Remembrance Sunday. We support the Shotley Bridge Memorial Cottages service.
- Fund raising events – these are ad-hoc. If you'd like to organise one, do discuss with a leader.

8. Behaviour

The Group and Scout Association aim to provide Scouting in a safe and friendly environment. To aid in this the Group operates a "code of conduct" and has an "Anti-Bullying Policy". The Group expects all members to read and sign to state that they agree to comply with both policies, and considers this a condition of membership.

Group Policies

We expect all Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and their parents to sign that they accept and will abide by the Groups' Code of Good Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy.

Code of Good Behaviour

- I will comply with Scout Law (appropriate to my Section) and take an active part in scouting activities.
- I will show good manners, respect and consideration for Leaders, helpers and fellow members at all times.
- I will take responsibility for my own possessions.
- I will show respect for the Groups' and other members' possessions and property.
- I will at all times be punctual and arrive in full uniform, unless advised otherwise by a Leader.
- I will do my best to have fun.

Anti-bullying Policy

Bullying by any child or adult is not acceptable. It is the responsibility of all adults in 1st Blackhill Scout Group to develop a caring and supportive atmosphere. Children and adults, as members of the Scout Association, must be committed to ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, that they will not bully others and that they will prevent all forms of bullying among members. To this end all Scouting activities will have in place rigorous anti bullying strategies. The 1st Blackhill Scout Group has a policy of zero tolerance towards bullying.

All the children in the Group have the right to protection from all forms of bullying, be it physical or mental, by any member of the Association, child or adult. They must be kept safe from harm and they must be given proper care by those looking after them.

Children and adults are encouraged by the Group to report any incidents of bullying, whenever they occur, either to any of the Section Leaders, or if preferred, to the Group Scout Leader. Normally incidents of bullying will be dealt with by the Section Leader, but in more serious cases, parents will be informed and invited to assist in preventing re-occurrence of the problem.

Members who are deemed to continue to bully or fail to comply with the Code of Good Behaviour will be requested to leave the Group.

Finances

1st Blackhill Scout Group is a charity (group number 32128 and charity number 520684) governed by the Charity Commission rules and Scout Association Policy Organisation Rules (POR).

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) usually takes place in September where the Trustees, usually parents, are voted onto the Executive Committee.

Income

The Scout Group receives money in the following ways:

1. Subscription

We are mainly financed by subscriptions "Subs" paid by members. The annual membership is paid monthly across the whole year, preferably by direct debit and paid irrespective of attendance. To minimise administration for leaders we use a system called Online Scout Manager (OSM) to collect Subs together with camp / activity fees.

2. Gift Aid

If a parent / carer is a tax payer please complete the gift aid declaration in the essential information form. This costs you nothing, has no ongoing burden for you and allows us to claim an additional 25% of your Subs from the Government.

3. Fundraising

The Group holds fundraising events several times during the year organised by the Executive Committee. If you have any fundraising ideas - or perhaps would like to organise an event, do speak to one of the leaders. Anything you can do to support the group makes a big difference.

"Easyfundraising": this website will give a donation to your chosen charity when you shop through their website. They have 3,000 shops and sites including Amazon and Ebay. 1st Blackhill is registered on this site, please support the Group and shop through Easyfundraising whenever you can and raise donations; it doesn't cost you anything and they have Apps for phones and tablets too.

www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/blackhillscoutgroup

4. Building Hire

The Scout building is available to hire on a one-off basis or for regular bookings. There are even discounts for members. Please refer to the website for details.

Outgoings

1. Capitation

We contribute to Scouting at District, County and National levels. This takes the form of an annual capitation fee (typically about £45) payable for every member of the Group. This provides insurance and scout services. Scout insurance provides all members with limited benefits in the event of an injury during a Scout activity. No responsibility or insurance is provided for members' personal items.

2. Training

The Group pays for essential training for leaders (for example first aid) and where possible for specialist training for skilled activities for your children. For example the Group has an archery instructor which required specialist training but is very popular with children.

3. Essential Group Costs

Typically essential Group costs are offset from the money raised at fund raising events and include items such as the purchasing of badges or activity materials and Leader expenses but in some instances can be for a one off large item. In the case of purchasing or replacing larger scouting items (camping equipment / tents) grants are applied for.

4. Insurance

The Group pays for contents insurance for our tents and other store items.

5. Building costs

We have a great new specially designed Scout Building but with that comes responsibility for insurance, utility bills, service (boiler, fire extinguisher and alarm systems), maintenance and improvement. 1st Blackhill and 1st Consett Scout Groups share these costs.

Adult Support - Ways to help

All adults involved with the Group as Leaders, Instructors or by serving on the Group Executive Committee give their time voluntarily. For safeguarding purposes, the minimum number of adults required for a section is two but this can also depend on the section numbers and activity type. The Group therefore welcomes any support parents / carers can give to the Group in any manner be it long term, ad hoc or for a specific event.

These are some of the ways Adults can support the Group:

1. Direct involvement with members in the roll of Leaders and /or Assistant Leaders, who are responsible for the normal programme of each Section. A full training programme is provided to support all Leaders.
2. Adult support to deliver specific training or activity opportunities to its members. Adults with particular skills who can assist with specific activities or at special events, as instructors, are invaluable. (for example, first aid badge work, sporting activity).
3. Volunteer parental occasional helpers, on a rota basis, to support the Section Leaders on section nights. This is particularly important where there is insufficient Leaders present that would make the night unviable as the Group would not meet the safeguarding requirements. Moreover, more helpers make it easier for both the leaders and the children too.
4. Parental Executive Member at the Group's Executive Committee (Trustee). A volunteer parent is required from each of the Scout Group Section to represent the views of the parents to support the Group Scout Leader, who has the ultimate responsibility for all aspects of the Group, and is responsible to the charities commission for the correct running of the Group.
5. Volunteer administrative support at the Group's Executive Committee.
6. Volunteer parental support at fundraising events.

Any adult interested in assisting the Group please contact a Leader. Some under 18s can also volunteer, often as young leaders or as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

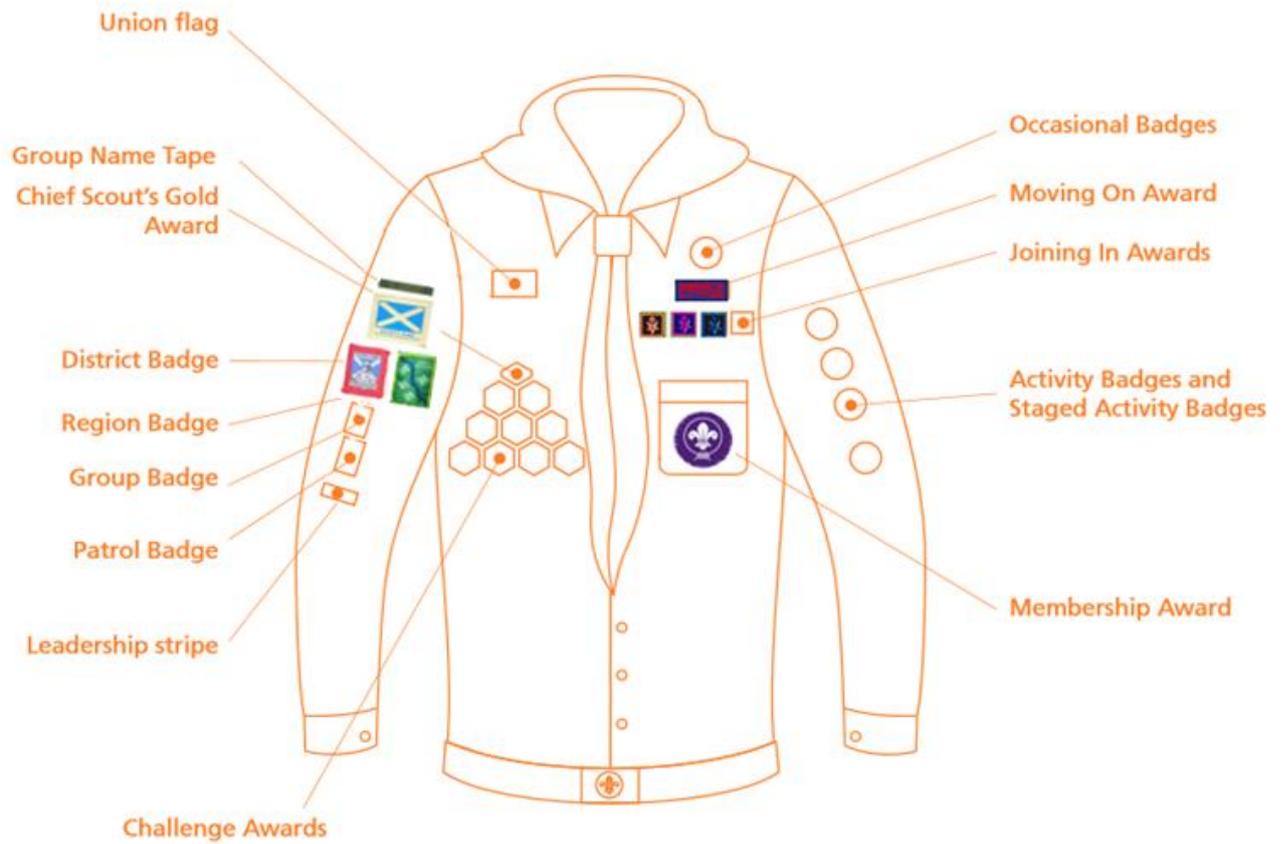
Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) (previously CRB checks)

Scouting is a uniformed organisation - leaders wear uniforms, helpers do not - but everyone who regularly supports the group needs a DBS. Any adult who helps with the Group and may have unsupervised access to our young people must have a satisfactorily completed DBS check recorded on the Scout membership database. You don't however need a DBS to, for example, demonstrate a skill, activity or hobby provided there are already the required number of adults in place for safeguarding purposes.

Completing a DBS ID check takes about 20 minutes, is usually done at a section night and is free. The DBS confirmation typically takes one to two weeks. The check is to ensure that the person concerned has no history that might prevent them from safely helping with children in the Group. We encourage all parents or guardians to complete a DBS, as we never know when we may need your help with some aspect of looking after the young people.

Please speak to a leader regarding you or someone you know who is willing to help in any capacity or send an email to dbs@blackhill.org.uk with your full name, telephone number, email, address with postcode and let us know how you would like to help.

SCOUT UNIFORM



Essential Information and Consent Form

The “Essential Information and Consent Form” requires a parents/guardian’s agreement to the Group holding information about you and your child for the purposes of Scouting. The sections are explained below:

1. Members Details

As the Scout movement is a membership organisation, to enable it to operate and communicate with its members it is necessary to maintain records about them. This includes keeping details of names, address, dates of birth, contact telephone numbers and email addresses. In addition, certain information is classified in law as “sensitive personal data”. In Scouting context this can include information about the members health, disabilities, religious beliefs, racial and ethnic origin. To hold this classified information parent/guardian’s explicit consent is required via a signature on the Essential Information Form.

Details of any child’s progress is also held throughout their time in Scouting (badges & awards etc). Information held in the 1st Blackhill Scout Group may be shared from time to time within Scouting including the Headquarters of the Association.

Furthermore, some of your child’s detailed information will be used in the completion of an annual census – total numbers by age, gender, ethnicity etc. We report totals for each section, not for individual members.

All the information will only be used in connection with membership of the Scout Movement in the United Kingdom and will include membership management and communication. Information **will not** be passed to any third parties outside the Scout movement.

All rights and responsibilities are held under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (effective as of 25 May 2018), however if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact a Leader.

2. Photography

In order to promote the group and Scouting in general we will from time to time send articles to local newspapers or other Scouting related publications. We will also send with the article relevant photos of a particular event. The subject of these photographs will be often be groups of Scouts who are taking part in a particular activity. We reserve the right to have these photographs published, but will undertake discretion to safeguard the full identity of the Scouts taking part and also ensure that any pictures taken relate to authorised Scout activities.

You have the right to withhold permission for your child’s image to be used.

3. Gift Aid

We would like to encourage all parents/guardians who pay income tax or capital gains tax to sign for gift aid as it enables the Scout Group to claim an extra 25% of the money you pay back from the government. **If you do not pay tax, but your partner does, please ask them to sign, as it makes a huge difference.**

4. Health and Medical Information

Parents/guardians are asked to provide certain medical information about their child, which may be helpful to doctors involved in treating any injuries or illnesses. The form also authorises the Scout Leader in charge to sign any documents required by the medical authorities if the parent or guardian cannot be contacted. Please read the note at the foot of the form for clarification of this authority.