



Information for Parents



www.1stwealdbrook.org.uk

Welcome

Your child is joining the 1st Weald Brook Cub Scout Pack.

Whether they are coming up from our Beaver Colony or joining the Pack from outside, I hope they have lots of fun, challenge and adventure while in the Pack and take happy memories from us when they eventually leave.

This booklet is intended to give you, their parent or guardian, an idea of how the Cub Pack works, to let you know how you can help your child during their time in the Pack and to answer a few questions you may have.

If there is anything else you want to discuss, or if you have any concerns about your child's progress or welfare while they're in the Pack, please feel free to speak to me either after any Pack Meeting (although that can get a bit frantic and may not be suitable if you need a quiet word) or drop me an email - csl@1stwealdbrook.org.uk

Most communication with parents is now done by email so it is imperative that we have a valid email address that is checked at least once a week as in addition to emails sent by individual sections, a weekly email is sent out every Sunday evening to all Group parents giving details of the following week's activities.

Rosemary Dandridge

"Shada"

1st Weald Brook Cub Pack Leader

1st Weald Brook Scout Group

1st Weald Brook Scout Group is part of the Brentwood Scout District and has the following sections which are open to both girls and boys:

- Beaver Scouts (aged 6-8)
- Cub Scouts (8-10 1/2)
- Scouts (10-14)

all members are guaranteed a place in the next section when they reach the appropriate age.

In addition, Explorer Scouts (13 1/2 -18) meet at District level.

At 1st Weald Brook we have our own hut, with kitchen, toilets, shower & storage facilities and are extremely fortunate to have a large field adjacent to the hut providing ample opportunity for outside activities.

The Cub Pack

The Pack meets in term times on a Tuesday evening from 7pm-8.30pm. Pack meetings are normally held at the Scout Hut but from time to time we will meet at an alternative location - this is frequently the case in the summer months. You will always be notified in advance if there are any changes to the normal arrangements.

The Pack is divided into small mixed age groups called "Sixes".

Most activities are done in Sixes, but some are done with the whole Pack together and occasionally we split into age based groups.

Sixes are named and identified by the colour of the woggle (the leather or plastic tube that holds the scarf together) that they wear.

Each Six is led by a "Sixer" who has been selected because of their attitude, behaviour and maturity. Each Sixer is assisted by a Second. Whilst Sixers and Seconders will frequently be the older Cubs, it is

important to understand that there is no automatic right for a Cub to be appointed to one of these roles.

The overall theme of the Pack is based on "The Jungle Book" by Rudyard Kipling. The adult leaders have "Pack names" taken from the Jungle Book - which can sound rather peculiar.

Not Just a Tuesday Evening....

Cubs is not just a Tuesday evening.

Clearly hikes and camps will have to take place at weekends and in school holidays and there may be times when your child is asked to do something at home as part of a badge.

There are also other activities that take place outside of normal Pack Nights. These vary from year to year and depend on the skills, interests and availability of the leaders but have included a visit to a Mosque, "skyping" with Cubs in other countries and a day of water activities in Docklands.

At Weald Brook, we aim to organise, or take part in, one "extra" activity per month – some of these will be with Cubs from other Packs.

There are two events each year that we do expect all Cubs to be present at.

The first is the annual "Renewal of Promises" event in which all members of the Scout Association in Brentwood gather together to renew their promise. Renewal is always as close as possible to St George's Day (April 23rd) as St George is the patron saint of Scouting.

The second event at which we expect all Cubs to be present is Remembrance Sunday. We join the Civic Parade and Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial in Brentwood but we do not attend the service that follows at St Thomas' Church.

Behaviour

All Cubs are expected to be polite, considerate and respectful to others, to take turns, share, play fairly, be quiet when others are speaking, and to take care of the equipment. Fighting, kicking, shouting, teasing, bad language, hitting and pushing are not acceptable and inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated.

Minor incidents will be dealt with by a telling off and/or sitting out of a game or activity for a short period. More serious examples such as bullying, will result in the Cub's parents being contacted. A Cub who repeatedly misbehaves will not be invited on activities away from the Hut and may ultimately be asked to leave the Pack.

Attendance Policy

Cubs who do not attend regularly lose personally out by not having the opportunity to complete their badge work, their attendance patterns have a detrimental effect on the rest of their Six and can create problems for the leaders in organising activities and they are also depriving another child of a place in the Pack.

Any Cub who misses three consecutive weeks without valid reason (principally illness) will immediately forfeit their place in the Pack.

Further, any Cub who misses 6 or more weeks in the term, again without a valid reason, will be asked to leave the Pack at the end of the term.

Special Needs, Medical Conditions, Behavioural Issues

Scouting does not discriminate against children with disabilities or special needs, but we have a duty to ensure their safety and the safety of others.

We would ask that parents are completely honest about any special needs, learning disabilities, illnesses, allergies etc that their child may have, or may be being assessed for.

This includes things like dyslexia, asthma, allergies and ADHD as well as more serious conditions.

We need to understand what your child's unique needs are, and whether they can be accommodated with the number of adults, and the other children, that we have in the Pack. We may need to draft in additional help, or ask you to stay with your child.

If we find that this information has not been disclosed, we reserve the right to suspend your child while a full risk assessment is carried out

Faith and Cultural Needs

If your child has specific faith or cultural needs then please do tell us about them. We will always do our best to accommodate specific dietary requirements and religious observances - if we know about them in advance.

This information will be treated in complete confidence and it will help us to ensure that all the activities we do are, as far as is reasonably practical, open to all Cubs in the Pack and that no Cub feels excluded or marginalised because of their own personal circumstances or beliefs.

The Cub Scout Promise

There are alternative versions to the core promise (as shown in your child's "Welcome Booklet") covering both non-Christian religions and for those of no faith. Please speak to Shada if you would prefer your child to use an alternative wording.

Uniform

Scouts is a uniformed organisation. Cubs are expected to wear full uniform for Pack meetings, when arriving and departing from events and for parades. Occasionally uniform may not be appropriate and if this is the case you will always be told in advance. Cubs should take pride in their uniform and do their best to look smart.

Uniform consists of:

- Green Cub Scout Jumper
- Group navy polo shirt OR a plain white Tee/Polo shirt
- Navy Scout Activity Trousers
- Blue and White Scarf (provided by the Group)
- Woggle (Provided by the Pack. Lost woggles currently cost 50p to replace)

Normally trainers will be the most appropriate form of footwear, but for Parades and other formal occasions black school shoes should be worn.

All items of uniform, including scarves and anything else that your child is likely to take off, must be clearly named.

The jumper and trousers can be purchased from the scout shop online.

Basic uniform for all sections is generally in stock and anything not in stock can be ordered .

Order forms for the Group polo shirts are on the web site.

Equipment and Kit

Cubs need very little "specialist" equipment.

A (lightweight) waterproof jacket is essential and a pair of wellies or strong boots is useful - we don't cancel or change activities because of the weather and are often outside in the winter months.

For hikes, a small daysack will be needed - just large enough to hold lunch & a waterproof - not a huge rucksack. Strong shoes/walking boots are useful but by no means essential - trainers will usually suffice but routes are often muddy even in the summer months. Wellies are not appropriate for hikes.

For camps, the main item that is needed is a sleeping bag. Ideally this should be a 3 or 4 season bag with compression sack. A bag of this quality will last your child right through to Explorers and is well worth the investment - being cold at night on camp is not fun.

Cubs will also need a sleeping mat - these can be bought for around £5.

A torch is the only other item that is essential for camp - the ideal one would be an LED head torch with red as well as white bulbs (makes a good Christmas present).

The Group web site has a "wish list" of other equipment that is useful but not essential.

Water activities need clothes, including close fitting shoes (crocs are not suitable), that can get wet. It's worth hanging on to a pair of light cotton trousers (but not jeans or jogging bottoms) that have been outgrown in length, or have worn through at the knee, as these fit the bill perfectly.

Worn/damaged but still "sort of fitting" clothes are also perfect for camp as no one cares what happens to them!

The Group's Leaders

Almost all adults in Scouting, including uniformed leaders, are volunteers. They give their time for free. But they are trained volunteers - the Scout Association has a thorough training programme that all Leaders have to undertake. All leaders have to undergo a full DBS check, supply personal references and be approved by an Adult Appointments Committee before their first appointment. Appointments are also subject to regular review and renewal.

Our Cub Scout Leader, Rosemary, (Cub name "Shada") has overall responsibility for the Cub Pack and the activities which members take part in.

Rosemary is helped in this task by Kate (Cub name "Rikki"), Marcus (Cub name "Bagheera") and Kevin (Cub name "Grey Brother") our assistant Cub Scout Leaders.

Jo (Cub name "Raksha") and Sesh (Cub name "Racoon") are Section Assistants and are at Pack meetings when work/family commitments permit.

Ideally we need four adults at every meeting however there are weeks when some leaders are unable to be present. As such, we are dependent on parents to ensure that we have adequate supervision for our activities.

Because of this situation, every parent is expected to help for at least two meetings (or extra activities) a year. It is not fair for the burden to fall on just a few parents. If you have a particular skill or hobby that you would be prepared to share with the Pack then please do let us know as we'd love to incorporate it into the programme.

Of course, if you would like to get involved on a more regular basis, then we'd love to have that help. We appreciate that you may not be able to commit to every week and that's not a problem. We can work around shift patterns and family commitments, the occasional "last minute unavailability" and the vagaries of TfLRail Rail and the M25. Please do give Rosemary a call if you'd like to know a bit more.

Badges

Cubs love earning badges and there is a huge range available to them.

Activity badges

These are the "single subject" badges that are worn on the left arm and some of the names may well bring back memories from your own time as a Cub or Brownie! There are 36 different Activity badges that Cub Scouts can work towards so there's bound to be one that fits your child's particular interest. From time to time we work towards one of these badges as a Pack, but Cubs may also do these as individuals.

Staged Activity Badges

Each stage of these badges is available to all sections, with the highest stage currently achieved being worn on the uniform. There are 14 staged activity badges.

Challenge Award Badges

There are 7 Challenge badges available to Cub Scouts – Our Adventure, Our Outdoors, Our Skills, Our World, Teamwork, Team Leader and the Personal Challenge Award.

These badges take a bit longer to earn and most of the work for them will be done as part of Pack meetings but there will be times when involvement at home is necessary. If your child has something to carry out at home then please encourage them and help them to do it - but don't do it for them. The emphasis is very much on each Cub taking part to the best of their ability - there are no "absolute standards" that have to be reached.

It is worth pointing out, however, that a Cub will not be able to gain the Our Adventure Challenge Award without taking part in at least one hike, and the Our Outdoors Challenge Award requires at least 3 nights camping (in tents, not indoor sleepovers) with the Pack. We hope to give every Cub the opportunity to have at least 3 hikes and 8 nights camping during their time in the Pack.

Subscriptions and Finance Matters

Subs are currently £13 per month payable by standing order.

Parents are also encouraged to “Gift Aid” their child’s subscriptions - this will allow us to reclaim over £20 per child per year from the Inland Revenue.

We mentioned earlier that Leaders are not paid. The subscription fee includes a “capitation” fee that is paid to Scout Headquarters - effectively the membership subscription of the Scout Association - and this includes insurance. A small amount is also paid to the District/County which primarily helps with the training of leaders, the out of pocket expenses of the Appointments Sub-Committee and the costs of District events such as St George’s Day Parade.

The remainder of the subs go into Group funds, from which all the costs of maintaining the Scout Hut have to be met and the equipment and materials needed for the weekly meetings purchased. Scarves and all sew-on badges are also paid for by the Group.

Unfortunately, many of the optional activities that take place outside of normal meeting times, and occasionally a special activity on a Pack night, do involve a little extra cost. Again, all the adult leaders involved in District events give their time for free, but you will appreciate that catering, transport and the use of “outside specialists” or specialist equipment (including the use of Thriftwood Camp site and their staff) does have a financial implication.

Unless otherwise specified, cheques should be made payable to 1st Weald Brook Scout Group.

It is not the intention of the Scout Association to deny anybody the opportunity to be a full member of the Movement because of money problems. If you ever feel that the cost of your child’s participation in Pack activities would put an undue strain on your situation, please speak in confidence either to Rosemary or to Bernard, our Group Scout Leader.

“In Touch”

“In Touch” is the name given to the system(s) that the Leaders/parents use to communicate with each other should an emergency situation arise.

For activities at the hut, the ‘phone number is 01277 211791 and the Cub mobile is also normally switched on - 07772 329015

For activities away from the hut, we will either take the Cub mobile phone or use the “Home Contact” system.

It is important to note that the Cub mobile number is only switched on during activities and should only be used by parents in an emergency. It is not answered at other times.

If we are using a Home Contact, they will have a copy of the emergency contact details for each member of the party and also a copy of the planned programme and contact details for the party.

They will be contactable for the whole of the time that the party is away.

This means that should the Leaders need to contact all the parents (eg delay in returning from an activity) they only have to make one phone call to the Home Contact and are then free to concentrate on the young people in their care rather spending time trying to contact each parent/guardian individually.

The Home Contact will usually be another leader or adult involved with the Scout Group.

Should parents need to get an urgent message to the party, then this should be done via the Home Contact.

Cubs should not take mobile phones with them on any Cub activity

Parental Support

As well as the youth sections (the Beavers, the Cub Scouts and Scouts) and the adult leaders, there is another very important part of 1st Weald Brook Scout Group - and that's you, the parents and carers. The Group cannot function without you.

All parents are members of the Group Council which meets a minimum of once a year at the AGM.

We've already mentioned that Cub parents are expected to help out at Pack Meetings at least once a term BUT.....we also need your help to keeping the Group running through such activities as fund-raising and maintaining the Group's equipment and buildings. Everything from cleaning the toilets, washing towels or cutting the grass to occasional electrical and plumbing work.

If you have any time to give with no need to make a regular commitment, or would just like some more information, please speak to Rosemary, or to Martin, our Group Chairman. All offers of help, however small, are gratefully received.

Scout Groups receive no Government support and there are only 3 ways that we can generate the resources to enable us to continue.

- volunteers to help with individual sections, maintain the premises, organise appeals and events
- appeals and events
- Subscriptions (including Gift Aid)
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Clearly, if volunteer labour and fund-raising support is reduced, then subscriptions will have to rise to cover the Group's costs.

Contact Details and More Information

Group Scout Leader: Bernard Manktelow
gsl@1stwealdbrook.org.uk

Cub Scout Leader: Rosemary Dandridge
csl@1stwealdbrook.org.uk

Group Chairman: Martin Bateman
chair@1stwealdbrook.org.uk

Group Web Site: www.1stwealdbrook.org.uk

Scout Hut 'phone: 01277-211791

Cub Mobile: 07772 329015
(only switched on during Cub activities away from the hut)

We follow Scout Association Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) in everything that we do. Full details can be found at www.scouts.org.uk/por

All our policies, including privacy, safety and child protection are available on the Group web site.



*last update April 2021
with thanks to John Russell*