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Religious Policy

The Scout movement includes members of many different faiths and religions as well as those with no formal religion. The following has received the approval of the heads of the leading religious bodies in the United Kingdom (POR 2.3).

All members of the movement are encouraged to:

- make every effort to progress in the understanding and observance of the Promise to do their best to do their duty to God or to uphold the Scout's values as appropriate
- explore their faith, beliefs and attitudes
- consider belonging to some faith or religious body
- carry into daily practice what they profess.

The Promise

Alternative wordings of the Promise that young people and adults may wish to use to best reflect their own beliefs are included in the POR (Chapter 1.12), reflecting the diversity of the Scout community. Young People (or their parents / carers may discuss this with their Section Leader or the GSL).

Attendance at Services

If a Scout Group, Explorer Scout Unit or Scout Network is composed of members of several denominations, religions or beliefs, the young people should be encouraged to attend services relevant to their own form of religion or belief.

Chaplains

Chaplains may be appointed as Advisers in Scout Groups, Districts, Counties, Countries and Nationally. A Chaplain may be a Minister of Religion or a lay person. In a Scout Group sponsored by a religious body the religious leader may be appointed Group Chaplain. National Chaplains may be appointed for religious bodies represented in the Scouts.

Responsibilities within the Religious Policy

The District Commissioner or the County Commissioner, as appropriate, must be satisfied that all applicants for Leader or Commissioner appointments are fully aware that they will be required by their personal example to implement The Scout Association's religious policy.

If a Sponsored Group has a policy of recruitment restricted to members of one particular form of religion or denomination, the Sponsoring Authority is responsible for the religious training of all young people in the Group.

In this case it is the duty of the Group Scout Leader to encourage attendance at such religious instruction and observances as the Sponsoring Authority may consider desirable.

Scouts' Own Services may be held for the purpose of spiritual reflection and to promote a fuller understanding of the significance of the Scout Promise and Law. Such services must be regarded as supplementary to, rather than a substitute for, formal attendance at the services of the individual's own form of religion.

If a Squirrel Scout, Beaver Scout, Cub Scout, Scout, Explorer Scout or Scout Network Member is not allowed, by reasons of the individual's own religious obligations, to attend acts of worship other than that of the individual's own faith, the Leader must make certain that those obligations are not compromised.

1st Linslade Scout Group is not a sponsored organisation.

Cultural Requirements and Religious Needs

When cultural requirements or religious needs require, members of recognised faith communities may wear appropriate clothing of a style and fashion in accordance with their beliefs as part of their Scout uniform. Knives may not be worn with uniform except for religious reasons. This should first be discussed with the Section Leader or Group Scout Leader.