

5th Letchworth Scout Group Hardship Policy and Procedures

Purpose

This Policy defines how 5th Letchworth Scout Group provides support to parents to ensure that activities are open to all our Young People. It also sets out how we aim to help a Young Person to go on a trip or camp that they might not otherwise have been able to attend due to financial hardship.

Scope

This Policy applies to all Young People who are members of 5th Letchworth Scout Group and who satisfy the Qualification Criteria in Appendix 1.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Hardship Committee	A sub-committee of the Group Exec Committee with responsibility for implementing this Policy.
Regular Attendance	Physical attendance at more than 90% of regular weekly meetings and Special Events in the current and previous term.
Special Event	St George's Day Parade and Remembrance Day Parade.
Unauthorised Absence	Failure to give advance notification that a Young Person will not be attending a regular weekly meeting or Special Event. For all but sickness on the actual day of the meeting, 24hrs notice is required.

Policy

Commitment

Scouting is about young people learning and having fun, not only at regular weekly meetings but also at Special Events, trips and camps. At 5th Letchworth Scout Group [The Group], we believe that inability to pay for membership subs, camps and events should not be a barrier to attendance.

We recognise that for some families the extra money needed for a trip may be difficult to find. We also recognise that there may be occasions when paying subs can be a challenge.

Therefore, The Group is committed to providing financial support in the form of relaxed payment conditions and subsidies to ensure that all Young People have the opportunity to take part in their Section's activities.

Policy

Specifically, it is the Policy of the Group to:

- Create a Hardship Committee to process applications from families.
 - The Hardship Committee will comprise the Group Scout Leader, Group Treasurer and Group Chairman and will be led by the Group Scout Leader.
 - To be quorate, at least two members shall be involved in any decision.
- Develop procedures to allow families to apply for support and to have their request processed in a fair and consistent way.
- Ensure that the procedures protect the privacy of applicants as far as is reasonable.
- Promote the existence of this Policy and its supporting procedures to all families.
- Ensure that all requests are judged strictly according to their merits and in accordance with this Policy.
- Report to the Annual General Meeting on the number of requests that have been made and granted in the previous year and how much money has been used to subsidise activities.
 - The information will be anonymised.

Responsibility and Accountability

1. The Group Scout Leader is accountable to the Group Scout Council for the correct application of this Policy.
2. The Group Treasurer is responsible for keeping appropriate records to allow reporting at each AGM.
3. Section Leaders are responsible for:
 - a. promoting the existence of this Policy to all parents; and,
 - b. supporting families when they apply for support.
4. The Hardship Committee is responsible for:
 - a. processing requests; and,
 - b. reporting to the Group Executive Committee on a regular basis.
5. The Group Executive Committee is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this Policy.

Implementation

This Policy comes into force on the date that it is agreed by the Group Executive Committee.

Approvals

Name	Role	Signature	Date
Gareth Howell	GSL		
Mark Payne	Chair		

Appendix 1 – Qualification Criteria

All applications are made on behalf of a specific Young Person. To qualify for support under this Policy, the Young Person must:

- be an invested member of their Section;
- have a record of Regular Attendance.

Appendix 2 – Procedure for Requesting Relaxed Payment Conditions for Termly Subs

Purpose

This procedure defines how a parent or guardian of a Young Person can apply to vary how they pay termly subs.

Scope

Only Young People who are eligible (as per Appendix 1) can apply for support.

Procedure Requirements

Principles

- Termly subs are normally due on the first day of each new term and must be paid in full: either by Cheque or by a Direct Debit payment using Online Scout Manager [OSM].
- If a parent feels that they cannot meet this requirement because of financial hardship they can apply to pay termly subs in three equal monthly instalments.

Essentials

1. If a parent or guardian of the Young Person wishes to apply to pay in three monthly instalments, they should talk to the Section Leader and explain the situation.
2. The Section Leader shall confirm that the Young Person satisfies the Qualification Criteria. If they do and, in the opinion of the Section Leader, the case to vary the payment schedule is made, they should:
 - a. Suspend the subs payment schedule for that Young Person in OSM; and,
 - b. inform the Group Treasurer that the Young Person's subs will be paid in three equal monthly instalments.
3. The Group Treasurer shall make a note that subs are to be made in instalments.

Guidance

- Section Leaders should only allow subs to be paid in instalments in exceptional circumstances.
- It is the Section Leader's responsibility to ensure that the instalments are paid on time and to report to the Group Scout Leader if they are not.

Appendix 3 – Requesting that Subs be Waived

Purpose

In cases of extreme hardship, parents may not be able to pay any subs. This procedure defines how parents can apply to have the requirement to pay subs waived.

Scope

Only Young People who are eligible (as per Appendix 1) can apply for support.

Procedure Requirements

Principles

- Where a parent genuinely cannot afford to pay subs, and the alternative is that the Young Person does not attend Scouts, then the Group can agree to waive the requirement to pay subs for the current term.

Essentials

1. The parent of guardian shall talk to the Section Leader and explain the situation.
2. The Section Leader shall confirm that the Young Person satisfies the qualification criteria. If so, they shall make a recommendation to the Group Scout Leader.
4. After discussion with the Section Leader, the Group Scout Leader shall make a recommendation on whether to support the request and then inform the other members of the Hardship Committee.
5. Within two weeks, the Hardship Committee shall confer and:
 - a. reach a decision on whether or not to approve the request; and
 - b. record their decision.
6. The Group Treasurer shall record the decision for audit purposes.
7. The Group Scout Leader shall inform the Section Leader of the decision and reason, who can inform the parent or guardian.

Guidance

- When refusing a request, a reason should always be given.

Appendix 4 - Requesting support to allow a Young Person to attend a paid-for event or camp

Purpose

This Procedure defines how parents and guardians of Young People can apply for financial support so that their son or daughter can attend a paid-for event or camp.

Scope

Only Young People who are eligible (as per Appendix 1) can apply for support.

Procedure Requirements

Principles

- If a parent signs their son/daughter up to a trip, they are committing to make the full payment by the due date/s in the invitation.
- In cases of genuine hardship, the parent or guardian may apply to the Hardship Committee for financial support.

Essentials

1. The parent or guardian shall talk to the Section Leader and explain the situation.
2. The Section Leader shall confirm that the Young Person satisfies the Qualification Criteria. If so, they shall make a recommendation to the Group Scout Leader.
3. After discussion with the Section Leader, the Group Scout Leader shall make a recommendation on whether to support the request and then inform the other members of the Hardship Committee.
4. Within two weeks, the Hardship Committee shall confer and:
 - c. reach a decision on whether or not to approve the request;
 - d. agree a payment schedule and any subsidy; and
 - e. record their decision.
5. The Group Treasurer shall record the decision for audit purposes and record the payment schedule against the trip/camp account.
6. The Group Scout Leader shall inform the Section Leader of the decision, reason and payment terms, who can inform the parent or guardian.
7. The parent or guardian shall then either agree to meet the payment terms or withdraw the request.

Guidance

- It is the Section Leader's responsibility to ensure that the instalments are paid on time and to report to the Group Scout Leader if they are not.
- Except in exceptional cases, the Hardship Committee should only give approval for one event or camp per year for each Young Person.
- When refusing a request, a reason should always be given.