

Referrals and Safeguarding

Keeping children safe is of course the primary concern of both WSCC and West Sussex Scouts. Keyworkers must be prepared to support this aim by realistically screening the suitability of a child to join a Scout Group through their own professional judgment, discussion with parents and guardians, and talking with children themselves. The Scouts do not use a formal assessment to gauge risk, but will make a judgment on each individual case to establish if a young person is suitable and appropriate to become a member.

To empower families, the parent or guardian of child should be the driving force behind the application. This being the case, all relevant information about the young person can be passed to West Sussex Scouts in a way that fosters discussion and inclusivity within the family unit. Key workers have a part to play in this process also, and may be approached by families or Group Leaders to be an active part of the discussion on suitability, needs and risk within the Group.

Children who regularly display violent or aggressive behaviour are unlikely to be suitable until such a time that these behaviours are controlled. Other behaviours may also be preclusive; in most cases these will be self-evident, others may require further discussion with families and Group Leaders. Where a young person applying for membership is a vulnerable person, discussion with Group Leaders and parents should be initiated as early as possible. If a young person has exhibited any inappropriate sexual behaviour, or has cautions or convictions for sexual offences, this must be discussed with the Scout Safeguarding Team prior to applying – safeguarding@scouts.org.uk / 020 8433 7164

Financial Support

Scouting represents fantastic value for the opportunities it presents to a young person, and it would be tragic if a young person missed out simply due to financial constraints. Primarily, families should budget to meet the cost of scouting from their own income, and seek to sustain this through the child's scouting career – this is in keeping with the TF aims of generating a cohesive family capable of supporting themselves. West Sussex Scouts do hold a grant from WSCC to enable young people who are unable to meet costs for essential items and activities, to continue to be involved. Applications for support from this fund should be a last resort.

Where a financial need exists, Scout Group leaders can apply to access the fund, which on successful application, will be paid directly to the Scout Group.



Working in partnership with



Briefing sheet for 'Think Family' Keyworkers and Partners

Message from the County Commissioner...

Every child has the right to an adventure. Life is about grabbing opportunities. The prizes don't always go to the biggest, the best and the strongest – they go to those who persevere. These are simple life lessons that Scouting teaches.' - **Bear Grylls, Chief Scout**

In West Sussex Scouts we agree with Bear, and that's why we have partnered with Think Family. We want to offer all children the opportunity to experience the fun and adventure that Scouting offers regardless of their background.

Across West Sussex there are 113 Scout Groups, so families are rarely more than 5 miles from their nearest group. Whilst many groups will have a waiting list, we will do our best to find a place for children from TFX because we know they need our help to grow in confidence, achieve their full potential and become active citizens of the future.

Information for Keyworkers...

Scouting is an organisation that offers amazing opportunities to young people to gain confidence, life skills and experiences, as well as to try and turn youth in to an adventure. Scouting is open to all young people between 6 and 25, both boys and girls and is an umbrella term that includes traditionally known names like "Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorer Scouts, Sea Scouts, Air Scouts etc". When in the Scouts, children are able to undertake a wide range of activities from adventure sports like kayaking, rock climbing to camping and learning practical, life skills. Groups usually meet weekly in term time but sometimes go away at weekends and in school holidays. Scouting will teach children to respect authority and discipline, engage with their peers and the wider community, and to see their own potential.

WSSCC have a partnership agreement with West Sussex Scouts which means that eligible children who are referred by TF Keyworkers or partner agencies will be prioritised for membership, although naturally there may still be a waiting period. Please use the contact information opposite to direct responsible adults to the correct commissioner to start the joining process, or just to ask some questions about the Scouts, or how their child may fit in to the organisation.

Wherever possible, responsible adults should be the driving force in any application, however Keyworkers should make themselves available to assist or facilitate should the need be present. Once enrolled, should the child engage in challenging behaviour, the Scout Group will be responsible for dealing with this directly, following the Scout Association guidance for such matters. Keyworkers should be available to support a Scout Group in answering questions about the child or the family, and if necessary being available for a meeting between the family and the Scout Group.

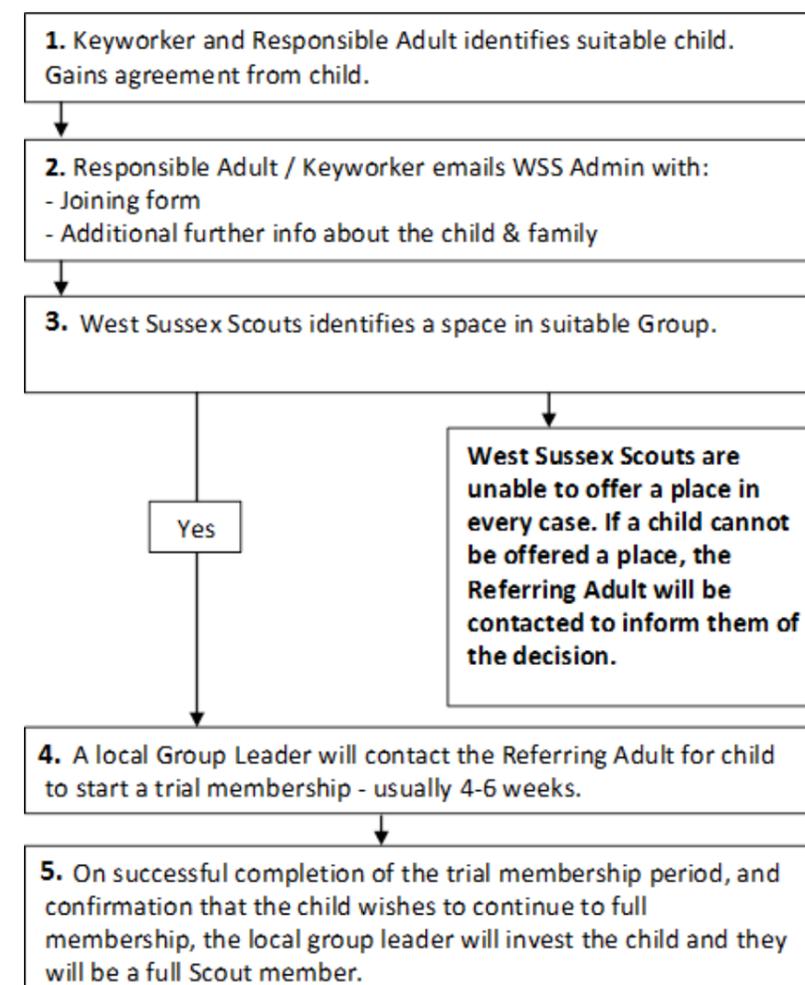
West Sussex Scouts hold a grant to help children referred by TF key workers with the financial necessities of scouting, such as the purchase of uniform, trips or specific activities. The fund is operated by the West Sussex Scouts and so families will liaise directly with leaders to access financial support. The purpose is to ensure that no child is deterred from being involved with Scouting simply through lack of financial stability.

Adults are also welcome to be involved in Scouting. West Sussex Scouts are keen to hear from suitable adults with an interest in supporting and developing children through Scouting. Adults should approach Group Leaders to discuss the level of support they are able to provide, and to hear about the process of vetting that will have to be undertaken in all cases.

An initial trial period of 4 – 6 weeks is usual and is perfect to let the child see how they will fit in with the group.

Please do let families know that TF gives them the opportunity for a place in the Scouts, which could be the start of a lifelong adventure.

The Joining Process



Next Steps

The first step is to identify if a child in a family you are key working would benefit from joining a Scout group and discussing it fully with all members of the family. Scouting has many opportunities to develop a child's social skills, self-confidence; respect for authority; and personal leadership but in order to develop these benefits, a personal commitment is required from the child to the Scout Group. The child will have to commit to regularly attend meetings, to support the other members and the Group's objectives. Most importantly, a commitment is required to respect leaders and other members, exhibit good behaviour at all times, and obey the rules and regulations of the Scout Group.

The application from:

http://www.westsussexscouts.org.uk/media/14264/tfx_scouts_joining_form.pdf

Once a family has reached a decision that they would like to proceed with a membership application, the adult making the referral should send the completed documentation to:

think.family@westsussexscouts.org.uk