

Guidelines for Scout Bands



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Introduction

This edition of the factsheet replaces that coded PT146. It provides assistance to Bandmasters, Band Advisers and any District or County/Area Commissioner with a Scout Band. Further editions may be produced in the light of feedback from this edition. The issue of replacement factsheets will be notified in SCOUTING Magazine, Talking Points and the Activities Newsletter.

General

If The Scout Association is going to meet their Aim it is essential that the young people are offered a wide variety of opportunities which offer physical and mental challenges. It is important that there is a balance in these activities. Young people join The Scout Association in the first place for the companionship and activities of the Association. They should be offered a balanced programme not one that concentrates on one activity to the exclusion of all others. Some specialist Leaders are guilty of one track vision and this should be resisted. There are a number of possible avenues to incorporate music into the Scout programme.

Scout Marching Bands

Scout Marching Bands may be formed by Groups or Districts with the approval of the District Commissioner(s). The Group Scout Leader or District Commissioner(s) as appropriate must ensure that members of such bands take an active part in other Pack, Troop or Unit activities and that their progress through the training programme is aided by their participation in these activities.

Joint Scout and Guide Marching Bands may be formed with the approval of the Commissioners concerned.

Scout Marching Bands will be inspected annually under arrangements made by County/Area or District- Approval for a Scout Marching Band to play in public will be given subject to the following minimum standards:

- The minimum number of members in the Scout Marching Band must be 12
- The Scout Marching Band must have suitable accommodation for practice in which it may train and rehearse without causing a nuisance to the public
- The Scout Council concerned must ensure that finance adequate to the maintenance and replacement of instruments is available
- The Scout Marching Band must have a Bandmaster
- The Scout Marching Band must maintain a good standard of performance and have a reasonable repertoire

The bulk of a Scout Marching Band will be made up of Scouts and/or Explorer Scouts with a smaller number of adults to provide a steady base. It is strongly recommended that a maximum of three persons over the age of 25 should play with the Scout Marching Band. In view of the physical capabilities of the young, i.e. length of stride etc., it is recommended that Cub Scouts should only be recruited when they are working towards their transfer to the Scout Troop.

There are no occasions when it would be in the interest of a Beaver Scout to join a Scout

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Marching Band. The ethos of the Beaver Scout Section does not allow for a regular rehearsal commitment.

Annual Inspections

The object of the Annual Scout Marching Band Inspection is not to pass or fail a Scout Marching Band but mainly to ascertain their standard and, where necessary, give help, encouragement and further advice on the activity within The Scout Association.

Ideally the person under-taking the inspection will be a County/Area Band or County/Area Music Adviser. In the absence of such an appointment it is essential that the District Commissioner consults the Assistant County/Area Commissioner (Activities) to find a suitable assessor. This should be someone with a requisite technical knowledge and experience who will be capable of providing an independent assessment of the Scout Marching Band's capabilities.

Where the band concerned is a "Scout and Guide Band" it is essential that a Guide Association representative is involved in the Annual Inspection process.

The person undertaking the Annual Inspection should indicate the standard and ability of the band by using the following codings:-

Code A A top class band with a wide experience and membership. Such a band would have a wide and varied repertoire. A band competing in the top class of a nationally recognised youth band league may qualify for this grading.

Code B A band of high standard, with a good size membership. The style of band and membership may lead to a slightly restricted repertoire. A band competing in the higher classes of a nationally recognised youth band league may qualify for this grading.

A band which achieves an A or B grading should be considered suitable for recommendation for Headquarters and National prestige engagements.

Code C A band of good ability but possibly limited experience, membership or repertoire. A

band competing in the middle classes of a nationally recognised youth band league may qualify for this grading.

Code D A smart band of limited size, ability or repertoire. A band competing in the Novice classes of a nationally recognised youth band league may qualify for such a grading.

A band which achieves a C or D grading might be considered suitable for recommendation for public appearances in support of Group or District events.

Code E A novice band who, as yet, are unable to offer a sufficient repertoire, but are smart in turn out and drill. Approval may be given for the band to march in public to drum tap only.

Code F A band where ability and or turn out is not of good standard, which should be limited to indoor practice only.

The person undertaking the Annual inspection will send a copy of the report to the Group Scout Leader, the District Commissioner(s) and the County/Area Commissioner. The Programme and Development Department at Gilwell Park should be notified of the standard reached.

This will enable Headquarters to maintain a register of Scout Marching Bands so that opportunities to play and represent The Scout Association can be easily processed. It will also enable Headquarters to keep individual bands informed of special training and developments in their areas which may be of interest.

An Inspection Certificate signed by the person undertaking the Annual Inspection and endorsed by the County/Area Commissioner may be issued to reinforce the Annual Inspection procedure. A suitable certificate is available from the Programme and Development Department at Gilwell Park.

Dress

When a Scout Marching Band appears in public it is representing The Scout Association and should therefore be a credit to the Association and wearing the correct nationally approved uniform

as specified in the Policy, Organisation and Rules. Additional items which may be incorporated into the uniform are listed. Bands, Band Advisers and responsible Commissioners should ensure that no other extras such as feathered plumes, non standard headgear etc. are incorporated. Any supporters appearing with the Scout Marching Band should also be in the correct nationally approved uniform.

Scout Marching Bands which take part in competitions where there is a showmanship element in the judging criteria may opt for a competition costume. Such a costume must not incorporate any element of Scout Association uniform. It would, however, be appropriate to make use of the arrowhead badge etc. in the costume design. Scout Marching Bands making use of such a costume in the competition are encouraged wherever possible to appear in any finale or prize giving in correct Scout Association uniform. There may also be occasions when a Scout Marching Band is required to appear in a pageant, carnival or other Scout show when a special costume is required. As before, such a costume should not include any element of Scout Association uniform.

When a Scout Marching Band appears at a wholly Scout event, i.e. St. George's Day Parade, or at an event where other Members of The Scout Association are parading, i.e. Remembrance Day Services, the Scout Marching Band should appear in correct uniform. In these circumstances it may not be appropriate for the Scout Marching Band to exercise the option of 'green beret with metal arrowhead badge'. The advice of the person in charge of The Scout Association's involvement should be sought on these occasions.

Where a band has membership from both The Guide Association and The Scout Association those members of the band who are members of The Guide Association must wear Guide uniform. This Guide uniform can be one of many patterns. Bands should make their own decisions with regard to uniform items (see Guiding Manual 26.32). Guides can wear the same colour neckerchief as Scouts in a Scout and Guide Band.

Concert Bands and Orchestras

Some strong Groups with a musical tradition may wish to provide a more challenging musical opportunity by means of a Concert Band or

Orchestra. The rules with regard to Authorisation, Membership and Annual Inspection, should be the same as for a Scout Marching Band. It is, however, possible to combine the Annual Inspection with that of the Scout Marching Band if both are operated by the same Group and draw their membership as appropriate to individual activities. The guidance with regard to minimum numbers may have to be modified especially with regard to special ensembles of players.

The number of Scout Marching Bands in a District or County/Area may combine to form a group of this nature for special occasions. Permission of District or County/Area Commissioner should still be sought.

Other Musical Opportunities

Where a small group of musicians get together to provide music for their own or Group benefit, i.e. a Folk or Jazz Group, String Quartet, Chamber Orchestra etc. there is no need for the appropriate Commissioner's approval. When their standards and training have improved to the extent that they wish to play for the general public the appropriate Commissioner's approval should then be sought. The advice of the Assistant County/Area Commissioner (Activities), County/Area Band Adviser or County/Area Music Adviser should then be sought.

Publication Cross Reference

Current editions of:
Policy, Organisation & Rules of The Scout Association

Information Centre factsheet
Starting a Scout Band - FS120212 July 2008
County/Area Band Adviser - FS120211 July 2008

The Guide Association
Guide Bands and Guide Memberships of Scout and Guide Bands - December 1992.