

# Background to the Purpose and Principles of Scouting



Item Code FS140099 July/06 Edition no 1

0845 300 1818

## Introduction

This factsheet provides in-depth explanation of the values that underpin Scouting. It will be of especial interest to Trainers for Module 05, *The Fundamental Values of Scouting*, seeking further background information. For those who require a basic description of Scouting's Fundamentals, we recommend you first read *The Fundamental Values of Scouting* (FS 140004).

## The Fundamentals

The Fundamentals of Scouting specifically refer to the **Purpose, Principles, and Method** of The Scout Association.

Our Fundamentals were agreed by the Committee-of-the-Council in May 2000. This document provides a background to their origin. More importantly, it looks at the meaning of the elements of the various Promises. The aim is to ensure that any future changes to wording do not change their meaning.

## The Purpose of Scouting

*The Purpose of Scouting is to contribute to the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities.*

This was known as the Aim of The Scout Association but was reworded to adhere to *Scouting Fundamentals* (published by the World Scout Bureau in 1992). It now specifically uses the words 'contribute to' rather than 'promote' in recognition that Scouting is one of a number of influences in a young person's development.

## The Principles of Scouting

Scouting is based on three principles, which are expressed within the Beaver, Cub and Scout Promises:

- *Duty to self;*
- *Duty to others; and*
- *Duty to God.*

These principles are described in the World Scout Bureau's *Scouting Fundamentals*. When later considered by the working group, there was discussion around the use of the term 'duty'. It was felt, however, that no one word could be found to replace 'duty', when relating to self, others and God.

*The three principles lead Members of the Scout Movement to believe that the world is a better place when people:*

- *are trustworthy, self-controlled and self-confident;*
- *have self-respect and respect for others;*
- *work together to serve other people and to improve society;*
- *show responsibility towards the natural world and proper respect for possession and property; and*
- *have an active religious faith.*

The phrase '*lead Members...to believe*' puts the emphasis on the individual Member. It means that each Member can take actions towards these statements rather than expecting 'the system' or 'other people' to do it. By 'Members' we include both adults and young people.

## The Scout Information Centre

Gilwell Park Chingford London E4 7QW Tel + 44 (0)20 8433 7100 Fax + 44 (0)20 8433 7103 email [info.centre@scout.org.uk](mailto:info.centre@scout.org.uk) [www.scoutbase.org.uk](http://www.scoutbase.org.uk)

### The Promise

The Promise is something that we *do* and the *way* in which we live our lives. It is not something that we just *say* on occasions. It is important that the words of the Promise and the Law mean something to the people making them. The words in the Promise and Law might therefore change over time. This is to ensure that today's Members understand them and that they cater for diverse backgrounds and cultures.

One way that we express our Fundamental values is through the Promise and Law, which cover the principles of duty to self, duty to others and duty to God. They help individuals turn Scouting's Fundamentals from a theory into a practical reality – they are a code for living.

### The Beaver Scout Promise

*I promise to be kind and helpful and to love God.*

<i>I promise</i>	<b>Duty to self:</b> the Beaver Scout is making the Promise for himself or herself. By taking responsibility for his or her actions the Beaver Scout is recognising the underlying principle of duty to self: that young people are responsible for what they become and what they do. Unlike the other Promises, the Beaver Scout Promise uses 'I promise' as a statement of intention and the words 'do my best' are not included.
<i>to be kind and helpful</i>	<b>Duty to others:</b> this is an expression of duty to others; it reflects the way in which the Beaver Scout is expected to act towards others.

<i>and to love God.</i>	<b>Duty to God:</b> this is an expression of duty to God and includes all faiths and beliefs recognised by The Scout Association. This can be replaced with alternative wording, such as 'Dharma' or 'Allah', which can better reflect the faith or belief of the individual making the Promise. It uses the word 'love' in a way that a young person might understand love for a parent or sibling.
-------------------------	--

### The Cub Scout Promise

*I promise that I will do my best, to do my duty to God and to the Queen, to help other people and to keep the Cub Scout Law.*

I promise that I will do my best	<b>Duty to self:</b> the Cub Scout is making the Promise for himself or herself. By taking responsibility for his or her actions the Cub Scout is recognising the underlying principle of duty to self. It encourages them to be responsible for what they become and what they do. The Cub Scout Promise includes an additional requirement to that of the Beaver Scout Promise: to 'do my best'. At eight to ten years old, a young person should recognise the importance of striving to do their best rather than simply to reach a set standard. This requirement to 'do my best' applies to all parts of the Promise that follow.
to do my duty to God	<b>Duty to God:</b> this is an obvious expression of duty to God and includes all faiths and beliefs recognised by The Scout Association. This can be replaced with alternative wording, such as 'Dharma' or 'Allah', which can better reflect the faith or belief of the individual making the Promise.

and to the Queen	<b>Duty to others:</b> ‘the Queen’ is a reference to the United Kingdom’s monarchy, where the monarch reigns according to the laws of the nation. With this phrase, the Cub Scout is expected to respect the laws of the land and to set a good example. For people of other nationalities resident in this country, this phrase may be replaced with ‘the country in which I am now living.’
to help other people	<b>Duty to others:</b> this refers to the Cub Scout’s responsibility to help others in various ways – from the physical (such as doing the washing up after a meal) to the emotional (such as comforting someone who is upset).
and to keep the Cub Scout Law	<b>Duty to others:</b> the Cub Scout Law focuses on duty to others (including thinking about the needs of others and doing a good turn).

**The Scout/Explorer Scout/Scout Network and Adult Promise**

*On my honour I promise that I will do my best, to do my duty to God and to the Queen, to help other people and to keep the Scout Law.*

On my honour	<b>Duty to self:</b> this separates the Scout Promise from the previous two. It emphasises that keeping the Promise is a reflection of an individual’s character and therefore strengthens the words of the Promise that follow. Keeping the Promise is entirely up to the individual. Muslims can replace this wording with ‘In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent the Most Merciful’.
--------------	---

I promise that I will do my best	<b>Duty to self:</b> the Scout is making the Promise for himself or herself. By taking responsibility for his or her actions the Scout is recognising the underlying principle of duty to self – that people are responsible for what they become and what they do. The Scout Promise includes the requirement to ‘do my best’ and the Scout expected to strive to reach his or her potential rather than doing just enough to get by. As with the Cub Scout Promise, the requirement to ‘do my best’ applies to all parts of the Promise that follow.
to do my duty to God	<b>Duty to God:</b> this is an obvious expression of duty to God and includes all faiths and beliefs recognised by The Scout Association. This can be replaced with alternative wording, such as ‘Dharma’ or ‘Allah’, which can better reflect the faith or belief of the individual making the Promise.
and to the Queen,	<b>Duty to others:</b> ‘the Queen’ is a reference to the United Kingdom’s monarchy, where the monarch reigns according to the laws of the nation. With this phrase, the Scout is expected to respect the laws of the land and to set a good example. For people of other nationalities resident in the United Kingdom, this phrase may be replaced with ‘the country in which I am now living’.
to help other people	<b>Duty to others:</b> this refers to the Scout’s responsibility to help others in various ways – from the physical (such as helping a person who can’t do something for themselves) to the emotional (such as comforting someone who is upset) – and also to include working towards a fairer world for all.
and to keep the Scout Law	<b>Duty to self and duty to others:</b> the Scout Law focuses on the two areas of self and others with more detailed personal ‘rules.’ They describe how to really live out the Promise.

## The Method of Scouting

Scouting uses a Method that is best seen when young people, in partnership with adults, are:

- *enjoying what they are doing;*
- *learning by doing;*
- *participating in varied and progressive activities;*
- *making choices for themselves;*
- *taking responsibility for their own actions;*
- *working in groups;*
- *taking increasing responsibility for others;*
- *taking part in activities outdoors;*
- *sharing in prayer and worship; and*
- *making and living out their Promise.*

These points were derived from the Programme Criteria for the Youth Programme, agreed by Programme and Training sub-Committee in 1991 and amended following work undertaken by Programme review in 1996.

Two further statements have been added to the Scout Method since:

- *participating in varied and progressive activities; and*
- *making and living out their Promise.*

It was decided that the language used should be engaging (e.g. '*enjoying*' not '*enjoy*'). This helps convey a sense of active involvement.

The first part of the statement of the Method is important: 'young people in partnership with adults' and it applies to each of the bullet points. The word partnership was chosen because the precise nature of the relationship between adults and young people will vary with age and individual development.

## How do we know if Scouting is succeeding?

*It is believed that Scouting is succeeding when Members demonstrate:*

- *a growing sense of self-discipline and self-esteem with integrity, honesty and reliability - one who can be trusted;*
- *a growing ability to get along with others as an individual and as a team member - showing a sense of responsibility towards others;*
- *a growing determination to work with others towards the creation of a more tolerant and caring society;*
- *a growing understanding of the natural world in which we live, and a sense of responsibility towards it and those who live in it; and*
- *a growing sense of wonder and a discovery of the need for prayer and worship.*

The Outcomes of Scouting originated from a Committee of the Council paper in 1994. The wording: '*a growing*' was added so that each statement relates to Members at every stage of their development.