

Fundamentals Explained

Purpose, values and method of Scouting



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Fundamentals Explained

This document contains detailed information on Fundamentals of Scouting. This may be of particular interest to Trainers who deliver Module 5: Fundamental Values of Scouting.

Context

The fundamentals of The Scout Association were reviewed in 1999 as part of the introduction of the revised programme. Subsequently it was felt appropriate to consider another review some ten years on.

The fundamentals were considered over three years. There were many people involved in the consultation that led to the current fundamentals including face-to-face discussions with young people at a number of events around the UK and electronic survey responses from adults.

The key outcomes of consultation period were to:

- a) make the expression of our fundamentals simpler and therefore easier to understand; and
- b) ensure that our fundamentals reflect what Scouting is trying to achieve in today's society in the United Kingdom.

Why are the fundamentals important?

The fundamentals of The Scout Association describe what we are trying to achieve and how we achieve it. The fundamentals essentially dictate the type of organisation that we are.

Our fundamentals are not purely a matter of some words in a few documents. Our fundamentals shape the way that we Scout in the United Kingdom including the need for them to be reflected in the Movement's policies and procedures.

It is also important to remember that the Promise and Law have always been expressions of our fundamentals (not the other way around) in wording that was felt to be appropriate for the age range and in the context of the present society.

Fundamentals in every-day Scouting

We have to be realistic about how our fundamentals are viewed, used and understood. For those involved in considering, writing or training about them, they are deeply important. For those trying to run interesting and stimulating programmes for young people on a wet Wednesday night – they seem a little more distant.

If the fundamentals are understood by our leaders then they becomes a very powerful force that helps leaders to understand the programme and why we do things in a certain way. It empowers leaders to make decisions about how Scouting is delivered to young people by understanding *what* we are trying to achieve.

The Scout Association

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We have to accept that we have a range of people in Scouting – some will find the concept of fundamentals appealing and helpful; others will Scout using an intuitive sense of what it means. Many will have their own, personal way of describing what Scouting is all about. Some will use different vocabulary but precisely pin down what Scouting exists to achieve, others will use a different vocabulary and miss the point of it entirely.

It is therefore very important for Trainers to help our adult volunteers to gain a personal insight and understanding of the fundamentals of Scouting.

The fundamentals of Scouting

The Purpose of Scouting	Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.
The Values of Scouting	<p>As Scouts we are guided by these values:</p> <p>Integrity We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal.</p> <p>Respect We have self-respect and respect for others.</p> <p>Care We support others and take care of the world in which we live.</p> <p>Belief We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.</p> <p>Cooperation We make a positive difference; we cooperate with others and make friends.</p>
The Scout Method	<p>Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of Scouting and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enjoy what they are doing and have fun; • take part in activities indoors and outdoors; • learn by doing; • share in spiritual reflection; • take responsibility and make choices; • undertake new and challenging activities; and • make and live by their Promise.

The Purpose of Scouting

Probably the best place to start when thinking about the Fundamentals of Scouting is ‘why does Scouting exist?’ It’s a big question! The purpose of Scouting describes, in one sentence, what we are trying to do.

Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society.

‘Scouting exists to...’ is a clear and direct start to the statement that makes it clear what we are going to do. It also means that the statement can stand alone without the heading “The Purpose of Scouting” and it still makes sense.

‘Actively engage and support’ means that young people are actively involved in their own development and not just passively part of Scouting (they don’t just do whatever is organised by others). This means that we should encourage young people to have ideas about what they want to do in Scouting and that their ideas should make a difference.

‘Personal development’ covers the social, physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual needs of young people. This means that Scouting is more than just having fun – it is about stretching young people in these areas so that they learn and develop in an enjoyable and practical way.

'Empowering' is about giving young people the skills and the opportunity to do something – and then supporting them to do it. It is more than just saying “get on with it” – it is core to Scouting that we *help* young people to develop and learn skills that will assist them in the wider world.

'Make a positive contribution' recognises that other than the personal benefits of Scouting to young people, Scouting has a wider purpose to positively affect society. Good Scouting helps young people learn skills, gain confidence and develop the desire to make their world a better place. The 'positive contribution' is based on the values of Scouting – this links us right back to the words of Baden-Powell who once wrote: *'Teach Scouts not how to get a living, but how to live'*. You can't say fairer than that!

'Society' is a very broad term; it covers local, national and international communities as well as new forms of society such as online communities. It is very important that Scouting is felt by young people to be relevant to them in how they live their lives (it's all about **being** a Scout rather than just **doing** Scouting for a couple of hours each week).

Some people might ask why “fun” is not mentioned in the purpose statement. We have to remember that the purpose statement covers the reason *why* Scouting exists and not *how* Scouting works (this latter aspect is covered in the Method of Scouting).

The statement does not have an adult focus, because Scouting exists for young people and the adults are used as the means to deliver the method to achieve the Purpose.

The Values of Scouting

As Scouts we are guided by these values:

Integrity: *We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal.*

Respect: *We have self-respect and respect for others.*

Care: *We support others and take care of the world in which we live.*

Belief: *We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes.*

Cooperation: *We make a positive difference; we co-operate with others and make friends.*

I guess that all of us have a feeling, deep inside, that defines Scouting for us and guides us in the way that we act, the decisions we make, what we say and how we treat people. The statement of values captures that feeling.

The great thing about our values is that we know that there are so many Scouts living by them that we are united into something big – a huge Scout family (that's why we start the statement with **“as Scouts we are”**). But even though it's a very big family, the values are very personal – they are about what each of us does, not what the 'system' does (and Baden-Powell would like that, he was very keen on us being a Movement and not an organisation).

The words in the Values should be very familiar, but it is worth considering why we use these particular words.

The statement says that we are **'guided by'** the values and this describes the relationship a Scout should have with the Scout values, that the values have an influence on the decisions we make and the actions we take. The values are deliberately shared and personal rather than organisational, making them directly applicable to our members.

Integrity is at the very core of how we view ourselves and therefore, what we do. Scouts see the importance of being honest, trustworthy and loyal and that our world is better for us and for others if we act this way.

Respect influences how we feel about, and treat, ourselves as well as others – it includes acceptance and inclusion of others even if they are different from us – and whether they are family, friends or strangers. In many ways it is our respect for others that has helped Scouting to spread across the world.

Care is about action as well as a feeling. By actively caring for our surroundings and for people, Scouts create a better world for everyone – whether it is the natural environment or the built environment. This leads us to help other people who might be less fortunate than us in one way or another.

Belief and its exploration helps Scouts to learn from other faiths and continue on a spiritual journey and development. Scouts are open and willing to explore faiths whether established or defined or not. Learning about other faiths, beliefs and attitudes can help to make the world a more tolerant and a less frightening place.

Cooperation means working with other people and building friendships with adults and peers. The key here is that this co-operation and friendship helps us to do things that make a positive difference to the world so the relationships are active and worthwhile.

The Scout Method

Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of Scouting and:

- *enjoy what they are doing and have fun*
- *take part in activities indoors and outdoors*
- *learn by doing*
- *share in spiritual reflection*
- *take responsibility and make choices*
- *undertake new and challenging activities*
- *make and live by their Promise*

I suspect that many of us would instinctively know when we saw good Scouting in action. It is an interesting exercise to think about exactly what we would see that would define Scouting in action – and that's what the Scout method does for us.

Scouting takes place when young people, in partnership with adults, work together based on the values of Scouting: This opening statement applies to the whole of the method. This means that adults should work in partnership with young people to achieve all of the other parts of the method as described below. This partnership is crucial; Scouting is, at its heart, values-based youth work.

Enjoy what they are doing and have fun: Clearly we all have to enjoy our Scouting – whether we are young people or adults – otherwise we would stop doing it – and we all need to have fun. But this enjoyment had to be considered carefully. It doesn't mean, for example, always doing the same thing (as eventually it might become boring and not enjoyable). It does mean stretching ourselves and young people to try new things that are also enjoyable.

Take part in activities indoors and outdoors: Many people will immediately recognise the importance of activities outdoors (whether these are adventurous activities or not), but it is also true that great Scouting can take place indoors as well. The key here is participating in activities that help us to enjoy the great outdoors and also to enjoy the indoors.

Learn by doing: Scouting actively engages young people – and the best way to engage young people is to let them do things. This is really simple, for example, don't spend hours talking about how to read a map, go for a walk and experience how the map fits the real world. As adults we sometimes get too

focused on telling young people everything rather than helping them to discover it for themselves. Learning by doing is great fun for the young people and the adults. It might take a little longer but the results are usually far better.

Share in spiritual reflection: Sharing in spiritual reflection is a very wide and deep activity. It encompasses the diversity of faiths of members and includes prayer and worship as well as other appropriate methods of reflection. It is important to help young people to spend some time taking stock of themselves and the world around them – time to slow down perhaps and be quiet and still. We live in an increasingly noisy and frenetic world, but there is a great power in peace, quiet and contemplation, which we sometimes forget.

Take responsibility and make choices: Good Scouting encourages young people to take responsibility and make choices for themselves and also for others. The skill of weighing up options and making decisions that are best for people will help in all aspects of a young person's life and, indeed, as an adult.

Undertake new and challenging activities: Scouting challenges us all the time – to think differently, to push ourselves, to achieve things that we never thought we could do. Scouting is working really well when we help young people to recognise for themselves the right activities that would challenge them. This means that we need to find new activities for young people. Remember that this means activities that are new to the young people, not necessarily new to the adults.

Make and live by their Promise: The final part of the method links us back to our Promise. It is the final part because in many ways it underpins everything we do. We want young people to make their Promise – we use 'make' because it isn't just about saying it (indeed some people may make their Promise in sign language or some other physical way). The Promise is more than the words. The Promise is what we understand from the words – how it feels inside. We also expect Scouts to live by their Promise – this is because the Promise isn't just for the time that we hold our section meetings – it is a way of life.

The Promise and Law

The Promise and Law are the simple way in which we help young people and adults to remember and think about the fundamentals of Scouting. It is therefore vital that every Member considers the Promise and discusses its meaning before making the Promise and being invested into Scouting.

The Scout Promise

There are three versions of the Promise which are explained in Appendix 1. Each version is written to be appropriate to the broad level of understanding of each of the age groups within the Movement. The core Promise is:

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.

There are various wording changes that can be made to the Promise to cater for different faiths and foreign nationals living in the UK.

The Scout Law

Adult and youth Members express Scouting's Values within the seven Scout laws.

- A Scout is to be trusted.
- A Scout is loyal.

- A Scout is friendly and considerate.
- A Scout belongs to the worldwide family of Scouts.
- A Scout has courage in all difficulties.
- A Scout makes good use of time and is careful of possessions and property.
- A Scout has self-respect and respect for others

Tim Kidd

Chief Commissioner of England

Appendix 1: The Promise

The Beaver Scout Promise

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

<i>I promise</i>	<p>Personal Development: 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 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.</p>
<i>to be kind and helpful</i>	<p>Make a positive contribution to society: this statement reflects the way in which the Beaver Scout is expected to act towards others.</p>
<i>and to love God.</i>	<p>Spiritual Development : 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.</p>

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>I promise that I will do my best</i>	<p>Personal Development: the Cub Scout is making the Promise for himself or herself. Cubs are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions; developing an increasing awareness and ownership for what they become and what they do.</p> <p>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, and does not</p>
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	necessarily mean 'to be perfect'.
<i>to do my duty to God</i>	Spiritual Development: this is an expression of a Cub's commitment to continue exploring their faiths and beliefs. 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.
<i>and to the Queen</i>	Make a positive contribution to society: '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.'
<i>To help other people</i>	Make a positive contribution to society: 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).
<i>And to keep the Cub Scout Law</i>	Make a positive contribution to society: the Cub Scout Law focuses on helping 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.

<i>On my honour</i>	Personal Development: 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>I promise that I will do my best</i>	Personal Development: the Scout is making the Promise for himself or herself. By taking responsibility for his or her actions the Scout is recognising that individuals are responsible for what they become and what they do. The Scout Promise includes the requirement to 'do my best', not necessarily to be perfect. 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.
<i>to do my duty to God</i>	Spiritual Development: this is an expression of a progressive commitment to continue exploring their faiths and beliefs; the wording 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.

<i>and to the Queen,</i>	Make a positive contribution to society: ‘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’.
<i>to help other people</i>	Make a positive contribution to society: 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.
<i>and to keep the Scout Law</i>	Personal Development and make a positive contribution to society: 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.