

A Parents Guide to Scouting

This information is to help you to know what lies ahead, what you may expect of us and what we will expect of you. If there is anything you are unsure about, please feel free to ask your the Leaders.

What is Scouting?

Scouting is a worldwide movement that has shaped the development of youth and adults for 100 years. Scouts are in every part of our community, and Scouts is the biggest and most successful youth organisation in Australia. More than 16,000 thousand boys, girls, and adults in New South Wales from wide cultural or religious backgrounds or with an intellectual or physical disability enjoy an almost unlimited range of activities.

The aim of Scouting is to encourage the physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual development of young people so they may play a constructive role in society as responsible citizens and as members of their local and international communities. This aim is achieved through a strong and active program that inspires young people to do their best and to always be prepared.

Scouting Sections

The Scout Movement consists of five sections:

- Joey Scouts for ages 6-8
- Cub Scouts for ages 8-11 (7-11 if the group does not run a Joey Section)
- Scouts for ages 11-15
- Venturers for ages 15-18
- Rovers for ages 18-26

1st Cabarita-Mortlake Scout Group has Cub Scout, Scout and Venturer sections. All sections meet on Thursday nights starting at 7pm. The group also runs a colour-guard and drumming session between 6:30pm and 7pm.

Scouting is fun!

Scouting is definitely fun, and it also prepares young people for life in the adult world by teaching responsibility for their own actions and progress. These achievements lay a solid foundation for the success of our future Australian leaders. But don't tell the kids they're learning; they think they're just having fun!

No matter the age of the participant, Scouts provides fun and exciting programs that promote active learning. Whether the young boys and girls are canoeing, camping, visiting museums or helping their local community, the activity is sure to teach them about themselves and the world around them.

Scouting is Adventurous!

Each year, all sections of Scouts learn to share responsibilities and to live with each other through adventures set in the outdoors. Camping, hiking, canoeing, drumming and stilt walking are just a few of the exciting experiences that a 1st Cabarita-Mortlake Scout may have achieved in his or her time as a youth member.

Scouting is Challenging!

Scouts challenge their minds as well as their bodies.

Scouting is Commitment!

Scouting makes a direct and positive impact on the community by teaching positive values and leadership skills to youth. Every year, Scouts and their leaders contribute thousands of volunteer hours to their local communities.

What is a Scout Group?

A Scout Group is the local area organization that offers different levels of Scouting to various ages. A full Group consists of five Sections called a Joey Mob, a Cub Scout Pack, a Scout Troop, a Venturer Unit and a Rover Crew.

Each Mob, Pack, Troop or Unit is under the control of a person known as a Joey Scout, Cub Scout, Scout or Venturer Leader who is helped by Assistant Leaders, and also Parent Helpers. The Group as a whole is managed and guided by a person known as the Group Leader.

Joining

Before your child can participate in any Scout meetings you will need to complete an Application for Youth Membership form (Y1), this will give automatic insurance cover for your child whilst they are deciding if Scouting is for them. There is also a Free Trial period of six weeks, before paying the membership fees. This will give you and your child a chance to enjoy Scouting before you make a financial commitment.

After the initial six weeks, the Group Leader and Section Leaders would discuss a date for Investiture. On Investiture the Joining Fee and Registration Fee would be paid and sent together with the Y1 to State Office, thereby registering your child as a member of the Scout Association.

Uniform

A shirt and belt is all that makes up the basic Scout uniform. These items can be purchased from Snowgum stores (Rhodes Shopping Centre and Parramatta Westfield are closest). Scarves and badges are provided at no cost.



Membership Costs

A Scout Group is entirely self-funded. The expenses of a Scout Group are various. A somewhat major cost is the purchasing of badges, certificates etc., (badges are presented as soon as they are earned and there is no call for parents to purchase their child's badges).

The Group must also meet the cost of maintaining camping equipment in first class, safe condition as well as paying for and maintaining the Scout Hall itself. Naturally we have electricity, insurance and the like to pay. There are also Leader training costs which are met by the Group. As well as the general Group running costs, there is the cost of providing new equipment and resources such as tents, ropes, cooking gear, games equipment etc.

Each member of the Movement is registered with Scouts Australia, NSW Branch and is covered by insurance upon payment of the necessary fees. The Joining Fee is a one off fee, while the Registration Fee is paid annually, an account will be sent direct to you by the Group.

Naturally with Scouting being fundamentally an outdoors-based programme, there will be from time to time pack holidays, camps, hikes etc., normally over 2 or 3 days, which your child will want to attend. The cost of these activities is an extra expense to yourself but you can be sure that we carefully aim to keep the price of such activities to a minimum.

A Community Affair

Scouting is a community affair. Scout Groups are formed and maintained by the community because parents believe in the benefits that Scouting has to offer and want to make it available to their children.

Throughout all Sections of the Movement, the Aim is to encourage the physical, mental, social and spiritual development of our young people so that they may take a constructive place in society as responsible citizens. We achieve this through:

- Voluntary membership of a uniformed group, which, guided by adults is increasingly self governing in its successive age groups.
- Commitment to a code of living expressed in the Promise and Law.
- The provision of a wide range of attractive, constructive and challenging activities, including opportunities for adventure and exploration both indoors and outdoors.
- The provision of opportunities for leadership and responsibility.
- Learning by doing.
- Encouragement of activity in small groups.
- An award scheme that encourages participation in a full range of activities and provides recognition of individual achievements.

It is a formula that has survived for more than 90 years! The principles of Scouting are proven to be just as relevant today as they were when Scouting began in 1907.

Parent Involvement

The most important aspect of parent involvement is the encouragement you give to your child. The boys and girls who get the most out of Scouting are those who put the most into it. All children have times when they need a gentle push, and certainly times when they need some help. This is where you come in.

If your child wants to do some test-passing or earn a badge, please go through the requirements and check that he or she has the knowledge needed and that all aspects of the test are covered. If your child hasn't done anything for a while, you may need to offer some extra encouragement to get started. The pride on their faces when they come to the front of the parade to receive their badges makes the effort well worthwhile.

Scouting is a voluntary organization, and we do rely heavily on parent support. The support given will depend on the individual circumstances of each family. Areas in which regular help is needed are:-

- Transport: Occasionally transporting the children to various activities included in our programme.
- Cleaning/Maintenance of the Scout Hall: It is important that the place in which our children gather be maintained in a clean hygienic fashion.
- Parent Roster: There are occasions when the Leaders can do with an extra pair of hands, eyes and ears. This is mainly needed when a Leader is working on their own. If we call for a little extra help, it is good to know that there are parents willing to assist.
- Joining the Parent Support Group: This is not an onerous task. The really hard work of building the Scout Hall and providing major resources has already been done by past committees.

It really only involves a monthly meeting and helping to manage and maintain the resources of our Group as well as the occasional social activity. It is expected that every family will be represented on the committee for at least one term (normally two years) during their child's Scouting career. Don't leave it until your child is almost ready to leave. Becoming a uniformed Leader: Leadership is not for everyone, but if it interests you, please speak to any one of the Leaders. They will tell you that they get just as much fun out of it as the kids, and a very real sense of achievement as well as doing something worthwhile for our youth and the community.

Remember, there is no such thing as a professional Scout Leader. Most Leaders are just a mum or dad like you, but the Scout Association provides wonderful training that turns laypeople into Leaders and without Leaders we wouldn't have a Scout Group for your child to join!

Your Expectations

Now, what's in it for you and your child? You can reasonably expect that your son or daughter will be in the hands of capable and caring Leaders who have a commitment to providing a stimulating and interesting programme designed to assist children to develop into self-reliant and responsible members of the community.

Scouting was started by Robert Baden-Powell to cater for children's sense of adventure and love of independence and to channel these characteristics into appropriate activities, which will equip them for later life. Leaders take the task of fulfilling the Aims of Scouting very seriously. We undertake every reasonable care of your child when you entrust him or her to us, and to do our best in partnership with you, to help your child to develop to his or her full potential.

We have all undertaken thorough ongoing training, and we give freely of our time and efforts to enable us to do this. We would not do it unless we were convinced of the value of Scouting in the lives of our children. We hope that after your child has been with us for a short time, you will be likewise convinced.

Protecting your Child

Scouts is Australia's leading youth development organisation with more than 20,000 members and we do our utmost to ensure they are kept safe in our care. We have 4,000 adult Leaders and volunteers helping to run Scout activities who undergo thorough training for 6 to 12 months before becoming Scout Leaders.

Scouts has a "two deep" leadership policy, that is, two Leaders (a male and a female) is our preferred option, however this is not always possible. It's reasonable to expect that sometimes due to sickness, or other reasons there is only one person present.

Scouts NSW ensures that all of its volunteers comply with current legislation including the Prohibited Employment Declaration (PED). In addition, Leaders undergo police record checks.