**Communication And Social Media Policy**

**Dated 01/09/2025**

**Our Communications Channels**

1st Greyabbey Scouts provides fun and challenging experiences for young people in the Greyabbey area, in a safe and supportive environment. To keep on doing that we need to reach out into our local community to make new friends, engage new members, and spark new volunteers.

We use photographs and video of Group activities to tell our story and promote Scouting through several channels:

* To share activities with parents and young members we use our invitation-only section Facebook groups.
* For membership registration we send emails via Online Scout Manager (OSM). Each email is sent to an individual recipient. All leaders, parents and guardians get an OSM account when they join 1st Greyabbey Scout Group. OSM is where we keep contact details for everyone, so it is important to keep yours up to date.

For promoting Scouting in our local community and to the general public we use our website and our public Facebook page. This list might change in future, if we find better ways of communicating.

**When is it appropriate for parents and guardians to take pictures?**

Parents and guardians are welcome to take pictures of only your Scout at meetings and events in public areas, but at the village hall in Greyabbey or other private scout locations under the control of 1st Greyabbey photos can only be taken if specific permission is given by the leader, who will ensure children without consent for pictures are not photographed. In the event that the leader declines permission no pictures can be taken on scouting premises. We ask that you respect the Scout Association’s “Young People First” policy and if your pictures feature children other than your own we expect that you don’t share them publicly. Feel free to share them with us though! You can share them in our private Facebook group, or with any of the Leaders directly.

There may be events such as Investitures or ‘Swimming Up’ where parents want to take photos. In these instances the leader may give permission, but will take steps to keep children without consent out of such photos/videos.

**As a parent or guardian, do I have to give my consent for pictures to be used?**

Yes you do. Without consent we will endeavour not to take any identifiable photos at all of your children, which means they will not appear on the closed Facebook group and you will not see photos of them in action at scouts. You can set your consents in OSM, in the personal details section. There are two different consent statements you can choose. Leaders will be aware what consents have been given and will check before using any photographs. The first consent allows us to use photos in ‘Internal’ – i.e. private group settings. This only includes closed Facebook groups, OSM or direct emails that only go to members and group notice boards in ‘Maple Lodge’. While we appreciate the consent wording is a bit woolly, we only have predetermined options in OSM. Please note that photos can of course be copied from these sites, and are then outside our control:

1. I give consent for photos/videos of my child to be taken, stored and shared internally in the meeting location, Scout websites and social media. I understand that if I later withdraw consent, previously published photos will not be able to be removed. (Regardless of this consent, the group/unit is not responsible for photos taken by other parties.)

The second consent allows us to use photos more widely, so public facing Facebook pages, the website, press releases etc. We will of course follow usual safeguarding practices.

1. I am happy for photos, video and audio to be published of the young person in this form whilst undertaking Scouting activities across all channels. This concerns photography, video and audio footage of the young person in this form being published via the following: Group internally controlled publications and communication channels, such as online news, email, websites, newsletters, at the Group meeting place, Group social media channels, Group advertising and/or promotional material including press.

For clarity, if you say ‘no’ to both options, we will endeavour to take no identifiable photos of your children, if you say yes to option one and no to option 2 we may take photos and share ‘Internally’ (see above) , and if you say yes to option 1 and 2 the photos will be shared ‘Internally’ (see above) and more widely in locations the public can see. If you say no to option one and yes to option 2, that must be an error as option 2 covers all options, and we will treat it as such.

**How will leaders take and use pictures?**

1. Leaders are encouraged to take pictures for the purposes of promoting Scouting and communicating with parents and fellow Scouts

2. We will check recorded consents before taking and using any photo or video

3. We will never publish personal details (full name, address, email, etc.) with any photo or video that is used, except with the express permission of parents/guardians

4. We will only use photos/videos of suitably dressed subjects in appropriate situations

5. We will follow the Scout Association’s “Young People First” policy at all times

6. If we or other parents/guardians inadvertently publish material without parental permission on our website or social media channels we will remove it as quickly as possible after it is brought to our attention

**What is the Scout Association’s guidance?**

The Scout Association encourages the use of photography and social networks as ways of publicising Scouting.  Scout Association guidance on photography  Scout association guidance on social media

**How do we monitor this policy?**

Key individuals in the Group, including the Group Scout Leader monitor our social streams to make sure they fit with these policies. We will reserve the power to remove any photographs we deem contravening this policy, inappropriate or unsuitable without notice. We review this policy annually and when a new Group Scout Leader takes over.