

WHAT IS BEAVER SCOUTING?

Beaver Scouts are boys and girls usually aged six, seven and eight years old. They belong to the first and youngest section in the Scouting family. Young people can join Beaver Scouts when they are 6 and can move to the next section, Cub Scouts when they are approaching nine years. Easily recognised by their blue sweatshirts, Beaver Scouts enjoy making friends, playing games, going on visits and helping others. They usually meet together once a week in a Beaver Scout Colony divided into small groups called lodges. In Stillorgan, we have 3 lodges – Cheetahs, Cheeky monkeys and Scorpions.

We organise a sleepover each year. Up till last 2009 these were held indoors but Beaver scouts are now allowed camp out in tents. Often this is the first time a young person spends a night away from home. Our camp is known as Camp on the green and takes place in Stillorgan. For the last 3 years we have taken part in a National camp in Co Kildare and at the Scouting Ireland head quarters in Larch Hill and we will be heading to Swords in 2012.

WHERE DOES BEAVER SCOUTING COME FROM?

Beaver Scouting was officially introduced by the Scout Association in 1986 thanks to many successful trials in the early 1980s. Originating from Northern Ireland and Canada, Beaver Scouting provides an opportunity to experience the adventure that scouting has to offer from as young as 6 years of age. Originally, a young person would have to wait until their eighth birthday before they could join the Scout Movement as a Cub Scout. Through the years, the Scout Association has introduced many ceremonies, parades and activities made specifically for Beaver Scouting. Nowadays, Beaver Scouting is available with Scout Groups opting to start up a colony.

AIM OF BEAVER SCOUTING

The aim of Beaver scouting is to provide a programme of fun, engaging, attractive activities which allows children to discover and develop their own talents. Getting to know other people, learning about them self, exploring the world around them, discovering creative & practical skills, plus discovering beliefs & attitudes are all included. The programme is fulfilled through weekly colony meetings, with each colony taking responsibility for its own activities, but is based around the 8 elements of scouting as laid down by Scouting Ireland and recommended by WOSM (World Organisation of the scout Movement):-

- Law and promise
- Learning by doing
- Small Group System
- Symbolic Framework
- Personal Progression
- Nature & the Outdoors
- Adult Support
- Service and Commitment

BEAVER SCOUTING IN STILLORGAN

Today, there are 16 Beavers in the Stillorgan Colony and there are 3 Colonies in the Dun Laoghaire Scout District. Colonies can be found across the entire country, stretching as far as Cork and Galway. Each colony has its own identity, resources and set of scout leaders. In Stillorgan we have three Beaver Scout Leaders, Karen D'Alton, Stuart Scott and Brenda Sweeney.

COST OF BEAVER SCOUTING

Beaver Scouts membership is usually 100 euro per year, depending on the Scout Group, making it much cheaper than most other children's clubs. This cost covers the membership of Scouting Ireland, hire of hall, weekly meetings and insurance. Camps and trips are additional but are kept as low as possible. E.g. Trip to print museum cost 2 euro plus bus fare.

JOINING A COLONY

If a young person wishes to become a Beaver Scout, their first task is to find a colony they would like to join. Many parents choose a colony based on where they live, what day they meet or the price of the subscription fee. Whatever you decide, it is best to talk to a representative of the colony, such as the Beaver Scout Leader or Group Scout Leader who will advise you on what steps to take next. They may advise that the young person be added to their waiting list if the colony is full at the present time. When a place becomes available, the Beaver

Beaver scouts

Scout Leader of the group will invite the young person to attend their first Beaver Scout meeting. From this point onwards, the young person will work towards becoming a Beaver Scout. At this stage the young person is known as a kit.

INVESTITURE

In order for a young person to become a Beaver Scout, certain requirements must be met. A young person should attend at least six beaver meetings, learn about the people and ceremonies of the colony, know a bit about the history of scouting and have their Beaver sweatshirt. Finally, once all of the criteria are met, a young person will partake in a short investiture ceremony where they must recite the Beaver Promise. They will then be given the group scarf and woggle and officially become a Beaver Scout and a Member of the worldwide Scout Movement.

THE BEAVER SCOUT PROMISE

*I promise to do my best,
To be a good Beaver Scout
To love God and love one another.*

THE BEAVER SCOUT LAW

Beavers have fun, work hard and help their family and friends

BEAVER SCOUT MOTTO

Sharing, Sharing, Sharing

BEAVER SCOUT PRAYER

Dear Lord, Help me to be a good Beaver Scout, always busy and bright. Be with those who are dear to me and help me to do things right

WELCOME TO SCOUTING

Beaver Scouts like to try new activities and be recognised for their achievements. Like the other scouting sections, Beaver Scouts are encouraged to have fun and make friends by helping others, playing games, going outdoors, being creative, acting, singing, chatting and much, much more. Many of the activities carried out in the weekly colony meetings are specially designed to allow Beaver Scouts to demonstrate personal development and creativity, for which they will be awarded with 'badges'. Badges are used to symbolise that a scout has excelled in the tasks assigned to them as acknowledged by Scouting Ireland. There is a total of 9 adventure skill badges with 9 different levels. Also there are 6 spice badges with each one representing a different development quality. When a Beaver earns a badge they can wear it proudly on their sweatshirt.

CHIEF SCOUT BRONZE AWARD

The Chief Scout Bronze Award is the highest badge a Beaver Scout can earn and has been introduced for 2011. It symbolises great achievement in all areas covered in Beaver Scouting.

Mission Statement 2011

Whilst adhering to the rules of Scouting Ireland and accepting their targets as a given we have set the following goals & Targets for Beaver scout section of 3rd Dublin Stillorgan for 2011/2012

Administration

That all rolls/databases/programme planning/financial statements are kept current and that planning for each meeting is maintained as per previous years. That an atmosphere conducive to making friends and enjoyment is maintained and that we also maintain our standards on uniform and cleanliness.

Participation

To participate in at least 1 activity with the Cubs Scout Section.

To maintain the services of a Transition year student.

To help on a project in the community/parish.

To ensure that each child is given the opportunity to attain spices badges to help them achieve at least 3 level 1 Adventure skill badges whilst they are in the Beaver section.

To offer at least 32 meetings per year.

To raise 350 euro through sales of 12 days tickets this year.

To embrace the One Programme.

To ensure investiture of Kits at 6 -8 week mark- even if only 1 to be invested.

To spend at least 1 meeting on cooking.

To ensure at least 1 overnight is offered.

To Improve our link from Beavers to Cubs.

To produce a biannual newsletter.



Beaver Scouts - 3rd Dublin Stillorgan

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The aim of the Beaver Scout Section is:

"The physical, spiritual and mental development of the Beaver scout, through a programme of Learning by doing, fun and enjoyment with an environmental educational theme. Our Core Programme is Exploring The World Around, out of doors (when possible). It is called the One programme and runs from Beaver Scouts all the way to Rover Scouts. It is a well structured programme which encourages teamwork, friendship, self confidence, self-expression, love of the outdoors.

May we again stress that for safety reasons, Beavers scouts **must be** escorted into the parish hall for the start of the meeting each Wednesday (5pm) and at the close of the meeting (6pm), you may wait in the entrance hall of the parish centre so your child may be collected as soon as the meeting ends. Please note that a small part of our weekly meeting will involve an inspection of the Beavers' hands, face and general appearance so try and encourage them to arrive clean!

Please also note that the uniform sweatshirt and trews are available from the

- **Outdoor Adventure Store**, which is at 34/35 Upper Liffey Street. Ph: 8722212
- **The Scout Shop Depot**, Unit 5 Bray South Business Park, Killarney Road, Bray, Co Wicklow Ph:2764428

May we suggest that you wait a couple of weeks before you purchase the uniform in the hope, that your child is enjoying Beavers and does, in fact want to join. We shall be providing the Beavers with a necker and woggle at their investiture ceremony (approximately 6 weeks into the programme) and they must have their uniform by this time. Also we get 10% back on items bought here so please use our rewards card No 3425 627 881 818

The cost of joining Beavers is currently €100 pa. This fee includes insurance and registration with Scouting Ireland and the use of the parish hall.

What you, the parent, can expect from us:

Knowing your child is in a safe and friendly environment, with all the activities geared to the 6-9 year old age range. Our leaders are expected to follow a set training programme to enable them to look to the needs of that particular age group. Our association has a strict child protection policy (available on request) and Leaders Code of Behaviour and all our leaders are thoroughly vetted.

What we expect from you: That your child will attend on time for meetings. When dropping/collecting your child, that you come into the parish hall with/for your child.

In the event of your early arrival - that your child is not left unattended and that they are collected on time after meetings.

That uniform is kept neat and tidy at all times (weekly inspections take place!).

That apart from normal childhood high spirits, that they should obey the Beaver Scouts Code of Conduct. Bad conduct will not be tolerated and as a last resort, parents may be asked to withdraw their child from the Beavers should bad conduct persist.

You should inform the Leader in Charge of any ongoing health problems, allergies or special needs, thus ensuring your child's safety and enjoyment of the programme.

Each child who joins Beavers scouts receives a memory bag, a chart-mapping their achievements and a book on Beaver scouting explaining all the different skills and tasks that they can undertake. These are usually held in the Beaver cupboard, but may go home with a child to show to parents but must be brought back the following week.

We would also ask you to answer email and texts promptly.

At times, your help may be requested and would be very welcome, but we would expect you to attend the AGM, a fund raising evening and assist at the Mayfair in some capacity.

Karen D'Alton

Beaver Scout Leader
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THE BEAVER ANIMAL

The beaver belongs to the very large group of mammals called Rodents or animals which gnaw. They live mainly in North America although there are small numbers in Europe. Many were slaughtered for their fur and for the oily liquid they use to mark their territories. Beaver hunting is now carefully controlled and their numbers are increasing.

They always live in family groups with a mother and father who mate for life. There are three or four kits in each litter. They make their homes by rivers, streams and lakes in forests where there are deciduous trees.



The animals are born engineers. They know instinctively how to cut down a tree and drive stakes into the river to start a dam. During the two years that they stay with their parents they learn even more about the craft of building. When they go off to start their own colonies they can make perfect dams.

Using their sharp chisel-like front teeth and powerful jaw muscles they gnaw right through tree trunks. Big branches are pushed and dragged down to the water. They drive these first stakes in firmly so that the flowing water cannot wash them away. Next they weave smaller logs, branches and twigs across wedging them in tightly. They stuff the gaps with mud and stones, using their big flat tails to slap on even more mud to make the dam watertight. When finished the dam is strong enough for a horse to walk along the top and it holds back an immense amount of water.

The water gradually starts to rise behind the dam. It floods the banks of the stream and forms a pond. This is where the beavers build their home, it is called their lodge, to keep their family safe and well hidden. They start building their lodge by piling up mud and branches until they form an island in the middle of the pond. They cement the outside of their home with mud to make it strong. It has no doorways only one small air hole in the roof. They enter the lodge through a long tunnel under the water.

Their favourite food is fresh bark from trees, branches twigs, leaves and water plants. They prepare for winter by making a store of branches and twigs for food, at the bottom of the pond near their lodge.

Their front feet have strong fingers and claws and are used for digging and for handling logs when building. The beaver uses webbed hind feet to push his body through the water. Two of the claws are split down the middle and are used for combing the fur of their coat which is waterproof and thick to keep out the cold. Their tail is broad and scaly and is used as a rudder when swimming, as a support when climbing trees and to give a warning when danger threatens.

Friends of the Forest –



- A Beaver Story

Chapter 1: Meeting New Friends

Big Brown Beaver had a very important announcement to make. Swimming to the middle of the pond, he slapped his tail on the water three times. Smack! Smack! Smack!

Hearing his sharp signal, all the other beavers in the pond wondered, "What do you suppose is happening?"

From all over the pond, beavers, young and old, swam quickly to Big Brown Beaver. He was such a wise animal, and he knew so much about the forest and the pond. All of the other animals and birds in the forest were his friends.

"Big and little beavers," Big Brown Beaver announced. "Some people have come to live in the clearing along the river bank. Tic Tac, the squirrel, told me they are called the Jones family. They seem very friendly. When I slapped my tail, they all waved to me. If they are to be our friends, we should go and give each of them a forest name."

There was much excitement amongst the beavers as they swam from the pond down the river to the forest clearing where the Jones family lived.

At first, none of the Jones family saw the beavers who were quietly pecking over the side of the river bank. Then, one of the taller people finally noticed the beavers' brown heads and whispered, "I think we have some beaver visitors. Don't turn around too quickly, or we might frighten them away."

The other five family members slowly looked around and saw the beavers watching them. With a big smile, one of the people said, "Didn't I tell you that we would meet new friends in the forest? There must be a beaver colony in the pond near the river."

The beavers watched carefully to see if they could pick a name that would describe each member of the Jones family. Finally, a loud tail smack from Big Brown Beaver signalled that it was time to return to the pond.

Later, as the beavers sat inside their lodge, they began to share everything they had seen at the clearing. They began to suggest their ideas for forest names for the members of the Jones family.

"Beavers, do you remember the tall person who saw us first?" asked Big Brown Beaver. "He must have eyes as sharp as a hawk's. Let's call him 'Hawkeye'."

"Oh, that's a splendid name!" chorused all the other beavers.

Chip and Chatter, the beaver twins, remarked, "When we saw the one who was wearing the clothes of many colours, we thought of the beautiful rainbow that arches over the forest after a rainstorm. Why don't we call her 'Rainbow'?"

"Wonderful!" cheered the Beavers.

"I saw a person who moved by using a chair with wheels. He seemed very clever to be able to do that," observed another beaver.

"Then why don't we call him 'Ringtail' since he's as clever as a racoon," suggested several beavers.

When the smallest beaver began to talk, everyone became quiet and still so they could better hear each of her words. "One of the people had such sparkling eyes, and when she smiled, her smile made me feel so warm and good inside. Could we name her 'Sunshine'?"

"Warm as sunshine," agreed the beavers. "Yes, let's name her that."

"And then there was the person having so much fun splashing her feet in the water," observed one of the beavers. "We could call her 'Bubbles'."

"Yes, yes. And don't forget the one whose hair was the colour of a red fox," shouted yet another beaver. "He could be called 'Rusty'."

And so it was that the pond's beavers named the people in the Jones family so they could be friends of the forest.

