



Strategic Objective

At The Yard we aim to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and well. We believe that by promoting positive relationships, everyone will be able to participate and experience fun and friendships in a safe and warm environment. Through this policy we aim to support everyone's right to membership at The Yard.

General Statement and Principles

The Yard recognises that there may be circumstances where members of the organisation are unable to meet the financial commitments to maintain their membership, but their participation would be of significant benefit. This policy outlines the framework for handling and supporting those cases. They are always considered on a case-by-case basis, and only where sufficient funds are available.

Target Audience

Parents, Carers, and the staff who support them

Responsibilities

The Chief Executive is responsible for this policy. The Service Manager (Holiday & Family Support) is responsible for annual review or earlier if any amendments are required.

Arrangements

If a child or young person's parent or carer approaches a staff member looking for information regarding the Membership Assistance Policy, or how it works, the staff member should refer them to the relevant Service Manager. They will arrange for a discussion with the parents/carers.

Unlike many services that our families will access, we do not require referral or assessment. Therefore, decisions are made on a case by case basis. They will be made using information such as the personal circumstances of the family, eligibility for free school meals, or other support available. Final approval requires the agreement of two members of the Senior Management Team (SMT).

The total amount available for support (known as the Membership Assistance Fund) in a given year is set at the start of the financial year. The SMT will not allocate support beyond this total. Any request for further support must be agreed by a member of the Executive team.

The primary consideration must always be the wellbeing of the child or young person.

Should it be agreed that support can be provided, the following process will ordinarily be followed:

- The Yard will provide full or partial payment of membership fees for either 12 months, or arrange for the membership fees to be waived
- After this time, the situation will be reassessed, and a decision made as to whether the fees are now due by the family, or if the assistance is to continue

If the member is not eligible or is no longer eligible, The Yard team will help the member's family to find other means of paying the fees, such as using Self Directed Support (SDS) or the Independent Living Fund (ILF).

Information relating to individual hardship cases will be treated as strictly confidential, and in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

Records

Evidence of eligibility or information regarding membership assistance will be kept securely, and only those who are responsible for assessing and administering will have access to it

Support Resources and References (if applicable)

The Yard may use the [Scottish free school meal criteria](#) as one of the ways to assert eligibility. This provides an independent, known benchmark as a guideline.

| Links to other policies | | 03. Young Adventurer Membership Policy 07. Parents Charter Policy 08. Data Protection Policy 18. Equality and Diversity Policy | | | |
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| Policy No. | Status (Draft/Approved) | Version (M.m) | Approval date | Approved by | Review Date |
| 31 | Approved | 1.0 | August 2019 | | + 2 years |
| | Draft | 1.1 | January 2024 | | +2 years |