



STEVENAGE SCOUTS

Website : www.stevenagescouting.org.uk

Neil Ravilious
Programme team Lead
17 Halls Green, Weston, Hitchin, Hertfordshire. SG4 7DR
Tel : 01462 790921
Email : scouts@stevenagescouting.org.uk



DISTRICT COOKING COMPETITION

Sunday 1st February 2026

District Scout HQ, Poplars

Team Information

Theme

Teams should follow the theme "School Dinners". Bring back the classics—reinvented, reimagined, or hilariously nostalgic!, as chosen for the County event. Teams should try and avoid dehydrated foods, readymade sauces, tins where fresh ingredients could be used etc. There may be some guidance notes provided on the County website should you wish to check. Additional points may also be awarded for locally sourced ingredients.

Menu Requirements

A three-course meal is to be prepared for a patrol of 4 people [and a **small** taster portion for judging], with a maximum budget of £25, (points will be deducted for exceeding the budget). Any items including meat, fish, vegetables and fruit may be used so long as the budget is not exceeded. Extra points will be awarded for items prepared 'from scratch', (e.g. sauce from basic ingredients, not a jar).

- **There are NO set ingredients.**
- Drinks to be served during the meal do not need to be include in the budget.
- Small quantities of normal pantry items (supplied by the team) will be allowed in addition to costed ingredients (e.g. flour, herbs, spices, oil, vinegar, sugar and butter).

The meal is to be prepared using equipment which may be found in an average camp kitchen, i.e. with limited portable equipment, see the equipment list below, if in doubt ask the organiser. Basically, if it includes an electric plug, you can't use it, otherwise you probably can! As always, common sense will prevail!

A menu and costing with receipts (with team name clearly written on) should be handed in at check-in. The method of cooking, table setting and the appearance of the meal will be judged according to the attached criteria. After final judging and tasting, the team will eat the meal. Hot water will be provided for washing up.

Kit List:

Each team should only bring the following equipment:

- Gas cooker with two rings, grill and a gas bottle (in date gas pipe)
- No oven! No other heat sources.
- 1 set of billies (large, medium and small)
- 1x1 gallon dixie
- 2 mixing bowls
- 2 washing up bowls/buckets and tea towels
- Cutlery, crockery and glassware
- No electrical equipment to be used!

- 2 tables will be provided – teams should not bring extra tables (there is not enough space.)
- 1 frying pan or wok
- 1 water container
- Cooking utensils (peeler, knives, grater, whisk, etc).
- Table decorations, linen, cruet, etc.
- Chopping boards
- Common sense with regards to equipment applies; will it fit in a patrol box to take it on camp?
- **FIRST AID KIT**

Marking Schedule:

MENU AND COSTINGS		
Menu presentation and layout, creativity and use of theme. Menu composition, ingredient compatibility and costings.	<p>Presentation and layout 5/20 Spelling, size and style of menu, explanation of dishes Creativity in presentation</p> <p>Composition and harmony of ingredients 10/20 Understanding of meal planning Are the courses balanced in nutrition, texture, flavour and colour Do the courses reflect their description and are the ingredients proportionally balanced according to the given descriptions Do the ingredients compliment each other in colour, flavour and texture? Are they compatible matchings? Complexity of courses balance of how the menu flows as one unit – balance of ingredients between courses, courses that compliment each other Correct and imaginative use of ingredients</p> <p>Use of theme 5/20 Creativity within in menu composition Application of theme to menu composition</p>	20
Budget and costings	<p>Budget 10/20 1 point deducted per 50p spent over £25, e.g. £27 spent = 6 points, £30+ = 0 points.</p> <p>Costings 10/20 Costings for each course/ recipe should be provided on a separate sheet</p>	20
TEAM WORK, HYGIENE AND COOKING		
Team dress	Full uniform Neat, smart, well-groomed personal appearance Dressed appropriately and hygienically	5
Team work and participation	Leadership, work allocation, planning, organisation and methods. Everyone involved is actively engaged throughout the morning. All team members contribute to discussion with judges	10
Food preparation, cleanliness and safety	<p>Use and proper execution of techniques 10/20 Good knife skills and resulting uniformity of ingredients Correct preparation Knowledge and precision of skills displayed Appropriate use of utensils for the right tasks Use of worktop and kitchen space - work flow</p>	20

	<p>Organisation – sanitation and work habits 5/20 Safe hygienic practice. Safe working area and use of equipment. First Aid kit</p> <p>Proper use of equipment 5/20 Kitchen knives should be sharp – 5 points will be deducted per blunt knife deduction</p> <p>Difficulty Extra points will be awarded at the judges discretion for the amount of work required in order to prepare the menu</p>	
'Home cooking'	Extra points will be awarded at the judges' discretion for meals prepared from basic ingredients, e.g. rice pudding, curry not from a jar.	25
TABLE LAYOUT		
Table setting and theme	<p>Table layout and visual appearance 5/10 Attractive/ creative use of colour and materials etc Appropriate to menu and theme Suitable arrangement of dishes, cutlery, linen etc. Centrepiece (if used) appropriate to social eating All components present including menu Salt, pepper and other condiments relevant to meal Suitability of occasion and theme</p> <p>Use of theme in table setting and food 5/10 How much originality and effort has been put into the development of the theme through the table setting and courses? Eye appeal – original in design, uniqueness, appropriate to theme Creativity – interpretation of theme and originality</p>	10
FOOD AND TIMINGS		
Timing, service and appearance. Presentation and serving methods, portion size and balance.	<p>Timing/ Use of allotted time 5/20 Timings sheet provided All courses served on time ½ point deducted for each minute late</p> <p>Presentation of courses 10/20 Food is served correctly and at a pleasing temperature, including the judges sample? Each dish looks appetising and tempts the eater - dishes are fresh and colourful. Team members can accurately inform the judges of how each dish has been made and which techniques they have used Presentation is stylish but practical Originality – does the dish look particularly great, does it have flair, good height, colour and a strong appeal? Is the plate in proportion and of appropriate size for the type of course?</p> <p>Portion size and balance/ layout of plate 5/20 Items are closely placed in order to maintain temperature Proteins, carbohydrates and vegetables are appropriately balanced Dishes include a variety of colours</p>	20

Chef's Palate – Starter	<p>All three courses will be judged separately to a maximum of 20 points using the following criteria:</p> <p>All menu requirements met The dish contains all of the elements as detailed on the menu. Specified major ingredients are of largest proportion on plates.</p> <p>Complexity of dish</p> <p>Taste/ Flavour: Flavors are pleasing, consistent and appropriate to the dish Individual components are cooked correctly Specified major ingredients carry the dominant flavours Components fit together and flavours compliment each other Aroma of the dish is pleasant and tempts the diner Dishes use natural food flavour Points will be deducted for rancid/ off flavors, flavours that are out of place, unnatural food colours and missing ingredients.</p>	20
Chef's Palate – Main course	<p>Seasoning: Accompanying sauces etc. compliment the relevant components Flavours are seasoned to draw out their flavour and compliment each other without particular flavours being too strong</p>	20
Chef's Palate – Sweet	<p>Texture: Plate is sufficiently varied in texture in order to keep the diner's interest Textures reflect the cooking technique Components are of the correct consistency The dish provides a variety of textures Meats should be tender and easy to chew. They should be free of gristle and full of flavor. Fish should be flaky and moist.</p> <p>Colour: All components are appetising in colour Cooking is even, resulting in a uniform color and surface texture Points will be deducted for spotty cooking, burned spots, undercooked/ raw, tough, soggy, brittle or crumbling dishes</p>	20
Quantity of food	Enough food is cooked to feed four people and provide a tasting sample for the judge (not a whole plate). Wasted food will incur penalty points.	20

Total: 205

Additional Guidance

The following terms will be used when describing the team's work within feedback and applies to a range of points that will have been awarded:

Description	Out of 5	Out of 10	Out of 15
Excellent	4-5	8-10	12-15
Good	3	5-7	8-11
Fair	1-2	2-4	3-7
Needs Improvement	0	0-1	0-3

- It would be helpful if teams could provide their menus, timings (a timed breakdown of their preparation time), recipes and costings in advance of the morning to allow the judges' time to consider them properly – it is very

rushed during the morning itself. Costings should be calculated using the full sales price as special offers are not permanent and therefore do not give accurate costings for a meal. However, this does not mean that you can't take advantage of them when purchasing your food!

- Judges taster portions should be of similar proportions to the team member's main plates, and should be served alongside one team member's portion so that balance of plate and presentation can be marked.
- All team members should eat all components of their menu
- Scouts should be collected at 2:15pm

Uniform:

Scouts are expected to attend wearing full scouting uniform i.e. Scout activity trousers/ smart (school) trousers or similar, smart clean school shoes, scout shirt (tucked in), woggle and group scarf (ironed, correctly rolled and worn properly).

Calculating costings

This has very rarely been provided by teams in the past and therefore we are providing the instructions for how to calculate menu costings. Costings will need to be provided for each dish served.

1. Gather purchasing receipts and each recipe.
2. List the ingredients required for each recipe in a single column table (example of full table provided).
3. Add extra columns to the right – quantity of each ingredient required for recipe, cost of ingredients serving (approximate depending on how they might be measured), cost of amount of ingredients required for recipe.
4. Use your recipe to determine the quantity of each ingredient on your list and write it in the second column in the table.
5. Break down the cost of a product for each individual item and write it in the cost of individual ingredients column. You may need to research and estimate the purchase price of your store cupboard ingredients as you will not have the receipt.
6. Multiply the cost of an individual ingredient item by the amount required for the recipe and write this in the cost of amount of ingredients required for recipe column.
7. Add the recipe cost numbers together to find out the total recipe cost.
8. Divide the total recipe cost by the number of servings yielded to find out the serving cost.

Recipe	
Servings	

Ingredients	Quantity required	Ingredient serving cost	Amount required for recipe cost
		Total recipe cost	
		Portion cost	

Example:

Recipe	Lasagne, served with garlic bread and green salad
Servings	6

Ingredients	Quantity required	Ingredient serving cost	Amount required for recipe cost
Olive oil	2 tbsp (50g)	$0.13 / 4 = 0.032\text{p per } 25\text{g}$	$0.032 \times 2 = 0.064$
Minced beef	900g	$7.4 / 10 = 0.74\text{p per } 100\text{g}$	$0.74 \times 9 = 6.66$
Onions	2	$0.8 / 10 = 0.08 \text{ per } 100\text{g}$	$0.08 \times 1.5 = 0.12$
Celery	4 sticks	0.18 per 100g	0.18
Garlic	8 cloves	0.3 per bulb	$0.3 / 2 = 0.15$
Plain flour	100g	$0.53 / 10 = 0.05 \text{ per } 100\text{g}$	0.05
Beef stock	150ml	$0.65 / 10 = 0.065 \text{ per } 10\text{g}$	0.065
Sugar	1 tsp	$1.35 / 10 = 13.5\text{p per } 100\text{g}$ $13.5 / 20 = 0.01 \text{ per } 5\text{g}$	0.01
Tomato puree	3 tbsp	$0.5 / 8 = 0.06 \text{ per } 25\text{g}$	$0.06 \times 3 = 0.18$
Chopped thyme	1 tbsp	$0.56 / 2 = 0.28 \text{ per } 5\text{g}$	0.28
Chopped tomatoes	2 tins	0.5 per tin	$0.5 \times 2 = 1.00$
Butter	300g	$3.8 / 10 = 0.38 \text{ per } 100\text{g}$	$0.38 \times 3 = 1.14$
Milk	750ml	$0.78 / 10 = 0.08 \text{ per } 100\text{ml}$	$0.08 \times 7.5 = 0.6$
Mustard	2 tsp	$0.38 / 20 = 0.02 \text{ per } 5\text{g}$	$0.02 \times 2 = 0.04$
Parmesan cheese	50g	$17.33 / 10 = 1.73 \text{ per } 100\text{g}$	$1.73 / 2 = 0.865$
Salt and pepper		~0.01	0.01
Lasagne sheets	10/ 12 sheets	$0.65 / 5 = 0.13 \text{ per } 100\text{g}$	$0.13 \times 2.5 = 0.325$
Cheddar cheese	75g	$7.96 / 10 = 0.8 \text{ per } 100\text{g}$	$0.8 \times 0.75 = 0.6$
White baguette	1 whole	0.80 per baguette	0.80
Salad leaves	2 bags	1.75 per bag	$1.75 \times 2 = 3.5$
		Total recipe cost	£16.639
		Portion cost	£2.77