

Special Needs

Essential Information for Adult Leaders in East Lancashire



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Introduction

Currently, throughout the County of East Lancashire there are many young people with Special Needs enjoying the Experience of Scouting and many examples of good practice of their integration into a variety of Scout groups.

From time to time though, Adult Leaders maybe faced with a challenge, and do not know where to turn or what to do. The aim of this booklet is to try and answer some of the initial questions.

What is Special Needs?

A special need is any disability, medical condition or personal situation that may make it more difficult for a young person or adult to participate fully in Scouting. It may be short-term, such as a broken leg, or it may be more permanent, such as chronic asthma or cerebral palsy. Some special needs may not always be obvious at first sight - these include specific learning difficulties, autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Fact-sheets on a range of disabilities, medical conditions and other special needs are available to download at www.scouts.org.uk/specialneeds or from the Scout Information Centre on 0845 300 1818.

What is the Scout Association's Policy?

“No young person should receive less favourable treatment on the basis of, nor suffer disadvantage by reason of mental or physical ability;

All Members of the Movement should seek to practise that equality, especially in promoting access to Scouting for young people in all parts of society.” Policy, organisation and rules – **The Scout Association.**

It recognises that some young people have special needs and may require extra resources in terms of appropriate programme support and equipment to enable them to develop to their full potential. Wherever possible, it is the Scout Association's policy to include young people with special needs into mainstream Scouting.

What do I do before the Young Person joins?

1. Make a home visit and ensure that you ask questions which will help you in the role of leader.
2. Talk to the young person, the parent(s), carer(s) or social worker to find out more about his or her abilities, health needs and medication.
3. Find out what level of Personal Care, if any will be required.
4. Find out what your Leadership team will need to do in the case of an emergency.
5. Consider whether you have enough adult Leaders or supporters to include the young person in the section and its activities. This may be a parent helper, Young Leader or Fellowship member.
6. Ensure you consult your Leadership team before offering a place.
7. Assess whether your meeting place is accessible and suitable. Carry out a Scouting risk assessment in order to ascertain this.
8. Carry out a Risk Assessment specific to that child and their disability. You need to cover all apparent risk. If you cannot remove the risk you cannot offer a place.
9. Talk with your Group leaders/helpers and address their concerns.
10. Consider a trial period but do not delay investiture and review the placement annually and address any problems that rise instantly.
11. Do not make promises that you cannot keep.

If you decide that your Group **can** offer inclusive Scouting to the young person, it's important to discuss this with the members of your Section to make sure they are prepared and ready to welcome him or her.

If you decide that your Group **cannot** offer the young person the Scouting that they needs, then you must offer an alternative. There may be another Group nearby that is able to offer a place. Contact the County Advisor for Special Needs if you require further advice or support. You can do this by e-mail: michelle.iddon@eastlancashirescouts.org.uk.

How do I adapt the Programme?

Programmes need to be designed with flexibility in order to meet the needs of all the young people in the group. At times, it may have to be adapted to meet the individual needs of a specific child to allow inclusion.

The only exception to this is where there are safety requirements or when a specific level of knowledge could be assumed from holding an award (such as an Emergency Aid Badge).

If a particular activity within a Scout Group cannot be offered to a young person with special needs, it might be possible for the activity to be done at home with the support of parent(s) or carer(s). Alternatively another Group or the District may be able to make provision within their programme.

When considering how to deliver the Programme think of the young person and their particular abilities. The following general advice may be helpful:

- 1.** Structure the programme to include a variety of activities. Include plenty of short tasks or games. Break down long tasks into manageable chunks.
- 2.** Keep the instructions to activities clear and concise. Demonstrate or use pictures, as this can be easier to understand for some young people.
- 3.** If a young person uses a wheelchair or has mobility problems, do not use him or her as the referee or a goalpost during games or activities; help him or her to participate as fully as possible.
- 4.** Don't worry if the young person cannot fully take part in **all** activities, they will still enjoy being part of the group. If your programme is balanced then there will always be activities and events that all young people can participate in and enjoy.
- 5.** Where an individual has difficulty reading or writing, provide an opportunity to use alternative means of communication such as a tape recorder, an audio programme on a laptop computer, or even someone else acting as a scribe.
- 6.** Take account of the differences that occur in size, strength and physical ability within a peer group.

7. Remember the County Team of Advisers are there to help you on adapting the programme to meet the requirements of your young people.

Is your Headquarters suitable?

It is important to ascertain whether your headquarters will meet the individual needs of the young person. It is advised that you carry out an Access Audit and decide the suitability of the venue.

You will need to consider:-

- A. Parking Close
- B. Pathways accessible
- C. Steps / Ramp
- D. Alternative to stairs
- E. Wide doorway / entrances
- F. Suitable Toilet access
- G. Equipment e.g. table height
- H. Adequate Lighting/Acoustics/Information Displays

Remember that if any alterations have to be carried out that funding can be obtained to meet the costs. E.g. Special Needs Fund from Scout Headquarters.

Access Audits have been produced by:-

- Berkshire Scout Association
- East Lancashire Scout Association
- Kent Scout Association
- Surrey Scout Association

Age Range Flexibility (Special Needs)

There maybe occasions when it will be appropriate to extend the time of a young person in specific section. It should only be implemented after

relevant consideration and obtaining the appropriate approval. It has to be remembered that in all cases the best interests of the young person are of paramount importance.

The following guidelines are to provide support for Leaders and Commissioners when dealing with young people with specific needs as it involves the appropriate County Advisor for Special Needs at an early stage and requires a formal review on a regular basis.

Individual Members

The District Commissioner may permit a young person to be in a Section outside of the normal age range, due to a young person's specific needs, on the recommendation of the County Advisor for Special Needs. This permission should be logged on a simple form and be subject to annual review.

A request to use this flexibility to meet the needs of an individual should be made in time for the necessary consultation to take place, before a decision has to be reached.

The permission given by District Commissioners should be based on the intellectual ability or physical needs of the young person concerned, along with the needs of the other young people in the Section.

The decision will be taken at the discretion of the District Commissioner on the recommendation of the County Advisor for Special Needs following the considered proposal of the Section Leader and Group Scout Leader of the Group concerned.

Wherever possible, the District Commissioner and the County Advisor (Special Needs) to meet the young person concerned, and their parents or guardians, as part of any consultation.

Once a decision has been made, the DC should advise the Group and Section Leader using the form and stating the date of the agreed review date. The permission should be for a fixed timescale requiring renewal on at a maximum, an annual basis; it is not considered likely that an extension beyond a year would be appropriate except in exceptional circumstances.

Factsheet FS250045, which can be obtained via the Internet or from the Resource Centre at Gilwell, should be completed and forwarded to the ACC Special Needs

What do I need to know about Medicines and Personal Care?

When delivering some appropriate medical or nursing care of a more personal nature you will need to protect both your Members and your Leaders/Helpers.

You also need to ensure that you and other Leaders are protected and safeguarded by following a few simple, common sense guidelines. Compliance with The Association's policy is paramount and the **Young People First** code of practice must be strictly followed by all Leaders, Helpers and Instructors.

All Leaders, Helpers and Instructors must be aware of Child Protection issues and the rights of the individual (child or adult), to privacy and dignity.

It may sometimes be necessary for people to do things of a personal nature for individuals, particularly if they have physical or learning disabilities. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents. In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help parents should be fully informed.

These essential guidelines are worth agreeing with all those who help with your Group:

- Prior to any personal care tasks being undertaken the Leader must get approval from parents or guardian regarding the level of personal care they are allowed to give and in what circumstances.
- Seek training and advice on how to undertake the personal care - this would be best obtained from the parents, guardian or carer.
- Leaders should ensure the Member is given privacy and treated with dignity while tasks of a personal nature are carried out. Total confidentiality must be maintained.
- Agree with the parents/guardian who is able to undertake personal care - you must not let anyone not approved perform the duties.
- Personal care should not be undertaken by someone who is inexperienced and who does not have the express permission of the Leader.

- Keep other Leaders informed where you are and what you are doing - do not leave yourself open to question.
- Record any personal care tasks undertaken giving time, date, function and if there were any problems - the parents/guardian may need this information.
- Giving of medication should only be undertaken under strict instructions from the parents/guardian - and only given by a Leader with the appropriate expertise and who has been designated for the task.
- Record any medication given - date, time, who gave it.

Ensure everyone concerned knows what to do in cases of 'anticipated emergencies' such as when a 'hypo' occurs and be aware of any 'warning signals' which the individual gets. Make sure that any emergency supplies e.g. biscuits, are accessible and their storage place is known.

Hyperglycaemic (too much sugar in blood) condition can be confused with hypoglycaemic (too little sugar in blood) condition in an emergency situation. The two conditions require different treatment.

- **Never administer aspirin to any child under 16 unless prescribed by a doctor.**

The Use of Epipens

Epipens are used to administer a dose of Adrenaline to a patient in the event of an Anaphylactic Shock.

You need to know what to do to safeguard yourselves in the event you have to use an Epipen, using the guidelines below;

Never accept an Epipen from a parent or carer unless;

1. Leaders / Helpers must know exactly which child owns that Epipen. Their name should be on it or its container, together with the instructions for use.
2. At least 3 people have been trained to use THAT Epipen on THAT child by the parent or carer and,
3. A written record of that training exists, signed by that parent or carer.
4. A written record must also be made in your HQ Accident Book if an Epipen has been used to treat a child.

IN THE EVENT YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE CHILD WITH AN EPIPEN IN YOUR SECTION YOU MUST FOLLOW THE ABOVE GUIDELINES FOR EACH CHILD.

YOU MAY NOT USE THE EPIPEN FOR ONE CHILD ON ANY OTHER.

Also remember that an Epipen only buys you time, it is not a cure and medical help MUST be sought immediately. You must also contact the relevant Parent / Carer.

What happens if things aren't working out?

If a particular situation doesn't seem to be working, it does not necessarily mean that Scouting is not for that young person. He or she may not be ready for Scouting just yet – in which case a break or two or three months may be the answer. This needs to be agreed with the young person and his or her parent(s) or carer(s).

If things still do not work out, the Section Leaders feel out of their depth, or the young person with special needs is not included in activities, then it may be that your Group is just not right for him or her. This is not a necessarily reflection on you or your Group and it does not mean the end of Scouting for him or her. There may be a Group that is more suitable: discuss it with the County Special Needs Team before making a final decision.

How do I deal with Challenging Behaviour?

Problem behaviours beyond the odd 'bad night' can take many forms. It may be harmless, irritating, attention seeking, bullying (including names calling, intimidation and excluding others from joining in), physically or verbally aggressive behaviour, violence or even sexual harassment. None of these are acceptable and will need the whole leadership team will need to discuss and decide on the best approach.

Some behaviour problems arise from known medical conditions requiring particular support for the Member concerned. They may be on medication or a specific behaviour programme and you will need to discuss this with those involved outside meetings. A consistent approach will reap the best rewards with clear boundaries set and adhered to.

Planning ahead

Before an incident arises you may want to discuss a number of questions with your team, such as:

- When does the level of naughtiness become unacceptable?
- Does the structure of the meeting allow problems to develop?
- How does body language or general attitude of the adults affect behaviour?
- Should Leaders be expected to tolerate persistent bad behaviour?

- If the causes are outside our control, what can we honestly influence during 1-2 hours a week?
- What steps are available to help with control?
- What is the final resort with regards to behaviours we cannot do anything about?

A Plan of Action

Plan a number of steps.

1. Sitting a child out – Remember you must be able to see them
2. Ensure the young people know what good behaviour looks like, sounds like and feels like
3. Watch out for boredom

Taking action

- Try to stay cool, calm and collected.
- Take positive action
- Ask a group or individual to sit down
- Talk quietly to the young person
- Use a broken record
- Listen to all sides
- Highlight safety issues
- Keep personal space
- Review incident when calm
- Introduce a code of conduct

The Gateway Award

For many years, The Gateway Award has been an alternative for young people unable to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme. The Award can be undertaken from age 13 onwards and there is no upper age limit. The Award provides participants with the opportunity to complete all three Awards (Bronze, Silver and Gold) at their own pace and at a level appropriate to each person's ability. A Junior Award is available as a separate section for those aged 8-13. To find out more, contact the Scout Information Centre (0845 300 1818) or County Adviser for Special Needs.

East Lancashire Scout Association Requirements for Special Needs

Training

As part of Leader Training all Leaders are required to complete Module 36 (Special Needs) and Module 15 Challenging behaviour.

Registration of Young Person with Special Needs

In order for the Special Needs Advisor to offer support to groups with young people with in Special Needs in them, we ask that Leaders fill in the registration form (downloadable from the County Website) and send it to the County Adviser. The Adviser will be able to obtain information, support and resources for the Specific Group to help provide an enjoyable experience of Scouting.

Communication Passport

How many time have you been on an event and you have had to have specific children with you because of their individual needs. The communication passport is a card which a young person can carry at events and hand in to a Leader of a specific base, in order to inform them of any need they may specifically have.

The Individual need of the child maybe behavioural, medical or a specific Special Need which is recorded on the card, along with the Group Leaders name and contact number. This allows the Young Person freedom to enjoy the activities but also making sure everybody that has contact with them is aware of any need that may effect their participation in an a specific activity.

Where do I go for help?

The County Advisor for Special needs is available to help and support Leaders and groups with young people with Special Needs. The Advisor can be contacted at michelle.iddon@eastlancashirescouts.org.uk .

Resources Available to Leaders

Websites

www.scouts.org.uk/specialneeds

www.surrey-scouts.org.uk

www.kentscouts.org.uk

www.berkshirescouts.org.uk

www.eastlancashirescouts.org.uk

<http://www.scouts.org.uk/cms.php?pageid=921> Challenging behaviour

www.scouts.org.uk/bullying/

www.youngminds.org.uk/

Email Support

County Advisor for Special Needs –

michelle.iddon@eastlancashirescouts.org.uk

Scout Information Centre – info.centre@scout.org.uk

Headquarters Special Needs Team - special.needs@scout.org.uk

Booklets and factsheets

Deaf Scouting - www.scouts.org.uk/deaffriendly

Promise in Makaton – Beaver, Cub and Scout

Widget Promises – Beaver, Cub and Scout

[FS185090](#) *Managing Behaviour*

[FS315066](#) *Promoting Good Behaviour in the Scout Troop*

[FS250009](#) *Diabetes*

[FS250010](#) *Bedwetting and Incontinence*

[FS250011](#) *Epilepsy*

[FS250012](#) *Dyslexia*

[FS250014](#) *Visual Impairment*

[FS250015](#) *Hearing Impairment*

[FS250016](#) *Clumsiness*

[FS250018](#) *Asthma*

[FS250019](#) *Bereavement*

[FS250024](#) *Acts of Worship and Prayers on the Theme of Everyone is Special*

[FS250025](#) *Autism and Asperger Syndrome*

[FS250027](#) *Cerebral Palsy*

[FS250030](#) *Down's Syndrome*

[FS250032](#) *Dyspraxia*

[FS250034](#) *Juvenile Arthritis*

[FS250035](#) *Literacy and Scouting*

[FS250036](#) *Toilets*

[FS250037](#) *Hyperactivity*
[FS250040](#) *Stoma*
[FS250041](#) *Muscular Dystrophy & Muscular Atrophy*
[FS250043](#) *Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus*
[FS250044](#) *Eating Disorders*
[FS250045](#) *DC Guidelines - Age Ranges Flexibility (Special Needs)*
[FS250046](#) *Special Needs Resources and Useful Contacts*
[FS250047](#) *The Gateway Award*
[FS250048](#) *Transport and Mobility*
[FS250051](#) *Allergies*
[FS250053](#) *The Promise and Programme - Flexibility for those with Special Needs*
[FS250054](#) *What are Special Needs?*
[FS250055](#) *Tourette Syndrome*
[FS250056](#) *Learning difficulties*
[FS250058](#) *Young carers*
[FS250059](#) *Self Harm*
[FS250060](#) *Speech, Language and Communication Impairments*
[FS250061](#) *Successfully Including the Scout with Special Needs*
[FS250062](#) *Accessibility Guidelines for Written Resources*
[FS250063](#) *Migraine in Children and Young People*

[FS270002](#) *Disabled Access to Buildings*

[FS322100](#) *Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD or ADD)*

[FS322101](#) *Appropriate Medical Care*

Acknowledgements

Surrey Scouts Special Needs Team – Handbook for Leaders and Helpers
Kent Scouts – Special Needs: Essential Information for Adult Leaders in Kent
Scout Information Centre – Special Needs Factsheets