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Additional Needs (AN) Policy & Procedure

Part A: Policy

1. Introduction

This document sets out 1st Linslade Scout Group’s commitment to:

- Uphold the [Fundamental Values of Scouting](#).
- Work closely with parents/carers of young people with additional needs (AN)
- Ensure Leaders (who are volunteers) are fully supported in their role

A summary of the Scout Association’s policies relating to working with young people with AN is outlined below together with a description of how 1st Linslade Scout Group will put these policies into practice. Useful resources for parents/carers and section leaders are also signposted within this guidance.

Although this document provides general guidance and advice, each case will be assessed on its own merits.

2. Equal Opportunities

The Scout Association’s [‘Policy, Organisation and Rules’ \(POR\)](#) outlines the Scout Association’s commitment to equal opportunities. The Equal Opportunities Policy (Chapter 2.1, POR) states:

*“The Scout Association is committed to equality of opportunity for all young people”.
 “Accordingly, the Scout Association is committed to extending the Scouts, its Purpose and Method to young people in all parts of society” “No young person should receive less favourable treatment on the basis of, or suffer disadvantage harassment or discrimination by reason of:*

- Class or socio-economic status
- ethnic or national origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race
- gender (including gender reassignment)
- marital or civil partnership status
- sexual orientation
- disability
- political belief

- pregnancy and maternity
- religion, belief or faith (including the absence of religion, belief or faith)
- sex
- age”

3. Adapting the programme to accommodate Young People with AN (Reasonable Adjustments)

The word ‘programme’ in Scouting refers to the range of activities, challenges and experiences that young people can enjoy in Scouting. The programme of activities is planned by the leadership team in partnership with young people.

As required by the Equal Opportunities Policy, young people must be treated as individuals. They must be regarded equally as members of the movement, whatever their abilities or disabilities. Some young people have AN and require extra resources in terms of appropriate programme and equipment to enable them to develop their full potential (POR Chapter 4.2.3).

There are grants available to support young people and adults with additional needs. These grants can cover things, such as costs of equipment, training or service.

Reasonable Adjustments

Scout units must make reasonable adjustments to support the full participation of young people with AN, disabilities or life-limiting conditions (POR Chapter 4.6.7).

Is defined in the POR (Chapter 2.1.2), Reasonable adjustments means “*actions to enable young people with disabilities to access the Scouts and scouting activities, as far as reasonably possible, to the same level as young people without disabilities. This should involve working in partnership with parents/carers to identify needs and support strategies.*”

4. Additional Needs and Inclusion

There’s a lot of flexibility within the Scouts programme to meet individual needs, whether that be a disability, neurodiversity, or an educational, mental health or medical need. Reasonable steps should be taken to identify any young people with disabilities.

[See Supporting Those with Additional Needs and Neurodiversity Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers](#)

It may be possible to make changes to the programme to accommodate the needs of a young person, including:

- the physical environment (e.g. the meeting place)

- the way things are done (e.g. age range flexibility, badge requirements, routines, and ceremonies)
- the support provided to the individual (e.g. equipment, adapting communication, the level of support)

What is reasonable for the Scout Group is dependent upon the effectiveness of the adjustment, whether it can actually be done, the cost and the resources of the Group at that time.

What is reasonable?

Reasonable adjustments should, as far as reasonably possible, remove or reduce the disadvantage faced by Scouts being inclusive to disabled young people. Guidance is included in [Reasonable Adjustments](#)

Reasonable adjustments is a legal term which recognises that each group will have different practical resources to meet the needs of an individual young person.

The capacity of the leadership team to provide Scouting safely is of utmost importance when determining whether an adjustment is reasonable.

Due consideration will be given to the maximum number of young people with additional needs per section.

The GSL may refuse to admit a young person, or to allow the young person to continue with the Group, if the GSL has concerns that the safety or welfare of the young person, or others, (e.g. other young people, Leaders, adults or members of the public), could be at risk. In these circumstances, the matter may be referred to the District Commissioner.

Scouts is delivered by adult volunteers and is not a statutory provision (such as the education system).

Scouts does not have a statutory obligation to provide 1:1 support for a young person to access Scouts on a regular basis. If there is capacity within the Group to provide additional support this will be offered, however, where a 1:1 is required on a regular basis, it will be the responsibility of a parent/ carer to provide or source the required support. Where a young person is supported to access Scouts by a professional carer provided (for example, by the local authority, or another charity), then the Group will work with the parent or carer and supporter to plan and agree how this'll work in practice.

5. Role of parents / carers

Parents/carers of young people with additional needs should disclose this when completing the membership registration form. They will need to work closely with the Group Scout Leader (GSL) and Leaders to understand the additional needs of the young person and the reasonable adjustments that may be possible.

Parents/carers should be aware that there may be situations where 1st Linslade Scout Group does not have the capacity or resources to meet the needs of a young person or to make the adjustments necessary. In such instances the GSL will refer the parents/carers to the District or County Commissioner to discuss potential alternatives.

When this AN policy is enacted (see section 7), the GSL will discuss the situation with the parents/carers of the young person. If the parents/carers do not accept the need for a 'Needs and Capability Assessment', the GSL will refer the matter to the District Commissioner.

6. Adapting the Programme

There are useful resources for section leaders around age range flexibility and adapting the programme (including badge and award requirements) on the Scout Association's website. In addition, The Bedfordshire County Training Team should be contacted for support / resources where available.

7. Triggering the Policy

This Additional Needs (AN) policy may be triggered if:

- a) There is a Notification of Additional Needs by a Parent / Carer either:
 - Via the initial Application Form when joining the Group
 - After the Young Person has joined the Group or
- b) There is a Notification by a Leader or other Adult involved in the Group following concerns

The flowchart (Annex 1) outlines the process which will be followed

Part B: Procedure

1) Notification by Parent / Carer / Leader

When a parent / carer informs the Group that a young person has AN, this policy is enacted immediately.

If a Leader, or other adult involved in the Group, has a concern they should first discuss this with the GSL. The GSL will then decide if the policy is enacted immediately or whether the situation is monitored for an agreed period.

2) Agreement of Parents / Carers

The GSL will obtain the agreement of the parent / carer to proceed as outlined in this policy. Should agreement not be reached, the GSL will refer to the District Commissioner for further support.

3) Meeting with Parents or Carer to assess Needs and Capability

Assuming the parent / carer has given their agreement, the Leader and / or the GSL and / or a member of the Trustee Board with allocated responsibility for inclusion, will meet with the parent / carer for a Needs and Capability Assessment following the guidance outlined in [Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers](#) (including the Parent or Carer Conversation Framework and the Parent or Carer Questionnaire)

Each case is different, but the conversation may include:

- Medical needs
- Emotional / behavioural needs (what are the triggers and how should this be managed)
- Any assistance required (e.g. with personal hygiene)
- Does the young person have a well-developed sense of danger e.g. would they run out in front of a car, put hand in fire or jump off a cliff?
- What do parents want?
- What might be an issue now / in an older section where there may be less closer supervision and more dangerous activities?

If a parent / carer does not agree to the meeting, the GSL will refer the matter to the District Commissioner.

The GSL will ensure that the NCA is documented. This will describe:

- the young person's capabilities
- associated risks in terms of Scouts activities (this should include risks to other young people, Leaders, adult helpers, and the public).
- any mitigating actions / reasonable adjustments that are required for the young person to safely participate in the programme.

The young person's parent / carer should agree the NCA and receive a copy.

The GSL will ensure that the NCA is kept securely. Access to the NCA will be limited to those who need to know, typically the parents / carer, GSL and section leaders working with the young person. In exceptional circumstances, it may also be distributed to the District Commissioner.

4) Trial Period

Assuming a place is offered to a young person, this will usually be for an initial trial period of three months or one term. If there are any risk-mitigating actions or reasonable adjustments specified in the NCA, these must be in place before the young person can join the section.

5) Reviews

The NCA should specify when the initial review will take place (usually at the end of the trial period). If all parties are content with progress at each review meeting and all risk mitigation strategies are still in place, then the young person may continue to be a member of the Group. If any party, including the parents, have any concerns then further action may be taken, including:

- Reviewing the NCA to identify any new risks, reasonable adjustments or risk mitigating actions
- Referring to the District Commissioner
- Withdrawal of the young person's place in the Group

At any time, any party can request a review meeting. If the parent / carer is unwilling to participate in the meeting the matter will be referred to the District Commissioner.

6) Appeals & Complaints

The Scout Association encourages leaders and parents / carers to resolve disputes informally at a local level wherever possible. Where this is not possible, anyone can follow the steps outlined in the [Complaints Process](#) for making a formal complaint.

7) Additional Resources

Below is a list of resources which have been used in compiling this guidance and which may provide additional information for parents/carers and section leaders.

[Inclusion and Diversity](#)

[Inclusion and Diversity – Supporting Those with Additional Needs and neurodiversity](#)

[Scouts with Additional Needs](#)

[Funding To Support Additional Needs](#)

[Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers](#) (including Parent or Carer Conversation Framework and Parent or Carer Questionnaire)

Process Flowchart

