



## **34<sup>th</sup> Chesterfield (Brimington) Scout Group**

### **Supporting Scouts with Additional Needs**

The starting point for this policy is The Scout Association's Policy, Organisation and Rules (POR) section on Equal Opportunities: <https://www.scouts.org.uk/por/2a-key-policies/2a5-equal-opportunities-policy/>

Further guidance from Scouts UK about Supporting Scouts with Additional Needs can be found on their website: <https://www.scouts.org.uk/information-for-parents/scouts-with-additional-needs/>

#### **Purpose**

This policy sets out how 34<sup>th</sup> Chesterfield (Brimington) Scout Group will ensure that all young people and adult volunteers with additional needs are welcomed, included, supported, and able to participate safely and meaningfully in Scouting.

We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where every individual is treated with dignity, respect, and fairness, regardless of disability, neurodiversity, medical condition, learning difference, mental health need, communication need, or any other additional needs.

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to:

- All youth members
- Adult volunteers
- Parents and carers
- Occasional helpers and visitors
- All Scouting activities, meetings, camps, trips, and events

In this policy, the term "member" applies to both young people and adult volunteers.

#### **Principles**

We will:

- Promote equality, inclusion, and accessibility wherever reasonably possible
- Recognise that every Scout is an individual with different strengths
- Make reasonable adjustments wherever possible – we acknowledge that there may be circumstances where adjustments cannot be made
- Work in partnership with parents, carers, professionals, and the young person themselves
- Encourage participation and independence
- Maintain confidentiality and handle personal information appropriately
- Ensure safeguarding remains central to all decisions

## **Definition of Additional Needs**

Additional needs may include, but are not limited to:

- Autism spectrum condition (ASC)
- ADHD
- Dyslexia or dyspraxia
- Speech, language, or communication needs
- Sensory impairments
- Physical disabilities
- Medical conditions
- Mental health needs
- Learning disabilities
- Social, emotional, or behavioural needs

A diagnosis is not required for support to be considered.

## **Responsibilities**

The Group Lead Volunteer, Group Leadership Team & Trustees will:

- Promote an inclusive culture
- Ensure adult volunteers understand this policy
- Support volunteers in making reasonable adjustments where possible
- Ensure risk assessments consider additional needs
- Encourage appropriate training for volunteers
- Respond appropriately to concerns or incidents
- Work with families to understand additional needs and effective support strategies

Section Teams will:

- Plan inclusive activities
- Identify and implement reasonable adjustments where possible
- Maintain appropriate records and emergency information
- Respect confidentiality
- Seek advice when required

Parents and carers are encouraged to:

- Share relevant information about their child's additional needs
- Inform leaders of any changes
- Work collaboratively with volunteers
- Provide medication or specialist equipment where agreed
- Provide any one to one support required

## **Reasonable Adjustments**

All Scout groups have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to support the participation of young people with additional needs. This should be done in partnership with parents or carers.

However, it is important to be realistic and take into account other factors which may limit what is a reasonable adjustment. These factors include:

- The number of volunteers within a section
- The skills and knowledge of the volunteer team

- The support required for existing members of the Section
- What is practical within the scope of the section programme

Examples of reasonable adjustments may include:

- Adapting badge requirements
- Offering a calm corner during meetings
- Allowing attendance for part of camps / events where practical
- Providing visual schedules or instructions
- Allowing additional processing time
- Adapting games or activities where possible
- Using buddy systems
- Adjusting communication methods
- Supporting transitions and routine changes
- Making physical environments accessible

Adjustments should be practical, proportionate, and aimed at enabling participation.

The Group is not usually able to provide:

- One to one support for individuals
- Intimate care or toileting support
- Changes to any safety equipment or rules needed for activities
- The purchase of specialist equipment

Where these adjustments are deemed necessary, we may ask parents / carers to provide or arrange them

### **Individual Support Planning**

Where appropriate, an Individual Support Plan may be developed with the parent / carer. This may include:

- Communication preferences
- Triggers or anxieties
- Behaviour support strategies
- Medical information
- Personal care requirements
- Sensory considerations
- Emergency procedures
- Required adjustments for activities or camps

Plans should be reviewed regularly and updated as needed.

### **Behaviour and Wellbeing**

We recognise that behaviour may communicate unmet needs, anxiety, distress, or sensory overload.

Volunteers will:

- Use supportive and respectful behaviour management approaches
- Avoid punitive responses where possible
- Focus on de-escalation and understanding triggers
- Promote emotional wellbeing and belonging

Any restrictive intervention must only be used where necessary to prevent harm and in line with safeguarding guidance.

However, we have a duty to safeguard our volunteers and other members of the Group. We cannot support behaviour that is dangerous, abusive or likely to cause damage to property or individuals. Where a child's behaviour becomes a safety or safeguarding concern, the Group Lead Volunteer will review this and decide whether we can continue to support the member in the Group.

Examples of behaviour that would cause a safety or safeguarding risk:

- Running away from volunteers / the Group
- Leaving the Church Hall building unsupervised
- Hitting, kicking, thumping, biting or otherwise harming another child or volunteer
- Deliberately damaging property or buildings
- Swearing, inappropriate language or sexualised behaviours

Where a child's behaviour is too difficult to manage, the Group Lead Volunteer may decide to:

- Ask parents to attend meetings with their child – parents will need a DBS check to do this
- Ask members to attend for a shorter part of the meeting
- Limit the meetings / activities we allow a child to participate in

Where behaviour continues to present a significant safety risk despite reasonable adjustments and support strategies, the Group Lead Volunteer reserves the right to ask a child to leave the Group.

### **Where Reasonable Adjustments Cannot Be Made**

When making reasonable adjustments, it is important to take into consideration:

- How many volunteers there are in the Section
- The skills and knowledge of the volunteers
- The other young people already members of the Section
- The physical space and equipment already available

For individual activities which cannot be adapted to a member's needs, Section Teams will seek to offer an alternative activity for the member

Where the Group is unable to make adjustments to support a child's additional needs, the Group Lead Volunteer will:

- Seek the advice and support from Scouts UK Inclusion Teams
- Work with the family to find alternative Scout Groups where support is available

### **Training and Support for Volunteers**

The Group Lead Volunteer is responsible for ensuring volunteers receive training and are supported in working with members with additional needs.

All Section Volunteers complete mandatory training in:

- Safeguarding
- Safety
- Creating Inclusion
- First Aid & Medical Conditions

Volunteers are also encouraged to access training and guidance relating to:

- Inclusion and accessibility
- Neurodiversity awareness

- Mental health awareness
- Communication strategies

Many of our volunteers have also completed additional SEND training through their workplaces.

Where appropriate, external advice may be sought from professionals or support organisations.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Information regarding additional needs will:

- Be handled sensitively and confidentially
- Be shared with those who need the information to support the individual safely and effectively – this includes the full Section Team working with the Individual
- Be stored in line with data protection requirements

### **Complaints and Concerns**

Any concerns regarding inclusion, discrimination, or support should be raised with the Group Lead Volunteer in the first instance. To raise a concern about the Group Lead Volunteer or where you are unhappy with how a complaint or concern has been handled, please ask for the contact details of the Chesterfield District Lead Volunteer.

Complaints will be handled fairly, respectfully, and in line with Scout Association procedures.

Supporting Documents:

- Individual Support Plan Template
- Emergency medication procedures
- Nights Away support expectations
- Additional Needs Summary Poster

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation, guidance, or local circumstances change.

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

Next Review Due: \_\_\_\_\_