

Family Camps



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0845 300 1818

Purpose

Family camps are events arranged by a Group or District for youth Members accompanied by their parents/carers and siblings.

These help to strengthen the bonds within individual families, they introduce parents to the Methods of the Association and strengthen the links between the constituent Sections of the Group.

District and County/Area family camps may have advantages in scale and the range of programme opportunities but can lose out in the creation of a Group family unless very carefully planned. The division created by sectional family camps and the lost opportunities for building links mean that sectional family camps are probably the least beneficial to our Members and their parents.

Participation

It is important that every effort is made to extend the invitation to attend to all Members of the Scout Group, their parents and any brothers or sisters who may wish to join the family. If the family camp is to foster the links between the Sections it is important that all Sections are represented.

Beaver Scouts may take part in family camps. Policy, Organisation and Rules Rule 9.62 (a) states that Beaver Scouts may attend Family Camps under the supervision and control of their parent(s) or carer(s) or responsible adult(s) nominated by the Beaver Scout's parent(s) or carer(s) who takes responsibility for the individual child and has completed the appropriate form (a copy is included on page 5 of this factsheet).

Criminal Records Bureau/Disclosure Scotland/Northern Ireland Procedures

All adults attending Family Camps, must have been previously checked via the appropriate vetting organisation, as above.

In order to allow for sufficient time, it is ideally suggested that such applications should be submitted at least 3 months before the proposed date of the camp.

The nominated adult must be present for the whole time the Beaver Scout is there and should not be a member of the camp Leadership Team.

The expertise and enthusiasm of Explorer Scouts and Members of the Scout Network could be channeled into providing a positive input into the camp organisation. Scout Active Support should also not be forgotten when preparing for the family camp.

Members of the Movement (as shown on the annual census return and Members joining during the year) are covered by The Scout Association's general insurance policies. These policies include Personal Accident Insurance and Legal Liability Insurance. Non-members, such as supporters, parents and carers, are not provided with the same automatic Personal Accident Insurance cover.

Whilst there is no requirement to provide such insurance for parents and carers, you may wish to consider doing so and a number of Insurance Brokers will offer suitable facilities. One such is Unity Insurance Services who may be contacted at the address below. Whatever decision you make with regard to the provision of such cover, it would be good practice to inform

parents and carers of the facts.

Unity Insurance Services Ltd
Lancing Business Park
Lancing
West Sussex
BN15 8UG

Tel. 0845 0945 703

Email. scouts@unityins.co.uk

As with any other Scout activity that takes young people away from home it is important that an InTouch system is put in place. (Policy, Organisation and Rules, Chapter 9, Rule 9.3) as there is always the possibility that relatives or other family members may have to be contacted.

Preparation

Family camps, by their very nature, must cater for a wide range of Members and their parents/carers. Before inviting families to take part it is essential that the appropriate Commissioner (District for Group and District Family Camps and County/Area for County/Area Family Camps) is aware of the intention to hold a family camp and has approved the holding of the event.

Having obtained the approval of the appropriate Commissioner, now is the time to canvass the support of parents/carers and Group Members. Remember many families have busy schedules so give as much notice as possible. If the camp proves popular, it may be appropriate to make it an annual event on a specific weekend each year. Remember to keep parents informed of developments. A notice of intent followed up regularly is much better than an original note followed by nothing until a week before the event.

Select and confirm the key members of the Leadership Team as soon as outline approval has been given by the District Commissioner. At the very least the following would be required:

- A Nights Away Permit holder;
- A first aider;
- A caterer;
- A programme coordinator;

- An equipment person.

These should be responsible for recruiting their own teams based on the numbers and programme of the camp. Regular contact to monitor progress will be essential.

At least two months before the camp, the Camp Leader, programme coordinator and caterer should have visited the site to ensure that there are no problems.

At this stage it would also be wise to have a clear idea on numbers attending and to be aware of any specific needs - diet, transport and so on. In addition, there may be some families who do not have their own transport and this may need to be incorporated in the initial preparations.

Health and hygiene

For some of the parents/carers and possibly their children it will be the first time that they have been involved in a camp. It is probably best to use a permanent campsite with well-maintained toilet and ablution facilities rather than a farmer's field with chemical toilets. The traditional Scout type toilet arrangements are not appropriate for the family camp. If the camp is to have exclusive use of toilet facilities a staff member should be responsible for checking and arranging for any cleaning details that are required. Remember that the impressions that are left with the parents/carers are those that will stay with them for many years. If the facilities are not adequate it is less likely that they will offer their support in future.

It is essential that there is an experienced first aider present. If at all possible they should have no other duties and be made known to all participants in the camp. Small incidents are always possible in a camp situation and competent, sympathetic first aid will reassure families.

A well-equipped first aid kit should be available. The name, address and telephone numbers of a local doctor and the nearest Casualty Department should be known by both the first aider and Camp Leader. If a permanent campsite is being used,

the Camp Warden will be able to provide this information. It is important to understand that organisers have a responsibility for the safety and health of those in their charge. Health and Safety legislation does not apply to voluntary agencies such as The Scout Association.

Catering

A good caterer can make a family camp while a bad caterer can spoil the experience. The caterer will need to know a week or so in advance the numbers attending and any special diets (vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, religious, and so on).

Caterers should be selected for their previous knowledge and experience. Their word is law in the kitchen area. A decision will need to be made at an early stage as to whether a fixed kitchen in a building or a camp kitchen is used. Remember that different skills are needed in each case.

Food storage requirements will be different in camp or in a building. Gas refrigeration for the camp based kitchen should be considered. Food hygiene must be understood by all and the kitchen area should be out of bounds to all but the catering staff.

Depending on the weather and the programme, a regular supply of drinks, hot or cold may be required by the campers.

A barbecue is a good way of allowing parents and children to get involved and may also help to mix up the campers in a social manner. This could be an integral part of an evening programme also involving a campfire.

Programme

There are benefits in giving advance notification of the proposed programme to all families. This is so that they can be aware of the type of activities that will be on offer and prepare accordingly. Clothing is a typical example and an important consideration. A programme of fun, energetic items and skillful activities should be balanced by periods of quiet relaxation. A programme needs to be developed to build on the particular opportunities of the site and should be suitable for

a wide range of participants from the youngest to the oldest.

As mentioned earlier, a barbecue followed by a campfire would make an enjoyable evening's entertainment. At some point there could be a 'Scouts Own' Service.

Accommodation

At an early stage it will be necessary to decide whether the camp is traditionally based using tents or in a selected centre. Where possible, individual tents or rooms should be provided for each family. It is not appropriate at a family camp to segregate the participants into age groups. The working unit is the family and families should live and work together at all times. Organisers should be sympathetic to the needs of the family and support and help may be needed for those with little experience of this type of activity.

Safety

The prime concern of any Family Camp Leader and Leadership team must be the safety of all participants. Any activity should be carried out in accordance with the safety rules of the Association, (*Policy, Organisation and Rules*, Chapter 9). Remember that a high proportion of accidents occur to adults playing games and carrying out activities for which their bodies are not accustomed. Any programme activity must be equally suitable for all ages to enjoy.

Review

After the camp it is important to organise a systematic review. By looking closely at what you did this time, you may well be able to make improvements to the planning and Programme next time.

It is important that everyone should be involved in the review process.

Checklist for Organisers of Family Camps

- Group Leaders' meeting agrees to hold Family Camp
- Organise the checking of all adults attending the camp who may have more than just a fleeting contact with your young persons, via the appropriate regional vetting authority, i.e. The Criminal Records Bureau or Disclosure Scotland or Northern Ireland procedures. (FAQ sheet available from the Scout Information Centre)
- Visit possible sites
- Set date and venue
- Notify all parents
- Confirm personnel for Leadership Team – Nights Away Permit holder, first aider, caterer and so on
- Plan programme with wet weather alternatives
- Caterer sets menu around programme
- Notify parents of outline programme and costs
- Submit Nights Away Notification
- Arrange suitable additional insurance (if required)
- Check and prepare equipment
- Finalise programme and catering needs
- Collect and bank all camp fees
- Put in place a suitable InTouch system
- Carry out Family Camp
- Settle all accounts
- Initial review with parents
- Produce income and expenditure account
- Detailed Leadership review
- Thank all those involved for their efforts and contributions

FAMILY CAMP – PARENT/GUARDIAN NOMINATION

Beaver Scouts may attend Family Camps under the supervision and control of their parent/guardian or the responsible adult specifically nominated by the Beaver Scout's parent/guardian.

The purpose of this form is to enable the parent/ guardian of the Beaver Scout to nominate another adult to take responsibility for the individual child at a Family Camp.

The nominated adult must not be a member of the Camp Leadership Team.

To be completed by the legal parent/carer:

I confirm that I am the legal parent/carer of (name of child)

I am unable to attend the Family Camp being organised by

and authorise (name of adult) to be responsible for the care of

my child from to

Signed by parent/carer Date

Name (PRINT)

Address

Telephone number

Top be completed by the appointed individual:

I accept responsibility for the care of the above named child Yes No (please ✓)

Signed Date

Name (PRINT)

Address

Telephone number

GUIDANCE FOR APPOINTING A NOMINATED ADULT FOR A FAMILY CAMP

Policy, Organisation and Rules – Rule 9.62 Family Nights Away

- (a) Beaver Scouts may attend family camps under the supervision and control of their parent(s)/carer(s), or a responsible adult(s) nominated by them.
- (b) The nominated adult(s) takes responsibility for the young person and must not be a member of the camp leadership team. A parent/carer permission form must be completed beforehand.

When implementing the following guidelines, the welfare of the young person must be the first and overriding priority at all times.

Accordingly, in any consideration or decision regarding the involvement of a nominated adult at a Family Camp, it will be important to ensure that all aspects of a young person's safety and security are taken into account. The sleeping arrangements for the camp will, for example, require particular attention. You should ensure that the parents, the nominated adult and the young person concerned are aware of the arrangements and feel comfortable about them.

The nominated adult must not be a member of the Camp Leadership Team. An adult attending the camp as the nominated person may only fulfil this function. They may not also attend the camp in the role of Leader, Helper, Instructor etc.

A nominated adult may only be nominated by one family unit. One adult can only have responsibility for a maximum of two family units (their own plus one other family).

A nominated adult may only have care of a maximum of four children under eight years of age. This includes any of their own children who are under eight.