



We provide fun, challenge and adventure to over 400,000 girls and boys across the UK

## Promoting good behaviour

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**The reasons for challenging behaviour can be many and varied and may well lie outside**

### Principles of good behaviour

Scouting should be an enjoyable experience and so promoting positive behaviour is essential to it. Whatever you call it – discipline, control, management or structure ensures that activities are fun.

Every young person at some point will probably misbehave. It's a natural process of growing up. Perceptions of challenging behaviour amongst adults will differ so what works for one adult in ten will not necessarily work for another.

One essential principle of promoting good behaviour is to lead by example. For instance, if leaders become loud. Older Scouts and Explorers may have the attitude 'If leader's don't stick to the rule

Allowing young people to speak without interruption and listen to what they are saying is one way. At some point you will experience occasions when behaviour will affect the smooth running of a meeting. There are ways of managing that behaviour in advance.

There can be many reasons for young people to behave in a challenging way and as a Leader it is important to identify the causes that you can influence and those you can't. Often poor behaviour is a result of boredom or too much energetic activity, which a leader can positively change by working to offer a dynamic, fun

Some behaviours may arise from medical conditions or you may have young people who are on medication. In these instances, you will need to discuss with parents/carers the best approach to take. Also, the reasons for some behaviours are personal to them that they may not have expressed to you.

This does not mean that any behaviour is acceptable but there are ways to manage the section and

Leaders, young people and parents should all be involved in this process so that everyone is clear

The key principles are:

- Know the young people and parents/carers in your section
- Offer praise and recognition
- Establish good routines
- Set the boundaries with the young people
- Agree on discipline

### Putting the principles into practice

Make sure that all involved know what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. It is best practice to set a code of conduct for the section based on the Promise, but in language that is appropriate for the age of the section. You must remember and stick to a code of conduct that they themselves have played a part in creating it.

reinforced and revisited where appropriate in the programme or when behaviour is inappropriate young people that the code has been broken and has consequences.

- Regular reminders about the code of conduct help everyone know what to expect. Remind (at each new term) what the agreed rules are. When new people start, get the young people to know what is expected rather than hoping they will pick it up. Perhaps use a buddy system where parents/carers know as well.
- Managing the transition between sections so that a new young person coming into the section knows the people within the section and how the section works. Making use of buddies during this process to help a new young person so that they don't feel alone or isolated.
- Consider what is appropriate to the age and maturity of the young people. Leaders should discuss with a leadership team what the boundaries of behaviour are and what the consequences will be. A serious threat to the welfare of others should be reported through the Child Protection procedure.
- It's important to have a routine for meetings - start and finish 'formally' and set expectations with the young people, adults and parents/carers at that particular meeting. Use similar routines each time everyone is sitting down in small groupings. Ensure that everyone understands the purpose of the activity/game as soon as possible.
- Think about how activities are structured. For example, if there is unstructured play, like football, this is more likely to lead to challenging behaviours or young people becoming more energetic.

## Strategies in supporting good behaviour

An appropriate intervention for behaviour that is unacceptable depends on the behaviour or the context. Leaders should discuss these regularly so that everyone is consistent in their approach. Adding it to the programme can be a good way of reminding leaders that it needs to be thought about.

Fostering a culture of praise and not blame has shown time and time again to encourage good behaviour. Praise those doing the right thing rather than criticising those doing the wrong thing. 'Thank you' and 'Well done' are good when talking to young people and between leaders too. Good practice includes:

- Before starting to explain activities and games make sure you have everyone's attention.
- Stop if someone interrupts or starts to chatter to their neighbour. When someone is talking, be silent. Keep explanations and demonstration sessions short and to the point and use bite.
- Ensure the young people know why you are asking them to do a particular thing.
- If doing an activity that can be explained in two stages, such as crafts, let them start and praise them as they progress.
- Check if everyone has understood the instructions before beginning the activity.

Use signals so that you do not need to use your voice all the time. For example, hand in the air. When the young people see a leader raise their hand they stop what they are doing (movement or noise). This then spreads across the Section. It is important that the Leader stands still and is quiet while the young people do the expected behaviour) and that any other leaders in the room are also quiet at this time, reinforcing the expected behaviour.

To get the attention of your section learn to project your voice so that everyone can hear, but do not shout. Eventually get them to be quiet and listen. Once you have their attention, they have to try harder to be quiet. Use a whistle sparingly if at all.

Give notice, like counting down from five to zero. The Leader can hold their hand out in front and folding fingers down with the countdown. Finish with a statement along the lines of, 'And you are alternatively use an egg timer with an alarm.

When young people are engaged in an activity do not expect an instant response - with many years for them to register and process an instruction, or even that you are speaking. It can be beneficial and silently count to six and then repeat the same statement or instruction.

Devise ways of recognising achievement. An appropriate points system with, for instance, a round most points at the end of the night, and a small prize at the end of term for the winning team. You certificates to reward those that arrive on time, wear their uniform correctly or any other single highlight?

Have a 'Scout of the month' award that can be given according to whatever focus of behaviour, a method of reward could include a trophy to look after for the month, the presentation of a certificate which form a draw at the end of the year with the opportunity to win a sum of money which can be for Scouting.

Use a red, amber and green card system, usually when a child is causing danger or has hurt someone about what they did, and then a talk with a leader about what happened. If behaviour improves,

If challenging behaviour continues, look for underlying causes.

- Do something else for a few minutes then go back to what you were saying later, for instance
- Sit them down and try to time a minute in silence. When they think a minute is over, they stop
- Clapping game. When they're noisy all the leaders clap then slap their own thighs which is rhythmic and they become quiet.
- Do a short burst of physical activity such as running around the room, begin a game of 'Simon says' as high as they can and then crouch down low for example.

## Games

With all games, including ones, which are familiar, go over the rules or instructions each time before 'When I say go, you can start.' If some people are not playing properly, stop the game and explain

When scoring, do it fairly not in your head so that things are open and honest.

If you play knockout games, make sure young people who are out of the game are given something to do. In knockout games you use and check if it's the same people who are always out first.

Include co-operative games and activities in your programme. Plan some games that require listening skills.

## What to do if there is a severe instance of challenging behaviour:

If it is a one-off behaviour issue - keep cool, calm and collected - this shows assurance and control but quietly, continue to maintain a safe environment, keep some personal space between you and all the facts - don't jump to conclusions. Don't get into a "win lose" situation - try to find a way to lose face.

Once the incident is over, discuss what happened, the actions taken and any lessons to learn for

For continued bad behaviour seeking to involve the parents/carers where necessary is advisable, defined boundaries and times scales is important so that everyone is aware of the process and h period has concluded, there is still an issue, then bringing in support from the Group Scout Lead reached this stage, your GSL in consultation with the District Commissioner, will advise you of th Policy, Organisation & Rule. [www.scouts.org.uk/por](http://www.scouts.org.uk/por)

## Adult Behaviour

What messages do your adults give out? Do they stop and listen when instructions are being giv behaviour? Do they recognise and acknowledge good behaviour as well as pick up on poor exam be the catalyst for undesirable behaviour in young people. Taking stock of how the adults are int people can be beneficial. If you identify issues and address them you may find that behaviour in address could include;

- Are adults on their mobile phones when young people have been told not to be, creating on
- Interrupting when someone else is talking, distracting either young people or adults while ir

## Some questions and thoughts to think about in terms of the leadership team.

- Do you look like a team with shared levels of acceptability?
- When you all work together and react alike there is far less opportunity for 'playing one leac
- Do you support each other when an activity is happening?
- What is the 'praise' or 'blame' culture of your Group like?

It's much easier to keep control if one of you is running the activity and another is helping to ob: something while you are running the activity so another pair of eyes can be invaluable. You may atmosphere is full of criticism or a constant reinforcing of acceptable behaviour. 'Thank you' and meant) when talking to young people and between Leaders too. Remember too that it is the beh than the young person and provide opportunities for them to have good behaviour acknowledged or 'bad', referring rather to acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. This helps everyone to focus it.

<http://www.scouts.org.uk/BRook>