

Guidance for International Links



- Why International Links?

Linking with Scouts in other countries is part of the quality Scout Programme and is something many sections enjoy doing to complete International Activity Badges and Challenge Awards.

- Linking with a Scout group in another country **should**:

- Be led and facilitated by the Section Leader and/or another appointed adult role in that section.
- Support the delivery of one or more badges and awards leading to a fun and valuable Scout Programme.
- Offer an exciting opportunity to share experiences and inspiration.

- Linking with a Scout group in another country **could**:

- Lead to exchange visits, trips, letter writing and skype calls.
- Be short term (eg one skype call) or long term and with a single section, whole group or District.

- Linking with a Scout group in another country **should not**:

- Lead to the exchange of money, goods or personal details.
- Be carried out without the supervision of Section Leader and/or another adult role in that section.

Steps to creating a safe and valuable link:

1. Discuss with your section where they would like to link with and what they would like to do.
2. Consider where you can best find a viable link. You could consider:
 - Asking if there are any existing links in your Group/District/County.
 - Posting on relevant Scouting social networks.
 - Enquiring about any international camps that have happened locally.
3. Communicate your link request to relevant groups/individuals and see what possibilities there are:
 - Be specific. Do you want to link with a specific section or country?
 - Make your expectations clear. (letter exchange/skype/exchange visit/games)
4. Check that any potential links are with recognised groups that are members of the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM). This shows that the adults you are speaking to have been vetted in line with WOSM recognised standards of child safeguarding.
5. Ultimately it is important to follow the guidelines below to ensure that young people are kept safe.

Checking and maintaining a safe link:

- Ensure you risk assess the activity, follow POR and the Yellow Card when conducting an international link
- Ask the group you want to link with the name of their National Scout Organisation and a copy of their Membership Certificate/proof of membership. WOSM member Organisations can be found on scout.org
- Ask them about Scouting in their country, eg. Programme, uniform, how do they stay safe in Scouting?
- * Always proceed cautiously and follow the Yellow Card and best practice in online safety:
 - 'Stay Safe' leaflets are section specific and allow young people to understand how they can stay safe www.scouts.org.uk/safeguarding
 - The Stay Safe Game is a great way to introduce online safety to younger sections www.digitalskills.scouts.org.uk/stay-safe-online
 - If you have been a victim of online abuse or you're worried about somebody else, you can report it by clicking the CEOP button on scouts.org.uk



If at any point you are concerned with the group you are linking to, do not be afraid to walk away and contact the Scout Information Centre for advice info.centre@scouts.org.uk 0345 300 1818