

Linking with Scout Groups in the UK



- Why International Links?

Linking with Scouts in other countries is part of the high quality Scout Programme in the UK and can help young people to earn badges and awards so you should have a very positive response if you try to make contact with a group in the UK.

- Linking with a Scout Group **should**:

- Be led and facilitated by the Scout Leader and/or another appointed adult role in that group.
- 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 **could be**:

- Short term e.g. one skype call, exchange of letters, pictures etc.
- Long term and with one group or a whole District.

- Linking with a Scout Group **should not**:

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

Finding a group to link with in the UK:

1. Discuss with your young people where they would like to link with and what they would like to do.
2. Find a group in the UK:
 - Enquire with Scout friends in your own country to see if any links with UK Scouting already exist.
 - Visit www.scouts.org.uk and type in the name of a town or city in the UK you are interested to link with. You will then find details of all of the Scout Groups in that area.
 - Search on social media for relevant Scout Groups in the UK. Remember to follow this guidance at all times.
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 age group? (Scouts in the UK are aged 6-24)
 - Make your expectations clear. (letter exchange/skype/exchange visit/games)
4. Check that the group is a member of UK Scouting by asking for the volunteer's membership number. You can then check they are a member of UK Scouting by emailing info.centre@scouts.org.uk
5. Ultimately it is important to follow the guidelines here to ensure that all young people are kept safe.

Checking and maintaining a safe link:

- Ensure you risk assess the activity against your National Scout Organisation's child protection policy.
- Request a membership number from the UK leader you connect with and check they are members of UK Scouting.
- Provide the UK leader with details of your National Scout Organisation so they can verify your membership and clarify that you have completed all necessary child protection checks and training in your country.
- * Even with proof of membership, proceed cautiously and follow safeguarding best practice in online safety.
- 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

