Group Scout Leader’s & Group Chair’s meeting

Monday 20th July 2020

**Thoughts on risk assessments for Scout Groups**

District support

* The district has convened a team of Scout volunteers who, in their professional experience, have been involved in the re-opening of schools, community halls and/or public-facing businesses.
* This group are there to:
  + Provide some moderation to group risk assessments to ensure parity where possible
  + Help review the volume of risk assessments which will be gernated
  + Have 1-1 conversations with Scout Groups about their particular buildings and situations.

Before you go back

* I think we’ll be into “yellow” in/around early September – possibly plan to go back in “yellow” if more practical than a week or two at amber
* Work with other users (particularly if you hire out your hall to a nursery / pre-school)
* Consider going back in smaller numbers to test-run your plans (e.g. patrol leaders only first week, PLs and APLs the next week before bringing most/all Scout back.
* What’s your plan if we the “level of readiness” goes back – can you adapt quickly?
* If you’re going back, can you commit to a quality programme given the restrictions on adult availability and/or venue/equipment restrictions? Don’t promise the world and then have to retreat back when the reality of the situation bites
* Record your risk assessment and remember it needs to be approved by the District Commissioner (Russ) before you begin your activities for young people (adults can go back to plan/run working parties at the meeting place – without written risk assessments - as long as social distancing is observed)
* Share your plans with parents
  + explain why some sections are going back and others aren’t
  + publish your risk assessments on group websites if possible
  + provide a one page summary of changes you’re implementing and what they need to do
  + use this as an opportunity to update all contact details
* Track and trace procedure must be followed strictly – attendance registers kept

Conversations with adult volunteers

* Think about first aid – identify a nominated first aider for each session – check they are comfortable being in close proximity if it’s required.
* What PPE do first aiders need (gloves & apron definitely) – clear plastic visor preferable to masks for young people’s benefit to see a reassuring face if they have hurt themselves
* Set the expectation with parents that a first aid incident may require them to collect their child due to limited number of adults to supervise
* Are adults willing to attend in a socially-distanced way (e.g. giving instructions stood within a 2metre exclusion zone)
* Can adults who are shielding provide a Zoom session for YP who are shielding (and/or as part of an A/B week rotation to accommodate smaller section numbers)
* The district will look to convene and support a team to provide a central Zoom programme if it is thought necessary
* Things will be different – they should be prepare for that
* The behaviour of young people will potentially be more challenging – schools are reporting more anxiety and aggression in young people as they cope with the emotional effect of lockdown, altered routines and potentially the loss (or fear of loss) of a family member or friend.

Physical preparation of the building

* Drop-off at the threshold to your land – you don’t need to police the approach/surrounding areas but some basic signage to remind people to follow social distancing guidelines would be good
* Cleaning of main touch points (door handles, toilets, taps, light switches) with anti-viral wipes is proportionate and should be done by each incoming leadership team
* Open doors/windows to allow ventilation if possible (i.e. not in bad weather or if this presents a safeguarding risk)
* Create the widest possible entrance to your meeting place (e.g. open a double gate rather than the usual pedestrian gate

Arrival at the meeting place

* Where possible, implement an “in and out” system for accessing the building (particularly in yellow)
* Handwashing is crucial – everyone who arrives should wash their hands with soap for 20 seconds

Programme planning

* Minimise shared equipment
  + Remove cups for beaver’s squash and ask them to bring their own drinks bottle
  + Can they bring basic items from home rather than providing it to them?
  + Dodgeball probably OK but pass the parcel would be a no-no!
* Sports/activities – look for guidance from the National Governing Body (e.g. football is back but rugby is not)
* Cooking seems OK in schools – but in the example of dough twists – one adults puts on gloves/face covering and gives each child a ball of dough rather than all children putting their hands in the bowl
* What’s your wet-weather plan?

**Experiences across Scout Groups during lockdown & thoughts so far on returning**

1st Bovingdon

* Cubs & Scouts – handed out badge books & record sheet
* 20 minute weekly Zoom session for Cubs – about 50% attendance
* Took part in a few district events such as virtual camp
* Leaders – very keen to go back
* Parents – keen to go back
* Venue will allow restart from 21st September subject to risk assessments etc – possibly returning the week before with a campfire at the Scout HQ

3rd Boxmoor

* Scouts continued weekly on Zoom
* Beavers & Cubs via social media & Online Scout Manager
* Leaders – keen to go back in September, meeting in the next couple of weeks
* Parents –

1st Hemel Hempstead

* Zoom meetings on usual meeting nights – attendance dwindled over time
* Weekend camp online – very popular
* Leaders - meeting planned for this Wednesday but seem keen
* Parents -

2nd Hemel Hempstead

* All sections have met virtually – around 60% attendance for Beavers
* Cubs 45% /Scouts 50-60% roughly fortnightly with “at home” challenge in between
* OSM badges at home functionality
* A couple of virtual camps offered in various ways
* Leaders – keen to get back in September (definite summer break) but with mixed views from family of leaders due to shielding requirements
* Parents – will be putting questionnaire together

1st Apsley

* Regular Zoom sessions – consistent take up of 70-80%
* Some shared across sessions and some led by individual sections
* Badge work submitted by parents and badges sent out
* Leaders – small core group have met – feeling zoom fatigue but also know planning needs to be done. Leader’s meeting this Wednesday to talk through – trying to avoid 11 ways of doing things.

Thinking about how to continue to involve those who can’t come back face-to-face.

* Parents – keen to get back to social interaction

4th Boxmoor

* Cubs & Scouts meeting roughly every two weeks
* Parents appreciative but attendance dwindled once schools returned
* May be back end of September – leader dependent

1st Kings Langley

* Sections working together to run weekly sessions
* Offered out district events
* Scouts took a little while longer to get started as Jane worked in a hospital but second half ran a weekly session

1st Gadebridge

* Scouts – very keen on Zoom and wanting to go back
* Cubs – joining with other Zoom sessions
* Beavers – have been running joint sessions weekly
* Leaders – meeting this Thursday– got to work through the fact that leaders currently do more than one section

5th Hemel Hempstead

* Beavers – has been sending stuff out to Beavers
* Leaders – some leaders may not be able to
* Venue – venue is a church so will need to confirm with them too

4th Hemel Hempstead

* Regular Beaver & Cub zoom with 60-70% take-up (opened up to other groups)
* Posting out badges if YP have achieved badges
* Leaders – very keen – got to work through the fact that leaders currently do more than one section
* Venue – venue is a community centre so will need to confirm with them too

1st Leverstock Green

* Zoom sessions for one Cub pack, but all sections offered the district sessions
* Leadership meeting on Sunday

1st Bennetts End

* Young people joining in district sessions
* Probably planning to go back in September