

Working with Parents/Carers when making reasonable adjustments

All cadet units have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to support the participation of young people with additional needs. The Scouts website has some great ideas of how you might make these reasonable adjustments. Developing a positive relationship and working in partnership with parents/carers, is key to supporting the successful inclusion of cadets with additional needs in the VPC.

Where a cadet with additional needs or disabilities is joining cadets, we advise an initial meeting with the parents/carers. This will enable you to identify the cadets' individual needs and plan any support needed to enable them to access cadets.

Ideally, this conversation would take place face to face. The conversation should involve the leader, parents/carers and, if appropriate, the cadet themselves. It may be helpful to involve someone in a local inclusion role or who has particular expertise in this area. Ensure that the meeting feels like a conversation, not an interview; it is just the starting point of an ongoing relationship.

It is important to be positive but realistic, and to establish expectations by helping parents/carers understand our policy and approach, and the context of VPC. Introducing the parents/carers to the cadet journey and offering a sense of what a typical cadet meeting looks like will help the parents/carers anticipate the aspects of cadets that their child may particularly enjoy or find beneficial, and any aspects they may need some additional support with.

Be honest about your level of knowledge and skills, and explain you are keen to learn from them. Ask about how the cadet is supported at home and at school, and discuss any strategies or approaches that could be used in cadets. Explain to the parents/carers how you plan to store and share information, and ensure that they agree to this.

Prior to the meeting, it may be useful to gain some background knowledge of the type of additional need the cadet has. The Scouts have an Additional Needs Directory which has lots of introductory information. Remember that each young person will be different, so avoid making any assumptions, and take the lead from the parents/carers in the language they use to describe their child's additional needs.