



Nights Away Information Pack



Welcome to the Nights Away Information Pack

Nights Away and residential events—such as camping trips and sleepovers—are a key part of Scouts. We are committed to making sure every young person has the opportunity to take part in these exciting and memorable experiences.

As a Group, we aim to offer a minimum of four Nights Away opportunities per section each year, giving plenty of chances for young people to enjoy adventures away from home with their friends.

We understand that sending your child on a residential experience can feel like a big step. It's completely normal for both parents and young people to have questions or concerns—whether it's their first sleepover or their fiftieth camp!

This pack has been designed to provide reassurance, answer common questions, and share important information to help you and your child feel confident and prepared. Each event will also have its own event information pack that confirms details specific to that event.

If you do have any further questions, please don't hesitate to ask—we're always happy to help.

Types of Nights Away

As a Group, we offer a variety of Nights Away experiences. These include events organised by our own volunteer team, as well as those run by District, County, or external organisations (for example, Spring Bank Camp).

Sleepovers

These are typically one-night events held in venues not usually used for residential stays. Recent examples include sleepovers at our local church, Gulliver's Kingdom, and White Post Farm.

Indoor Residentials

These take place in venues designed for overnight stays, with indoor sleeping accommodation and facilities.

Camps

Outdoor events where young people stay in tents, often including activities such as cooking, campfires, and outdoor adventure.

Expeditions (Scouts only)

These involve Scouts planning and completing an overnight journey, developing independence, teamwork, and navigation skills.



The Event Team

Nights Away events may be a new experience for you or your child, but our team is highly experienced in planning and delivering safe, enjoyable events. Each event is run by a team of adult volunteers and Young Leaders (YLS) who work together to plan and lead activities.

All adults staying overnight are required to hold a valid UK Scouts DBS check and must have completed mandatory safety and safeguarding training. Adults without a DBS check are not permitted to attend Nights Away events.

Permit Holder

All Nights Away events are led by a qualified Nights Away Permit Holder. This is an experienced volunteer who has completed additional training and assessment to ensure they can run safe and well-managed events.

To gain their permit, volunteers must:

- Build experience by attending a range of Nights Away events
- Complete relevant training, including planning, leadership, practical skills, safety, and safeguarding
- Successfully complete a Nights Away Permit assessment

The name of the Permit Holder will be included in each event's information pack.

First Aider

Each event will have a designated First Aider. This is a trained adult responsible for overseeing first aid provision during the event, including managing medications, illnesses, and allergies.

All adult volunteers in Scouts are required to complete first aid training, meaning there will always be additional trained adults present alongside the named First Aider.

The First Aider's name will be included in each event's information pack.

Event Leader

Every Nights Away event has an Event Leader responsible for overall planning and delivery. This is often the same person as the Permit Holder.

In some cases, the Event Leader may be working towards their permit. In these situations, they will be supported by a qualified Permit Holder, who retains overall responsibility for the event.

Ratios

We follow recommended adult-to-young-person ratios to ensure safety and appropriate supervision:

- **Squirrels:** 1 adult to 4 young people (plus the Event Leader)
- **Beavers:** 1 adult to 6 young people (plus the Event Leader)
- **Cubs:** 1 adult to 8 young people (plus the Event Leader)
- **Scouts:** 1 adult to 12 young people (plus the Event Leader)

Parents

Only registered members of UK Scouts are able to attend Nights Away events.

If you are interested in getting involved as a volunteer and supporting future events, we would be delighted to hear from you.

OSM Details & Medical Information

When responding to an OSM invite, you will be asked to confirm that your child's details are accurate. It is essential that all information on OSM is fully up to date before the event.

Please pay particular attention to the following:

- **Emergency contacts:** All listed contacts must be available throughout the weekend.
- **Medical information:** Ensure all conditions, medications (including inhalers), allergies, and intolerances are recorded.
- **Additional needs:** Include any helpful information (e.g. sleepwalking, need for a night light, bedwetting) in the additional information section so we can support your child appropriately.

Medication

If your child requires medication, please follow these guidelines:

- Bring all required medication to the Nights Away event.
- Request and complete a **Medication Information form** detailing dosage and frequency.
- Ensure medication is in its **original packaging** and placed in a **clearly labelled, sealed bag** with your child's name.
- Hand all medication to the **designated First Aider** at drop-off.
- Medication will be stored securely and safely at all times.
- It will be administered by the First Aider.
- All administration will be recorded on the medication record sheet
- All medication will be returned to parents/carers at the end of the camp.

First Aid

We will have qualified First Aiders on site at all times, along with a fully stocked first aid kit. By giving permission for your child to attend, you are also consenting to leaders administering first aid treatment if required.

In the event of more serious illness or injury:

- Parents/carers will be informed as soon as possible.
- Where feasible, you will be advised where to go to be with your child.

If immediate treatment is required, we may need to share your child's medical details (including GP information) with healthcare professionals—this is why keeping OSM updated is vital.

Additional Information

Please inform us in advance of any:

- Medical conditions
- Allergies (including plasters/latex)
- Religious observances
- Other relevant information

This helps us ensure your child remains safe, comfortable, and well cared for throughout the camp.

Safeguarding

All of our events operate in line with **Scouts UK Safeguarding and Safety Policies** and the safety and wellbeing of all young people is our highest priority.

- All volunteers have completed mandatory safeguarding and safety training.
- All adults hold a valid **DBS check** as a minimum requirement.
- Several members of the team are **First Aid trained**.
- We follow the guidance set out in the **Yellow Card** (Scouts UK Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Adults) at all times.

More information about Scouts UK Safety & Safeguarding policies can be found at the following link: <https://www.scouts.org.uk/volunteers/staying-safe-and-safeguarding/>

Sleeping Arrangements

At Nights Away events, we follow Scouts UK rules regarding sleeping arrangements:

- Adults, young people, and Young Leaders (YLS) must have **separate sleeping spaces**.
- Adults and young people will **not share tents or rooms** at residential centres.
- Where a sleepover takes place in a shared space (e.g. hall), clearly defined areas are allocated for adults, young people, and Young Leaders.

Where possible, we also:

- Provide separate sleeping areas by **age group**
- Provide separate sleeping areas by **gender**

However, in some circumstances (such as large indoor spaces), boys and girls may share a dormitory or hall, with appropriate supervision and clear arrangements in place.

Changing and toileting arrangements are separated by gender.

Risk Assessments

In line with Scouts UK policy, all activities and events are supported by written risk assessments. Risk assessments are completed for all Nights Away events and activities. These are available to parents/carers upon request.

Contacting us / your child whilst away

We operate an In Touch System for all events and nights away – this is the only number parents should use to contact the team or their child whilst away.

Youngsters should not bring their own mobile phones to camp

Our In Touch Number is: 07403 143527

Pull-Ups & Bedwetting

Bedwetting and the use of pull-ups are common for many children, and our team is experienced in managing this sensitively and discreetly. Please don't let concerns about nighttime dryness prevent your child from attending.

Many young people may still have occasional accidents—and from experience, camp can sometimes be one of those times. We are well prepared and have procedures in place to support children respectfully. If this applies to your child, we ask that you follow the guidance below.

Supporting your child:

- Please reassure your child that this is something we are used to and that they can speak to a leader at any time without worry or embarrassment.
- Encourage them to tell us if they need help during the night or in the morning.

If your child wears pull-ups:

- Please ensure your child brings and wears pull-ups or PJ pants if needed.
- We will ensure children are given space to change these discreetly in the evening and morning.
- Our volunteers are not trained in intimate care, so children should be able to change pull-ups themselves.
- However, we will provide wipes and disposal bags and can offer guidance and support as needed.

If your child doesn't usually wear pull-ups but may have an accident:

- Please pack a **spare sleeping bag** and **extra pyjamas**. These can be handed to an adult discreetly before the event begins if your child is uncomfortable with others knowing
- Talk to your child in advance so they feel comfortable letting us know if an accident happens.
- We will support them to change discreetly, whether during the night or in the morning.

We always carry spare equipment and have plenty of experience handling these situations calmly and privately. Even if your child does not usually have accidents, we are fully prepared and will manage any situation with care and discretion.

Please ensure your child knows they can approach any member of the team for help—we will always prioritise their privacy.

If your child wears pull-ups regularly or you have any concerns, we encourage you to speak with the event leader in advance

Homesickness

We are very experienced in running Nights Away events and understand that homesickness can be a concern—particularly for children staying away from home for the first time. Our leaders are used to dealing with homesickness and will always reassure and support young people who are missing home whilst at a Nights Away event.

Throughout the day, we keep young people active, engaged, and involved in activities, which is one of the most effective ways to reduce homesickness. When it does occur, it is most common in the evening and is often linked to tiredness. In most cases, our team can provide reassurance and help children settle back to sleep. In our experience, most nighttime homesickness is forgotten after a good night's sleep.

If a young person becomes particularly upset, we will assess the situation carefully. Where appropriate, we may contact you to discuss how best to support them, and in some cases a quick conversation with home can help them feel reassured.

In the very unlikely event that a child remains very distressed and cannot be settled, we may ask you to come and collect them – however this will always be used as a last resort.

Our priority is always to support each child with care, understanding, and reassurance so they can have a positive and enjoyable experience.

Photography & Updates During Camp

We take photographs at our events to capture activities and share what the young people are enjoying. These images may be used within our private parent group and, occasionally, to promote our group within the wider community.

Parents can follow updates and view photos during the sleepover via our **Parent Facebook Group**. This helps keep you informed and reassured that your child is happy and engaged in the activities.

We always aim to respect parental preferences regarding photography. Wherever possible, we avoid including young people in photos where permission has not been given. However, this can be challenging at larger or busy events, and we cannot control images taken by external organisations or individuals.

If an image is shared by the Group that you would prefer to be removed, please contact us directly and we will take it down promptly—any such occurrence would be unintentional.

For full details, please refer to our **Photography Policy** in the Group Information Pack.

OSM Invites & Payments

All nights away events are costed separately and our team work hard to ensure that the cost we charge is as low as possible. We do not make any profit on Nights Away events – the amount we charge reflects the cost to provide the event and activities.

Your child is invited to attend nights away events by OSM invites. You must respond to this as this is how you give permission for your child to attend. We also request that you indicate “No” to any events your child is invited to but cannot attend – this means our leaders are not waiting for your reply before they can begin planning.

Payments should be made through OSM for all events as soon as possible – your child’s place is not confirmed until we have received this payment. If payments are not made by the deadline, your child will not have a place on the nights away.

Where deposits are made for larger events, the deposit is non refundable and parents are liable to still pay full cost if we can't reallocate the space, unless a good reason is given.

All payments are non-refundable unless we can find another child to take your child’s place at the event.

Behaviour

We will remind all young people of our behaviour expectations throughout the event. These include:

- Taking part in activities
- Keeping themselves and others safe
- Listening to and respecting adults and fellow young people

If a child’s behaviour is considered unacceptable, they will be given support and opportunities to improve. If there is no improvement, we may contact parents/carers and, as a last resort, ask for the child to be collected.

Hygiene

We understand that many young people need encouragement when it comes to personal hygiene—especially during an exciting camp!

We will:

- Remind and encourage children to brush their teeth and wash their face morning and evening
- Ensure regular and proper handwashing throughout the day
- Support children where needed, while encouraging independence

Camp life can be messy—particularly on a Scout campsite—and that’s all part of the experience. Our aim is to let children enjoy themselves while maintaining good hygiene to keep everyone healthy and well

Dietary Requirements

As part of our Nights Away training, all leaders follow food hygiene guidelines to ensure meals are prepared safely and hygienically.

We are able to accommodate **food allergies, intolerances, and special diets**, but it is essential that we are informed in advance.

Please speak to **the Event Leader or First Aider** ahead of the event to discuss any dietary requirements, including:

- **Allergies (including nut allergies):** Where there is a known nut allergy, we will ensure that no nut products are brought to camp.
- **Dairy-free / Gluten-free diets:** We will provide suitable alternatives for all meals. If your child prefers a specific brand, please let us know in advance.
- **Vegetarian / Vegan diets:** Alternatives will be provided where we are informed beforehand.
- If your child has recently chosen to follow a vegetarian or vegan diet, please let us know your expectations. Occasionally, children may change their minds while at camp—if you are happy for flexibility, please inform us; otherwise, we will support them in sticking to their chosen diet.

Food Preferences

While we aim to provide a variety of options at each mealtime, we are not able to cater for all individual likes and dislikes.

We provide a range of choices so young people can decide what they would like to eat.

Many children try and enjoy foods at camp that they may not usually eat at home.

We ensure that no child goes hungry and always have additional options available if needed.

Please do not send additional food with your child unless specifically requested by leaders. Any food brought to camp must be handed in on arrival so it can be stored safely and appropriately.

Inclusion

All young people are welcome to attend our Nights Away events. We recognise that some children may have additional needs that may not have been shared during regular section meetings.

Please speak to us in advance about anything you feel we should know. Sharing this information will not prevent your child from attending—rather, it helps us ensure they have the best possible experience and receive the right support during the event.