

SLRN 6: Beginners Guide for Adults in Scouting

Welcome

Whether you are new to Scouting or have decided to take on a leadership role after being a Member for a number of years, this fact sheet is for you.

ScOUTING is well known for its great enthusiasm and love of adventure; and by that we mean the Leaders too! Working with young people brings many rewards, including plenty of challenges and the increased friendship of adults from all walks of life, with similar interests to your own - we hope you will have lots of fun.

Whatever time you can afford to give to being a Leader, your help will be very welcome.

WHAT IS THE SCOUT ASSOCIATION?

The Scout Movement is a youth organisation, founded by Lord Baden-Powell. In Malta we have approximately 2500 members. All Beaver Scouts, Cub Scouts, Scouts, Venture Scouts, Rover Scouts, Leaders, Commissioners and Members of the Scout Fellowship who have made their Promise and paid the Island Headquarters Membership Subscription are Members of The Scout Association of Malta.

YOU, THE LEADER IN SCOUTING

Every Adult Member of The Scout Association who obtains an appointment and a warrant to be a Leader must accept the Aim of The Scout Association of Malta and the Method of achieving this Aim.

The Aim of The Scout Association of Malta is to promote the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential -as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities.



The Method of achieving the Aim of The Scout Association of Malta is to provide an enjoyable and attractive Balanced Programme of Activities that is based on the Scout Promise and Law and guided by Adult Leadership.

To become a Member of The Association you must recite the Scout Promise and Law at a ceremony specifically organised for the occasion. The Promise and Law can be found in the Introduction Booklet handed over to you already.

FAITH

The Scout Association's Members belong to many different faiths and religions. There are different forms of the Promise that can be made if the words above are not consistent with your religious obligations. Whatever the words though, the essential spirit of the Promise remains the same. Ask your Group Scout Leader if you are unsure about this.

So, what are you taking on?

Members of any section come wanting fun, adventure and friendship. Learning all their names can seem daunting at first, but it is important that you get to know their backgrounds and their parents/carers - you are taking on responsibility for their children!

A number of leaders (made up of the Section Leader, Assistants, helpers etc) are the adult team leaders and have the responsibility of running a sectional programme throughout the year. At times, Skills Instructors and parents/ carers may help with particular activities, transport etc.



What is the commitment required?

- Section meetings at least once a week for about two hours.
- You will need to meet regularly with the team of Leaders to plan ahead. Good planning will mean that everyone gets a chance to take part in the running of the meeting and some responsibilities can be shared out. It also helps you to be aware of the equipment you will need. Ideally Scouting needs to take place out of doors.
- No Section functions in isolation. There will be opportunities to meet and talk to the adults in the other Sections in your Group as well as the Group Scout Leader at regular Leaders' Meetings. It is here that you may wish to discuss progression of activities as well as individual Members who will be coming up say from the Beaver Scout Colony or moving into the Scout Troop.
- There will be opportunities to meet together with other Adult Leaders in your District at District Meetings and national events. This is always helpful in exchanging ideas and for finding out what is going on in Scouting generally.
- There are also Leader Training opportunities where you will meet other Leaders from around the Island to exchange ideas and develop your skills as a Leader.

REMEMBER:

Parents/carers entrust their children to you. You will need to be at the meeting place in good time and ensure that their safety is uppermost in your mind at all times. Good programme planning will help you in this.



The leadership team

The team of adults helping within any Section may be just yourself and one other Leader, or there may be a whole army of Leaders and Assistants. Everybody will have something to offer the Section. These adults may be:

- The Section Leader – who is an uniformed warranted Leader who regularly attends meetings and outings.
- Assistant Scout Leaders – who are uniformed warranted Leaders. They regularly attend meetings and outings.
- Section Assistants – who attend on a regular basis or parent helpers who help once or twice a term on a rota.
- Young Leaders – who are working on a service project as part of their own training scheme. These can be Ventures or Rovers who will support a section within the group.

Well organised team work will enable everybody to do their best for the Scouts.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A LEADER?

Well it is a question which we sometimes take for granted ...we are there to **guide** our cubs in what we believe is good for them. But our role as leaders goes beyond this. As Leaders, we have the responsibility of the section programme, which contributes to the development of the young person. This depends on the approach used by the Leader. In this regard encouraging young people to 'learn by doing' often means giving them responsibility and **even letting them make mistakes**. Learning by doing requires the Leader to know the capabilities of the his/her members so as not to overwhelm them or let them become bored.



An Adult Leader:

- is a person who, week after week, month after month, provides fun, adventure, challenges and learning for our active children.
- hurries home, eats a quick meal, puts on a uniform while answering the phone five times, and arrives smiling to meet the youngsters, all in 30 minutes.
- gives up weekends and home comforts to teach children about crafts, nature and God.
- is somebody who can put up a tent in the rain and dark, find lost boots, dry wet bedding, handle asthma, blisters, homesickness and children's excitement on four hours sleep and go home talking of the next camp.
- is a person who waits in the cold with the last kid, whose parent forgot the time.
- attends meetings to learn and plan, has an expandable spare room and a head full of ideas.
- can lead a song, teach a skill, play a game, perform a ceremony, listen to a child and say a prayer.
- willingly fills the gap so that a child will not be let down.
- is committed, caring, hardworking, sturdy, strong, reliable, with a wealth of knowledge, a store of skills and a heart of gold.
- gets little spoken thanks, but knows the spirit is passed on.

Originally by:

Jean Buydens – Scouts Canada



THE SECTION PROGRAMME

Scouts do not join the movement to be personally developed!! Or to be educated!! They join to have fun and to do things with their friends. The Sectional Programme therefore includes activities such as camping, hikes, trekking, nature hikes and cultural visits as well as weekly meetings. The weekly meeting is used for team and confidence building, games, and to plan and prepare some of the skills needed for the outdoor activities: first aid, mapping, fire lighting and survival.

Through these activities, we as Leaders, need to look into the member's personal development. The stages we need to look into are:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Social
- Spiritual
- Character
- Emotional

So, we as Scouters, must be aware of what we say and how we act in front of our members even amongst the leaders themselves. Our attitude and way of talking will be looked upon as being good by our scouts and we have the responsibility to teach and show these kids what the values of a good adult are.

A Balanced Programme

Each Sectional Programme is based on different Programme areas. Each area represents a different development area/s in a young person's life.

Each Individual Programme Area contains lots of ideas for activities, using a variety of methods. By including ideas from each zone on a regular basis, you will be delivering a Balanced Programme to members. Sectional Programmes will be delved in further details during the Basic Adult Courses.



Awards and Badges

The Membership Award

A young person joining the any section will start working on their Membership Award (in the Beaver's Section this is called the Membership Award, in Cubs Scouts :Tenderpaw Award in the Troop: Tenderfoot Award and so on). It covers the basics of traditions and practices of Scouting.

Progressive Badges

Progressive Badges are awarded on an on-going basis to reward any kid on his progress. Each section has different way of working towards these progressive badges.

Proficiency Badges

There is a choice of Proficiency Badges. These special interest badges are built around the Balanced Programme and are designed to further develop a Scout's interest in a variety of subjects.

Scouts with Special Needs

It is the policy of The Scout Association of Malta, that all members of the Movement be seen as individuals and that they are regarded equally whatever their abilities or disabilities. They should be encouraged to undertake all activities in the programme, but in order to develop their full potential, some of these may need to be modified in consultation with the member , all the Leaders involved and the parents/carers. When admitting a young person with special needs into a Section, it is important to remember that if they are to progress through Scouting it will be necessary to discuss the situation with the Leaders of other Sections and the parents/carers at the appropriate time.



Camps and Weekend Camps

Ask any Scout what they like best about being a Scout and most of them will reply campings, abseiling, adventure and the lot. Most young people love being out of doors and the campings are very special and certainly very different from school trips! It is a chance to try some special activities that cannot be done at the regular Meeting.

Leaders need to be specially qualified before they are allowed to take Scouts away on a Camp or holiday.

The Leaders will often need to take along extra adult help to assist with the catering or equipment. This extra help may be Scouts, Venture Scouts, Skills Instructors (for special activities) or parents / carers to assist with general supervision.

Administration

There are a few simple guidelines, which are the key to running a successful section.

- Keep administration to a minimum
- Share administration amongst your Leaders

Records

A record of each Scout's personal details and progress is needed. These may be kept on the Scout Record Cards to be kept in a loose-leaf folder by the Scout Leader. Some groups also use a Points System, which they have devised and use as motivation in inspection, games, attendance at events and any other way the Leaders Team decide.

The main thing to remember with records is to keep them simple and understandable. Refer to SLRN11 - Record Keeping for guide lines of what type of records must be kept by each section.



Money

Any section is not expected to keep complicated accounts. A precise way of recording money matters will be explained by the Group Treasurer. It is necessary to keep simple credit / debit records to cover money involved in activities. Separate funds and accounts may also be kept, e.g. a Cub Scout camp. The Group Treasurer will inspect these records at regular intervals.

For further information see Section Management and Records in SLRN11 – Record Keeping.

PROGRAMME PLANNING

A good Programme does not happen by accident. The key is to plan the Programme for your weekly meetings, outings and camps. Programme planning should involve all adults in the Section together with members. That way you will be able to share ideas and work as a team.

Planning in itself is a skill, and like all skills, you become better at it the more you practice it. You can learn from your mistakes and build on your successes to achieve better Scouting for your section.

You will need to encourage planning in three stages:

- Long Term - A year's programme, which may lead up to the activities for the annual Scout camp.
- Medium Term - An overall theme for a few weeks or advanced planning for seasonal activities.
- Short-term - Planning detailed programmes for Weekly Meetings.

This method will help you and your Leaders to set targets and then consider what progress is made, both in terms of the activities and the development of the individual Cub Scout.



Methods

As part of providing a Balanced Programme, you should aim to use a variety of methods within your section. They will make meetings more varied and provide interesting themes.

Scout methods for example include:

Games, Outdoors, Team challenges, Visits and Visitors, Prayer, worship and reflection, and making/creating things.

Whatever theme or activities you try in your programme, the following underlying ways of working should always be used.

- fun
- getting on with others
- activity
- keeping the Promise
- personal development
- working together
- responsibility



RESOURCES - WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

People

As a Leader in Scouting, you will receive a lot of help and support from other Leaders. The first person you will be able to turn to will be your Section Leader, Group Scout Leader and your Personal Training Adviser (P.T.A.) a more experienced Leader who will be your support, during and after your training. Of course, other Leaders in your Group, especially your Group Scout Leader, are there to encourage, advise and support you.

There is the opportunity to meet Leaders from all Sections in Scouting and to share their ideas and experiences through Leader Training. Leader Training builds on the skills you already have and helps you to develop new ones. It is also challenging, practical, relevant and above all, enjoyable. Any of the following people will be pleased to be of help:

- Other Leaders in your Pack
- Your Personal Training Adviser (P.T.A.)
- Beaver Scout Leader
- Scout Leader
- Group Scout Leader
- Other Leaders, parents/carers and teachers
- Specialist organisations, e.g. Police, Fire Brigade, SPCA, etc.
- Young Leaders- these are an integral part of your Leadership team and should be used to their full potential.



Books and publications

The Policy, Organisation and Rules of the Scout Association (POR) is the rule book for Scouting and is a valuable aid for you.

There are many books and publications packed with ideas for handicrafts, songs, stories and other activities for this age range. A browse through your local children's bookshop or library would probably be the best guide to what is available. Internet is also a good tool for such a search.

If you keep a record of what you do with your Section you will soon have your own book full of tried and tested ideas which you can share with other Leaders.

Other Associations' programme may also serve as a springboard of ideas however, we feel we must draw your attention that such programmes varies from ours and the educational objectives and cultural differences may differentiate an activity. Use these resources intelligently.

Good luck and many hours of happy Scouting!

