

Including All Scenarios and suggested response

1 You are a commissioner supporting units

An experienced young leader has become an adult leader with her unit and is attending her first district meeting. Her ex rainbow, brownie and guide leaders will be there and it is a tightly knit district of 'buddies'.

How would you make sure that she feels confident to speak up at the meeting and that everyone values what she says?

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/policies/equality-and-diversity-policy/age/>

Response

If the leader hasn't already attended a district meeting as a young leader, talk her through how a meeting runs. At the meeting, make sure she will be sitting next to someone she is comfortable with, for example her unit leader or a buddy from outside the unit. Welcome everyone with a particular welcome to her attending as an adult leader. Show by example how you value her contributions. If she is reluctant to speak up, don't single her out for attention, but go round the room inviting everyone by name to give their opinion. Don't force anyone to speak who is not happy doing so.

By chairing the meeting effectively, you can achieve a balance where everyone feels valued and they value everyone else. If any problems occur, try to deal with them at the time. Failing that, make sure to speak to the person concerned as soon as possible after the meeting.

2 You are a commissioner supporting units

A leader has moved into your district and joined a ranger unit. The parents have concerns as they believe she is transsexual.

How would you manage that?

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/running-your-unit/including-all/supporting-trans-members/>

Response

If approached by parents, use the language from the Girlguiding website – about transgender.

"Girlguiding promotes an inclusive and safe environment where all girls and young women, including trans girls and young women, should feel accepted. Non-binary people assigned female at birth and trans boys as new young members based on their sex should also feel welcome.

As per our Royal Charter, we uphold our promise to support all girls and young women including trans girls and young women.

In line with our values of inclusion and changing as the lives of girls change, it's important that we welcome trans girls and women. Our UK-wide annual survey into the views of girls and young women, the Girls' Attitudes Survey, helps us to understand the changing lives of girls today. It found that 86% of girls and young women aged 11-21 believe people should not be discriminated against because they are transgender.

As a girl-only organisation with a trans-inclusive Equality and diversity policy, we treat trans girls and women according to the gender they have transitioned, or are proposing to transition, to. Meaning trans girls and trans women are welcome to be a part of our great charity".

If parents aren't satisfied,, talk to your county commissioner and ask for advice from Girlguiding's inclusion team..

3 You are a commissioner supporting other local commissioners

You appoint a leader with a hearing impairment as arts adviser to your division team.

What provision would you make at your division meetings?

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/how-were-being-our-best/updates-for-our-members/tips-to-include-disabled-members-and-girls/>

The leader is likely to know at least one other person at the meeting and be participating in her own district meetings. Suggest they might like to travel together. Make sure you have circulated the agenda and reports beforehand, consider giving her a copy of your chair's agenda, so that she knows what will be discussed and what her specific role is.

Discuss with her ahead of the meeting, how she likes people to communicate with her. Ask whether she has a communication device. Ask whether she would like to explain to other committee members what would support her or whether she would like you to do so either before or at the start of the meeting..

For example, if she lip reads, ensure that she has a clear view of everyone in the meeting and consider the following:

Sit or stand at the same level

Face the light with head up, looking directly at the her

Make sure not to cover your mouth, eat or drink as you are speaking.

There are various websites with advice, but the best person to advise you is the leader herself.

4 You are a commissioner supporting units

A female couple would like to start a new guide unit. A few leaders have never knowingly met a gay married couple before and tell you that they are worried about how they should interact with them.

What advice would you give to the leaders?

What support might you need to give the married couple?

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/policies/equality-and-diversity-policy/marriage-and-civil-partnership/>

Response

You may be surprised that this is even an issue, however, as a commissioner you need realise that not everyone has the same experiences. Ask the leaders how they would get to know a heterosexual partnership, one a leader and the other a unit helper. Explain that it will be the same for a gay couple, just act naturally. Treat them with the usual consideration and respect they would for any other new couple. exchange general information about themselves but don't overshare or probe. Suggest they read the relevant pages on the website and let them know that you are available to talk over any further concerns.

5 You are a commissioner supporting units

Some refugee families have moved into your district and some of their children would like to join the units. Your leaders ask how they can make them feel welcome.

What advice would you give?

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/running-your-unit/including-all/social-inclusion/refugee-and-asylum-seeking-members/>

Response

Try to find someone who speaks the relevant language to help with communications with both parents and girls. Tell them how things are run, support they can have and what to expect.. Find out if any current members know the new girls. They may be at school together or are neighbours. Consider explaining and preparing current members before the new girls' first meeting. Say it's okay to be curious but not to ask lots of difficult questions. The new girls may not want to talk about their experiences at all.

Smile and be welcoming, learn their names and be able to pronounce them properly. Consider visual timetables to help understanding. Be aware that whistles or loud bangs such as balloons bursting, could cause alarm, reminding the refugees of air raids.

Learn a bit about their culture and some basic words in their language such as thank you, hello and goodbye. Speak clearly and naturally, buddy them up with another member.

At their first meetings, make it easy for them to join in. Have games, crafts and other activities which don't rely on language

6 You are a commissioner supporting other local commissioners

You are holding a division camp and members with several different faiths. will be attending.

How will you make provision for them? Consider dietary requirements, religious observance and restrictions on activities etc

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/running-your-unit/including-all/religious-differences-and-guiding/>

Response

Research specific needs of the faiths concerned and consider:

Food – for example, kosher, halal, vegetarian, separate preparation

Members may need to pray at certain times of the day. Make sure there is a separate quiet space and time away from activities

They may need a space for ritual washing

Ramadan fasting

Are there any days when they won't be able to attend for religious reasons, for example those of the Jewish faith?

Are they allowed to participate in all activities?

Remember not all members of a faith keep the same observances, unit leaders should be aware of individual requirements

7 You are a commissioner supporting other local commissioners

You are holding a division activity day for all sections. Some young members will be attending who have autism, ADHD and epilepsy.

What do you need to consider and what provision would you make?

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/how-were-being-our-best/updates-for-our-members/tips-to-include-disabled-members-and-girls/>

Unit leaders should already have adjustment plans for the individuals, so can give you the information to help you make appropriate provision. Ask them to share, on a need-to-know basis, what would be helpful.

Check permission slips for information concerning additional needs.

Ensure you have adequate first aid provision and equipment, including a separate area and a grab bag.

Give short, clear instructions in the order in which you want them carried out.

Have a quiet area with seating, colouring books and pencils and puzzles available,

The girls can then retreat if they need to have time away from a busy, noisy environment.

8 You are a commissioner supporting units

One of the leaders in your district has become a carer for her elderly mother who has dementia. The other leaders in her unit now think she is unreliable and not pulling her weight.

How would you support both the leader and the others in her unit?

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/running-your-unit/including-all/social-inclusion/carers/>

Response

Meet informally with the individual at a time and place convenient to them. Show them your support for their new circumstances and find out how you, as their commissioner and the district can support them.

Find out their concerns and discuss whether their current role is still the right one for them or if they would like a change of role.

Check what they are happy to have shared with their team members. Let them know that they are still very much part of your district team.

Meet with the unit team to understand their concerns and to help them to understand the challenges which the leader, as a carer faces, Share as far as you information as you agreed with the leader. Discuss how they can be flexible to include the leader if she would like to continue in her role.

9 You are a commissioner supporting units

Two sisters aged 5 and 8, are fostered by a local family, which is keen for them to join a rainbow and brownie unit respectively. The girls have had a very difficult life up till now and they have some behavioural issues. The unit leaders are keen to support the family and make sure the girls are welcomed into their units. They are

concerned at the potential affect the issues may have on the other young members..

What advice would you give them?

How would you ensure you give ongoing support as needed?

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/running-your-unit/including-all/social-inclusion/children-in-care/>

Response

Advise leaders to meet with the foster parents, without the girls present. They can gain an understanding of the girls and their potentially challenging behaviour. They can ask if there are any particular triggers. Also, whether there are already behaviour management plans in place with the schools and in the home. These could be helpful in managing behaviour in the meeting place.

Explain that Girlguiding leaders are volunteers, without specialist training, but will do all they can to help the girls settle into the units. Agree with foster parents how the girls will be introduced to the unit and complete adjustment plans, if appropriate. Consider whether a meeting with the girls and/or a trial visit accompanied by the foster parent, would be a good idea. Agree the best way to keep communication open.

10 You are a commissioner supporting other local commissioners

Your division includes a district which is very mixed, with one area of deprivation next to an area of wealth. Your predecessor had, without much consultation, combined the 2 areas into one new district, to try to solve a problem by splitting a very large district. Members of all ages from the 2 contrasting areas are not getting on. The girls don't mix and call each other names. The adult leaders disagree about district events. The better off area is used to putting on large costly events. Leaders in the area of deprivation are used to creating fun events at low cost..

How would you deal with this situation to make sure each 'side' is happy with the outcome?

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/running-your-unit/including-all/social-inclusion/members-living-in-poverty/>

Response

There was little consultation prior to the merging of the 2 areas, so think whether it would be a good idea to consult with all leaders to check that this was the best way forward. They may prefer to return to the previous districts or is a different split possible?

If the decision is to remain together, can they find grants to support the poorer area?

It might be necessary to have a difficult conversation with all the leaders. If so, you may want to remind them of the Code of Conduct and that they need to find a way to work together. They would need to find a way to understand and balance each other's needs.

11 You are a commissioner supporting units

A unit leader is about to retire. One of her assistant leaders is very keen to take over and is 6 months pregnant. The other team members say they aren't sure about that, as they know what it is like to be heavily pregnant and to have a young baby. They do not want to become the unit leader.

How would you deal with this situation?

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/running-your-unit/including-all/social-inclusion/maternity-pregnancy-and-adoption/>

Response

First check the Girlguiding website to make sure you understand what you need to remember when you talk to the pregnant leader. The first part says, 'No volunteer should be treated less favourably because they're pregnant, breastfeeding or have recently given birth, without good reason (like a health and safety risk). All practical changes must be made to accommodate them'.

You should bear this in mind when you talk to the leader.

First, you thank her for being willing to take on the extra responsibility. Ask her if she has any plans. She might have thought things through already and have everything organised. Ask her if she would want to take a break around the time of the baby's birth. Suggest you meet with her and the rest of the team to make necessary arrangements.

Prepare for this meeting. It would give the other members an opportunity to share their concerns. Help them work out the best way which works for them all. You would be key in making sure that the meeting results in everyone being satisfied.

12 You are a commissioner supporting units

During a unit visit, you heard the assistant leader speak in a derogatory manner about a young black member. The child is the only black person in the unit.

How do you deal with that?

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/running-your-unit/including-all/talking-about-race-and-racism/>

Response

At the earliest opportunity and in an appropriate place, speak to the leader concerned. Remind them of what they have said, of the Code of Conduct. and of the Equality Act 2010. Suggest that they read the appropriate pages on the website and that they undertake the 'celebrating every girl' web training on the Learning Platform if available to her. You could talk to your county training adviser about putting on such a training for the leader to attend.

Make a dated written note of the incident and of your conversation with the leader. Does this happen often? Is it conscious or unconscious bias.?

13 You are a commissioner supporting other local commissioners

One of your team is concerned as she is often asked why Girlguiding says it is an inclusive organisation, but is only open to girls and women. She asks you for advice on how to talk to non-members about this.

What would you say? <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-volunteers/policies/equality-and-diversity-policy/>

Response

Suggest that the leader reads and familiarises herself with the wording on the website relating to sex. You could offer her the opportunity to practise giving the explanation to you at a convenient time. for you both. You could suggest she might like to refer to the annual Girls Attitude Survey.

Here are excerpts from the website.

'Sex (except that we are a trans inclusive, girl-only space). We believe we best meet the needs of girls and young women by being a girl-only charity, led by girls and young women. This is part of our Royal Charter (the document that explains how we run) and our research shows our young members support this. While all our staff positions are open to everyone, only girls can become members. Some of our volunteer positions are only open to women too.'

'Girlguiding is an inclusive organisation and all members must follow our Code of Conduct and policies.

Does this mean that Girlguiding will let boys join in future? No. Providing a girl-only space is key to what Girlguiding offers. Since this girl-only space is a way of achieving our aims of enabling girls and young women to develop their potential, it would not be seen as discrimination'.

Cindy Barnes 21.5.23