

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 1

Part 1

One of your Brownie leaders telephones you at 8pm to say there may be a disclosure relating to one of the Brownies at this evening's meeting. The Brownie was crying and her friend said she is worried because her uncle is coming to stay. Last time, he came into her bedroom and she didn't like it. The Brownie would only say that she was being silly, which is what her mum had said before - that she's being silly and cannot stop anyone from going into her bedroom. She has to be nice. The Brownie clearly didn't want to talk anymore and she just wanted to get on with the craft activity.

The leader said she wanted to tell you about this because she didn't know whether she should be doing anything, or perhaps she should just be keeping an eye out?

The leader asks: **'What do you think?'**

Part 2

The following week, the same leader telephones you to say that the same Brownie would not join in with the activities this week. Whilst she wasn't crying, she seemed withdrawn. The leader spoke with the Brownie, and the Brownie said the uncle came yesterday. When her mum and dad were out at the pub, her uncle came into her bedroom to play on her Playstation. The leader said that when she asked the Brownie why that bothered her, the Brownie said that they have to play the games he wants to play and watch what he wants to watch. It's a squash on the bed, and her uncle smells awful, but her mum says she has to be nice to her uncle as he doesn't come to stay often. The leader said the Brownie 'just looked so sad' at home time.

The leader said it was not the Brownie's mum who collected her, as her parents have an arrangement where one drops off and the other picks up.

The leader said she didn't know whether she should have let the Brownie go home - what if there was more to this?

The leader asks: **'What do you think?'**

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 1 *continued*

Part 3

The leader telephones you to say she had phoned the mother of the Brownie and the mother said that her daughter has to learn to be nice to him, and, as she didn't have brothers or sisters she found it difficult when her uncle came to stay. However, her uncle is like a brother to her - he's 17 and the Brownie is 7. The mother said her daughter is being silly and she knows it.

The leader says she still feels uncomfortable and asks: **'What do you think?'**

Part 4

The leader telephones you again, during the next Brownie meeting. The leader sounds upset - she explained that the Brownie had seemed happier this week and when the leader asked the Brownie how she was, she said: 'I'm happy now. Uncle has gone, so I don't have to share my TV or play mummies and daddies with him anymore.' The leader says she had said to the Brownie: 'Why don't you like playing mummies and daddies?'. The Brownie said: "Because it hurts when he is on top of me". The leader asked the Brownie if she had told her mother that her uncle had hurt her, and the Brownie said that her mother said 'Stop telling tales' because the uncle had said that he was sorry and that he plays rough, and that the Brownie is a 'softie'.

The leader says she is worried, and she asks: **'What do you think?'**

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 2

Part 1

A parent has telephoned you because you are the Rainbow leader's 'big boss'. The mother says she will withdraw her daughter unless there is a new leader found, because the current leader is 'rough' with the girls. The mother says the leader is loud and shouts at the girls, and the other leaders. The mother says she has seen the leader being impatient and 'rolling her eyes' after telling off one of the other helpers because 'that craft table should have been cleared by now'.

How do you respond to the parent?

Part 2

Initial enquiries indicate that this parent had previously complained to the Rainbow leader that her daughter had come home from Rainbows upset. Apparently the Rainbow leader's daughter (who is an older Rainbow) had stopped her child from joining in with one of the activities. The Rainbow leader had recorded that 'Mrs X complained that her daughter had allegedly been excluded from an activity. However, there was no evidence that there was any substance to the complaint'.

What do you say, or do, now?

Part 3

You are contacted by another parent who says she also wants to complain about the same Rainbow leader, who has shouted at her daughter and made her cry. The mother reports that her daughter says the leader was so angry she thought she was going to hit her. The mother said she had not spoken to the leader because she didn't want to be fobbed off. She believed her daughter, and she did not think the leader was fit to be a leader because of her bad temper. The mother said that other parents have been unhappy about the leader, but do not want to rock the boat because there is no other unit for the girls to go to.

There are now two concerns about the same leader. The second parent complainant is the sister-in-law of the first parent complainant.

What bearing does this have on the case?

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 2 *continued*

Part 4

The Rainbow leader denies she has shouted in an angry way and that she has ‘never hit a child in anger’. On further investigation, one of the helpers at the Rainbow group says the leader ‘is loud’; she also shares that the two complainants have also complained at school about the daughter of the Rainbow leader, saying that she had pushed both of their daughters in the playground. The helper asks whether anyone is aware that the boyfriend of the Rainbow leader is the ex-husband of the first complainant?

What bearing does this have on the case? What do you say, and do, now?

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 3

Part 1

You receive a call from an experienced leader late at night. She tells you that one of her young leaders, Carla, is causing her concern. She says that after the Brownie meeting, where Carla helps out, she noticed some boys were hanging around. She realised they were waiting for Carla to finish.

She approached them and they said they are concerned about Carla, saying she is not nice and she is doing things to Paul (her boyfriend).

She recognised one or two of the boys she knows through Scouts and they have siblings in the Brownie unit she runs.

What action should you take, if any?

Part 2

The leader said she was concerned, so she decided she would talk to Carla at the next meeting. It appears that Paul has been sending 'indecent pictures to Carla and pressuring her to respond with pictures. Carla said that he forced her to send them and now he is saying he will show them to everyone if she does not send more. She decided to speak with her mum and see what can be done.

The following night the Scout leader rings up and asks to talk about Carla and Paul's relationship as he feels it has gone too far and he is very worried about Paul's sudden behaviour change. Paul was very involved in drama groups, which is where he met Carla. However, he has recently stopped attending any activities and his attendance has dropped with his mum saying he is unwell and feeling sick.

What action should you take, if any?

Part 3

You decide to talk to Carla's mum, who says that Carla has previously been challenged for using sexualised language, and she tends to hang around with a much younger age group. The school counsellor says she is obsessed with sex and the mum is worried this business will bring in social services again, and asks you not to report it. She will talk to Carla.

What action should you take, if any?

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 3 *continued*

Part 4

The following day, Carla texts the leader and asks to talk to them as she is feeling suicidal. Alarmed by this, she calls you, her commissioner, and asks if you can go together to talk to Carla. When you get to the café Carla is very distressed, saying why will no one believe her that she is the victim and Paul is blackmailing her into taking off her clothes. She says she has broken it off with him and won't see him again.

What action should you take, if any?

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 4

Part 1

A leader rings you to say that at Guides tonight some of the girls have come to her very upset about indecent images they have received on their phones from other young people in their school. The girls explain that they had some photos taken during the last residential when everyone was mucking about with their mobiles. The leader asked to see the photos and the girls became very upset, and said they were so ashamed and wouldn't show them. The unit is predominantly from one school in the area.

What advice will you give, if any?

Part 2

Later that evening, you receive a call from one of the parents/carers who was shouting and appalled that Guiding has allowed indecent images to be taken at the last residential and said they would be going to the police. You manage to calm the parent/carer down and inform them that leaders have not seen the images. The parent/carer tells you that the images are of the girls semi-naked in indecent poses in their tent. You say you are shocked and will talk to all the leaders to tell the girls in the group about the dangers of taking and sharing indecent images.

What action should you take, if any?

Part 3

Later that night the leader sends you a series of emails from parents/carers who are concerned about these images, and the lack of control of the group while on the residential. You speak to the school in the morning, as you are a teaching assistant (TA) there and report the incident to the designated safeguarding officer. The officer says the police should be called, and promptly calls them. The police come to the school and the parents/carers are informed. That evening, one of the other leaders calls you and you have an argument, as they feel you should not have reported the incident, as it was harmless fun and it was a Guiding matter - not a school matter!

What action should you take, if any?

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 4 *continued*

Part 4

The following week, you receive a call from one of the leaders saying that at the meeting, tonight, the other leader had shouted at the girls. She was telling them off, saying it was disgusting and stupid, and didn't they know how bad this makes Girlguiding look. She also said to the girls who were in the images that they had to leave as they could not be trusted to behave. The leader thinks this is very unfair and has called for advice. **Discuss**

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 5

Part 1

You receive a phone call from a leader who you know is very able and works with young people as her profession.

She says she overheard a conversation between two Guides, where one admits she is having a relationship with an older boy from school (she said he was 14-years-old) and he wants to go to bed with her. However, the leader said she was not sure whether this is true, as the girl has been known to be a storyteller and unreliable.

What action do you take, or advice you give, if any?

Part 2

A week later the leader calls you again to say that the girl's mother has now called to say her daughter has been in an inappropriate relationship, and she wants you to talk to the girl about healthy relationships. You decide to have this conversation, and the girl admits she is in love and had been thinking about going to bed with him. However, she had told her friends she had sex with this boy. The leader is not sure the girl is telling the truth.

What action do you take, or advice you give, if any?

Part 3

You call the leader back, as you have not heard anything, and she tells you that the girl is now settled and, as she had thought, it was all a 'storm in a teacup' and no further action is needed.

What further action, if any, do you take?

Part 4

The leader resists any further discussion. She states that as she works with young people in her day role, she is perfectly capable of dealing with the incident, and she was right - the girl has now denied everything, saying, when questioned, that it was all a story.

How does this affect the actions or recommendations you may make as a commissioner?

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 6

Part 1

You receive a call from a unit leader who has taken a group on an international trip. At one point during the day, they had lost one of the girls, they had been taking a head count after coming out of a museum and noticed she wasn't there. One leader had gone inside to find her and found her upset and trying to talk to a security guard. The leader had asked her what had happened, and she said she had gone to the toilet without telling anyone.

What are your next steps?

Part 2

On getting back to the hostel that evening, you check in with the girl to make sure she is okay. She is still a bit shook up, so you call her parents. You call and speak to the mum and explain what happened. The mum gets annoyed at her daughter, and says she is always doing stuff like this and has no sense of responsibility. You pass her on to her daughter, but at the end of the call the girl is more upset than before.

What do you say or do, now?

Part 3

They carry on with the trip, keeping a close eye on the girl, partly to make sure she doesn't wander off again but also to make sure she is okay.

On arriving back, you have gone to the pick up point to support the trip leader; and to speak to the mum about the incident again, she is not angry but you can see that she is still annoyed by it all and when she collects her daughter grabs her arm forcefully and doesn't say a kind word to her.

What action should you take, if any?

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 6 *continued*

Part 4

When you next meet up as a group to discuss the trip, you notice that the same girl is more reserved than she normally is. When you ask her if she is okay, she asks if you can speak to her alone. You stay in the same room but step aside from everyone else, you mention to her that you are here to help, but that you cannot promise to keep anything confidential. The girl starts crying and says to you that she is useless and that she never gets anything right, she thinks her mum hates her and doesn't know how to make things better.

What do you say or do, now?

Assessing concerns/ complaints scenarios

Scenario 7

Part 1

At the end of one of your unit meetings a Brownie's mum approaches you, she explains that her and her husband are going through a divorce. She does not explain any more but mentions that her daughter is struggling with this and therefore asks that you are especially sensitive to her behaviours and let her know if any concerns arise.

What action do you take, if any?

Part 2

At your next meeting, during an activity on families you are particularly aware of how the Brownie is. You notice that she looks upset, and when you ask her if she is okay, she says to you that her Dad is not like other Dads because he doesn't love them as he hurts them. You reassure the Brownie that she is very lovable and that you know her mummy loves her, when you feel she is feeling a bit better you move the activity on.

What do you do following this?

Part 3

At the end of the meeting, when there is only this Brownie and two others left, the Dad turns up. He smells of alcohol and the Brownie hides behind you. He starts demanding that you give him his daughter. He is recorded as a contact and has picked her up once before.

What action should you take?

Part 4

Just then the other mothers and the Brownie's mum turn up together. The other mums take all three Brownies into another room and the Brownies mum says she will call the police if the Dad doesn't leave. Eventually he does leave. The Mum starts crying to you and shares that he has started drinking lots and at times has become violent, she is getting a divorce but doesn't know what else to do.

How action should you take, if any?