

Three Spires Scout Group, Magherafelt

Report: 2021-2022

Background and Administration

Three Spires Scout Group is a Charity which has management responsibility for all young people and volunteers involved in Squirrel, Beaver, Cub and Scouts within the Group. Three Spires Scout Group consists of approximately 40 young people between the ages of 4 and 14 years old.

The current trustees of the Charity are:

Joanne Martin
Amanda Gourley
Lynn Donaghy
Julie-Ann Mannis
Donna Ross

Finance

The main income of the Three Spires Scout Group in the reporting period has been through subscriptions from parents and grants gained from the Education Authority.

The major areas of performance that the trustees highlight for the reporting period are as follows:

1. Grants gained from the Education Authority enabled the Group to undertake activities and programmes that enhanced the learning and development experience for all the young people.
2. No external fundraising was undertaken as a response to the leaders and committee's awareness of the financial challenges facing members, their families and the wider community.
3. Subscriptions from parents are key as they enable the leaders to provide high quality, stimulating and responsive activities in a safe and secure environment. Subscriptions also enable the leaders to purchase materials, plan future programmes, camps etc. without waiting for fundraising to be secured.

Summary of highlights

2021-2022 was another busy year for all four groups and we were delighted to welcome the Squirrels into the Scout Group.

Squirrels

During Covid and in the imminent time after the Squirrel leaders kept parents up to date through WhatsApp and a pack was put together appropriate to the age group and sent to each Squirrel parent for each child. They were to follow the instructions which were inside the pack and as Squirrels are much younger mum, dad, brother or sisters were to help where possible. This was all explained within each part of what to do. They were given parts of badges which we had started in the Squirrel Drey meetings pre hand to complete at home and send me the evidence, via what's app pictures when each one complete badge was finished. This was done very successfully. The badges earned were: Year 1 and Year 2 Badges were earned, All Together Badge, Be Active Activity Badge, Squirrel Scout Explorer Outdoors, All adventure Challenge Award, Squirrel

Appreciation Day Badge. Well Done Badge for fun. Anything the Squirrels were allowed to take part in when the online tools came and the online zoom calls came, they did so. If reordered and sent to me, as evidence, they got rewarded for this too. I'm a Squirrel Badge, Squirrel Scout Exciting Badge, Go Wild Activity, Feel Good Activity, Smile Badge, My First Adventure, Local Superhero Activity Badge and All About Me Award Badge.

When restrictions eased we encourage the Squirrels to attend for face to face outdoor activities and then moved inside. Track and trace and covid monitoring was continuous.

Beavers

Similar to the Squirrels a pack appropriate for the age group and badge work was created and sent to each Beaver. The Badges we had started in our Beaver meetings, they were told to carry on and get them completed. The Pack also contained a letter outlining the need for supervision and support particularly when undertaking more demanding or risky tasks. Parents/carers sent pics via Whatsapp to show progress and completion.

The Beaver Colony also used Zoom to build that personal communication and sense of team. Parents were always present and further tasks were undertaken, evidenced and badges gained along the way. The Beavers also took part in UK wide activities, e.g. walking with Sir Tom – beavers were encouraged to go walking, when it was Sir Tom's Birthday got them to make a birthday cards, send the Beaver leader and these were sent to London to Sir Tom's. We also supported the NHS and made lots of rainbows and put them up all over the place, in windows, doors and send some to other places to put up also.

Similar to the Kindness Post Boxes the Beavers drew some lovely coloured pictures, wrote letters etc and then these were distributed to the various care homes around the area, in particular 3 that we would have visited in the past. They wrote what their picture was about on the back along with their name. The managers got in touch with me to say what a great idea, that all homes were so delighted to get these.

Beavers also got the opportunity to take part in Camps@Home for the 2nd year and these were well received by Beavers and their families. Beavers had Beaver Rally Day at Home on the 15th May 2021 which went on all day to 8 pm bed time. All Beavers and some Squirrels joined in also and did a number of activities to help to make it a good Rally Day and enjoy all the activities there was on offer and to gain the badges they wanted too.

Badge work achieved:

Well done badges for fun, Year 1 and Year 2 were gained by some, Creative Badges, Book Reader Badges, Cyclist Badges, Personal Challenge Badges, Beaver Activity Gardener, Camp @ Home 1 and 11 badges, Science Badges, Air Activities, Hobbies Badges, Cook Badges, Camp Craft Badges, Explorer Badges, adapted with family, Safety Badges, Hike 1 Badges, Space Badges and 3 Bronze Awards were gained

Cubs and Scouts

Cubs and Scouts were the main groups to be adversely affected by covid and its impact on their social connections. Due to our numbers we joined the 2 groups together. We used Zoom for online meetings but found these to be ineffective in enabling all the young people to engage however we did work with cubs and scouts to undertake a number of key areas of scouting which included the development of key skills and learning. A group of 6 cubs and scouts researched various countries and compiled a short video of their chosen nation. The cubs and scouts really enjoyed finding out about the food, culture, language and something different to share and then through working with The Nerve Centre they put together fantastic little videos to share with the rest of the members. When covid restrictions eased and we were able to meet outdoors we did lots of fun and challenging tasks, including tree art, a nature trail, a litter pick in the local community, stone painting and planning for our post covid world.

Like the Beavers the Cubs and Scouts took part in Camp@Home and worked on key badges that included their digital badge, community badge, arts and crafts and the world around us. The Cub and Scout year finished with day trips to three places that none of them had been to before: Marble Arch Caves, Exploris Aquarium and The Lakes at Craigavon.

As a Scout Group we supported the Australian Scout Association and the bush fires which decimated their local communities by buying fundraising badges. This not only raised awareness of the environmental challenges but also demonstrated our world wide community in scouting.

Our Public Benefit

Three Spires Scout Group is committed to ensuring that the Scouts grow intellectually and spiritually; that they make a positive difference within their local community and are integral to it; and that all activities are undertaken in a safe and secure environment. We achieve this in a number of ways: Programmes for all units are developed in line with Scouting guidance and activities are planned so that the young people have the ability to achieve badges, accreditation and recognition as they progress throughout the Group. Each group encourages the young people to take responsibility for their achievements and will divide the young people into packs/patrols giving leadership responsibility, goals and aspirations for the year ahead. Young people are encouraged and supported to not only provide leadership but also peer support, friendship and guidance to all members within their unit. Scouts, irrespective of their age, are also reminded of their Scouting promise which includes the commitment of spiritual growth and community love. Young people are also encouraged to self-reflect particularly as they move up the units so that they can take part in the planning of programmes but also evaluate how they have been achieved. Leaders also share experiences with each other so that the young people are individually supported as they grow and develop throughout the Scouting community. All leaders are very conscious of the scouting role within the wider local community. Many activities will bring in local people to share their skills, experiences, and talents so that the young people have a wider experience and understanding of the world around them. All units within the Scout Group are committed to supporting the local community and all young people made the rainbows to support the NHS which were displayed proudly in their homes; they also wrote regularly or drew pictures to older family members who were living alone or to members in the local residential centres who had no or few visitors. Involvement in Scouting also supports the educational attainment and personal development of young people. Through participation in learning activities Scouts of all ages have a wider understanding of key issues such as global warming, other countries; they learn practical skills, and as they become more independent, confident and self-assured they reach out of their comfort zones and friendship groups to achieve tasks. We have seen them they encourage and support each other to undertake challenges and they learn to win and lose through games and competitions. There are a number of beneficiaries throughout the year namely the young people who are committed to and involved in Scouting. Their parents and family members also benefit as they can see a positive impact on their children but also the wider community as young, educated, passionate and interested young people engage in other roles and environments taking their skills, knowledge and attributes with them.