



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding

Moving up a section

Support document for leaders

December 2019



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Introduction

This resource has been designed for leaders to refer to when supporting girls to move up a section. The information is split into different sections and has been designed as a 'pick-up-and-go' document: you can either use the whole of the guidance at once or dip in and out of relevant sections when needed. This resource includes:

- Helping your girls move up
- Working together with other units
- Using the programme to move up a section
- Communication
- Unit transfers on GO

Helping your girls move up

When girls move up to a different section it can be really daunting - and this can mean that girls don't always stay with guiding once they've made the move. We know that lots of girls who leave Girlguiding do so around the point they are due to move into another section. By thinking about how you can support girls moving out of your unit, and those who are joining, you can ease some of the pressure and help girls stay in guiding for longer.

There's lots that you can do as a leader, from getting to know the leaders of groups your girls could join, to arranging for girls and leaders from the next section to come and visit your group and talk about the next step in guiding, or running a joint activity or event with other groups in your area.

Encouraging girls to think about their next steps is also built into our programme. You can find out more by looking at the last pages of their section handbook and talking to girls about the exciting things they can look forward to.

You could also try the following ideas.

Tell stories - talk positively with young members about what happens in other sections. Invite girls from other units to talk about their experiences, such as trips they've been on or amazing things they've done.

Map it out - let girls know about all the available units in their area. The most obvious one may not be the most suitable for them.

Join it up - parents and girls might find it easier to stick with guiding if sections meet on the same evening. Try to coordinate times and locations if possible.



Camp out - Rangers could invite Guides or Guides could invite Brownies to join them at camp for the day, so they can discover all the adventures in store if they choose to move up.

Helping hands - involve young leaders and Rainbow and Brownie helpers in your unit so younger girls can see what leadership opportunities are available for Guides and Rangers. This can even help towards their Leadership qualification.

Talk to parents - discuss their daughter's next steps. Parents may not know about the other sections in guiding so help them find out what's available.

Programme - our programme includes a number of ways girls can prepare for the next section and is designed so that girls have consistent activities and themes that run throughout. The structure of each section's core programme is the same; each section has interest badges, skills builders and unit meeting activities, and the opportunity to gain Theme awards and top section awards. Girls moving on will recognise the structure and opportunities, but the topics might differ. Explore what they are with girls; what are their interests?

Give a warm welcome - making sure your units are welcoming to new members will make a big difference. So why not ask the group to think about what they can do to greet new members.

Girl-led guiding - involve the girls in the planning of next term's activities. This could be done by organising a special meeting at the end of each term to explore all the opportunities available to girls in your area and beyond.

Tasters - invite girls at the top end of a younger section to come along to a meeting for a taste of the activities available when they move up. Send girls home with an information pack about the older section and, when the time is right, contact each girl and her parents personally to invite her to join the unit.

Buddy up - pair up girls who have just moved up into your unit with existing members. This could be done during a joint meeting or event or at their first meeting.

Party! - Why not hold a 'moving up' party at the end of term for girls who will be moving to the next section? This sends the message that moving up is something to celebrate rather than worry about.



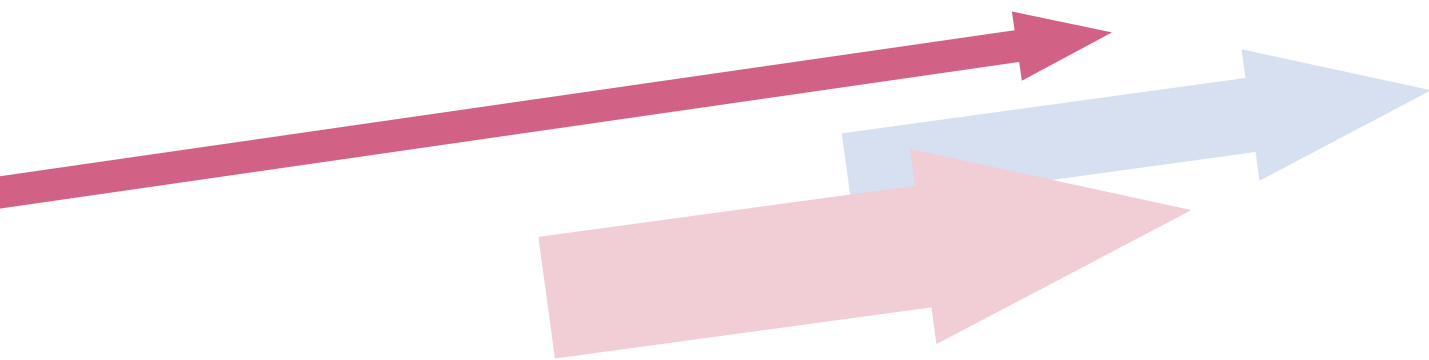
Working together with other units (joint activities/meetings)

For many girls, the prospect of moving to a new unit and a new section can be scary. Working together with other units, such as holding joint meetings, activities or events, can help make the step up to a new section more manageable for all and less of a jump for some. Working together in this way will offer the girls the chance to meet in advance the girls and leaders they will join when they move up.

Running joint events, meetings or residential can work in a variety of different ways. Here are a few ideas:

- Get together with units from the next section or section below to hold joint meetings once a term.
- Invite girls along to an event or meeting taking place in the section they will move to next. Perhaps this could be a Promise ceremony or a special evening that's been organised.
- Invite girls from the section below to join your unit at age-appropriate events and/or find out what other age-appropriate events are happening that your girls can join in with.
- Take part in a multi-section residential, such as a district, division or county camp.
- Run a themed evening where girls do unit meeting activities or skills builders which can help them work towards a Theme award. Make sure that the broader age range of girls involved in the evening is catered for.
- Take part in local events involving other sections so girls can meet one another and learn more about each section.
- Leaders, with the help of the unit, could teach girls from another unit their favourite game or a song.
- Ask young leaders in your district or division to organise a games evening involving two sections.
- Book an expert to do a session with girls from different sections, for example, a dance, drama, sport, survival skills etc. These types of sessions are great for team work and getting to know others.

These are all great ways to introduce girls to the next section, even if they don't end up attending that specific unit. It will also give unit teams a chance to work with others in the area, share ideas and experiences and generally find out more about the next section or section below, which will help make the process of moving between sections much smoother.



The contribution of unit leaders and volunteers to this process is very important. If a joint meeting, activity or event is organised the programme should be organised and delivered by a mixture of leaders from the two (or more) units. It's important to sit down and plan the logistics, equipment and structure so that everything can run smoothly. Leaders should also be encouraged to visit local units of the sections below their own; not only does this build links but it can also be a simple way to give girls a familiar face when they move up. This also helps leaders build a supportive local network for girls who become Rainbow or Brownie helpers. As they visit their connected sections/units, leaders can also share information about what girls have achieved in the skills builders. Knowing this will help girls settle quickly into the next stage of their Girlguiding journey.



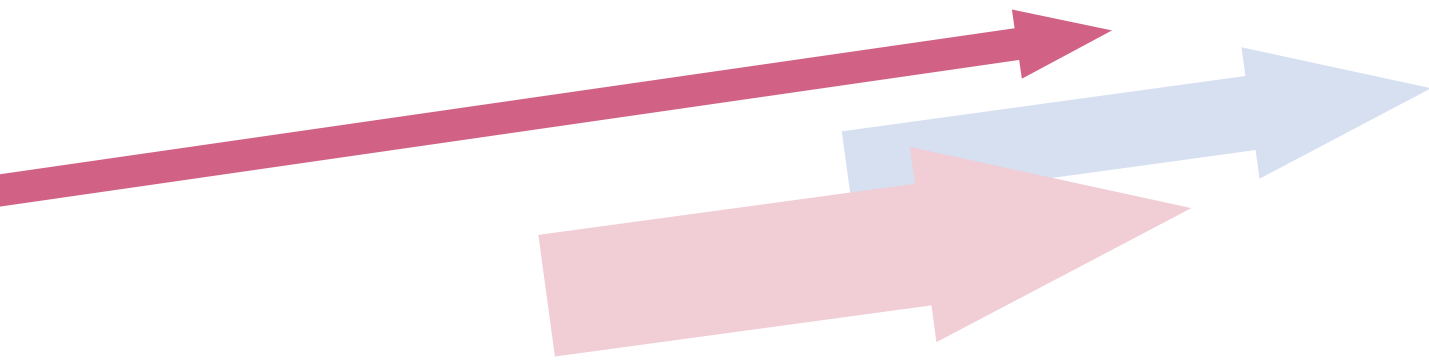
Using the programme to move up a section

Our programme is based around six core themes, which run through all sections. This provides consistency and supports girls on their journey between sections. It also makes it easier for leaders to support these transitions between sections.



Unit meeting activities

Unit meeting activities (UMAs) are designed to be section-specific, but all sit within the same six themes that run throughout all sections. This makes it easier for girls when they move to another section as they will already be familiar with the themes and the ‘pick-up-and-go’ nature of these activity cards.

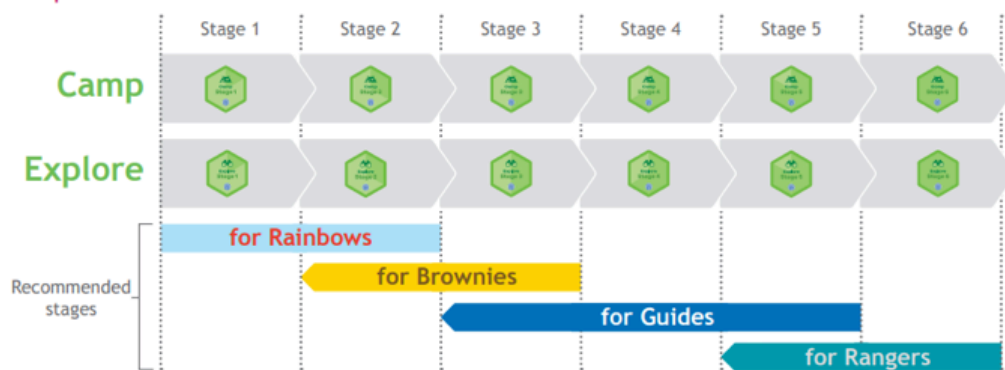


Skills builders

Skills builders are designed in a way that supports girls to move between sections: each skills builder is divided into six stages, and each stage contains five activities. Some of the stages fall into two sections and there will always be one stage from their previous section that will be available when they transition to their new section. It is a good idea to communicate with other leaders during the transition process so that everyone is clear what each girl's prior experience has been. Then her new leader can help her focus on gaining new skills and doing new activities in her new section.

It is always helpful to have discussions with girls around how everything fits in and links to each other. This should help build their excitement about moving up as well as help them feel less nervous about the change. It would be good to include both current leaders and new leaders in these conversations.

Example from the Have Adventures theme



- This structure applies to all themes and all skills builders.
- For each stage, there are five activities which are purchased together in a skills builder pack. Girls need to complete all five activities in the pack.

These are the stages included in each section's badge or record book.

Section Gold awards

The top section awards recognise the accumulated experiences, participation and commitment a girl has made during her time within a section. They provide goals for each girl to strive towards and gaining an award is a significant achievement*.

Encourage girls to achieve their section awards and celebrate them in a special way. The section Gold award also gives girls opportunities to discover more about their next section and you could even involve their next leader in the celebration.



The section Gold award challenges are made up of three parts, the last of which relates to the next stage of a girl's journey in guiding, as follows:

Rainbows - Get ready for life at Brownies!

Brownies - Get ready for life at Guides!

Guides - Girls get ready for life at Rangers and/or help others to get ready for Brownies or Guides!

Rangers - Girls find out about opportunities for young women and understand the adult volunteer structure.

The Gold award challenge for each section is unique and detailed in each section's badge or record book. Each one has been designed to:

- Challenge a girl to try something new and push her own boundaries
- Build on her other experiences within Girlguiding
- Prepare and excite her and others in the unit for guiding in the next section or for becoming a young adult in guiding; or to encourage and enthuse younger members to move into her section.

All of these would provide a smooth and efficient transition for both girls leaving your unit and girls joining your unit. Although a Gold award is designed to challenge each individual girl and should link to her own journey it is also important for you to offer support and encouragement to her and others in the unit, as moving up a section provides unknown adventures and opportunities for each girl.

If you have no girls working towards their section award, then it is important to keep open communication with other units in your district as they may have girls completing their awards who will be moving up to your unit, or girls who are wanting to support your girls moving up. This communication should work both ways as it is important to notify other units when your girls are working on their section award.

* It is important to remember that not every girl will complete or want to complete the section Gold awards and as a result you should be careful not to put all your focus on using Gold awards to support moving between sections. There are plenty of other ways to support your girls to move sections outside the programme.

We have developed a helpful, one-page guide unique to each section:

[Rainbows to Brownies](#)

[Brownies to Guides](#)

[Guides to Rangers](#)

[Rangers +](#)



Communication

Communication is key to girls successfully moving across all sections. Although the programme has been designed to bring consistency to a girl's journey in guiding, the girls will still need to be prepared for change and the communication of this throughout is very important.

There are key groups that should be communicating to help support this process:

- Leaders/units
- Leaders/units and parents
- Leaders/units and girls

Leaders/units

Before each term starts, why not contact the leader(s) or unit(s) of neighbouring sections. You can open up communication channels with these units to organise joint activities or meetings, leader visits, buddy pairings or parent evenings. Try doing this as early as possible to help with term planning.

Leaders/units and parents

It's important to remember that it's not just girls who need support when moving up to another section. Parents may not know much about what the next section holds for their child and therefore it's a good idea to raise awareness of this and help make the process as transparent and easy to understand as possible.

Leaders can work together to put girls' names onto GO waiting lists for the next section with parents' permission; this then allows for unit leaders in the section above to contact girls and their parents to offer them a place at their unit, when the time comes for that girl to move up. This allows leaders several opportunities to move girls on or bring them back into Girlguiding.

One way of communicating with parents about this subject is to hold an open evening for parents at the end of term. This can be used to not only share the skills and experiences their daughter has gained so far, but also all the opportunities that lie ahead as she progresses. You could pre-identify which girls will be ready within the next six months and invite them and their parents along, or even work with other units in your district/division to hold a larger joint event, which could cover all sections. If you were to hold a meeting, you might want to consider:

- Inviting girls from older sections so that parents and girls can hear first-hand from older girls about what they get out of Girlguiding and what it is like to be part of the next section.
- Inviting other leaders from these sections along, allowing both the parents and girls to talk to them about what they can expect when they start.
- Having details of units in your area available so that you can provide all options to parents and girls.



- **Sharing the transfer process with parents so that they can understand the processes and what happens next.**
- **Making sure your meeting includes some time for younger girls to mix with the older girls and their leaders - maybe even include an activity for them to do and show the parents.**
- **Giving parents information to take away - even if it is only details of units available and contact details.**

Another way to communicate with parents is to write them a letter. You can download an example of this [here](#) or find one at the back of this resource as Appendix 1.

Leaders/units and girls

Communication between leaders and girls moving up (either in or out of the unit) is essential. Many girls want to stay with their friends and the leadership team that they're familiar with, so having these open communication channels not only reassures girls about their next adventure, but can also be used to let them know their unit won't forget them when they moves up.

Talk to girls about moving up and let them think about their next steps. You can encourage them to think about how their next steps are built into our programme. Do this by looking at the last pages of their section handbook and talking to girls about the exciting things they can look forward to, new concepts and terms that are relevant to the next section. Girls taking their section Gold award should be doing this as part of that process, but it is important to remember that those girls not doing Gold awards need the same support, guidance and encouragement to move up.

It is also important to support those girls moving into your unit - why don't you organise a visit to the section below to talk about what they can expect when moving up to your unit, all the activities you get up to, or traditions and songs to get them familiar? In the same way, encourage another leader from the section above to visit your group and talk about the next steps.

You can also use a letter to support this type of communication by writing to the girls in your unit when it is time for them to move up. If you can, work with a leader from the unit the girl will move up to, to write a joint letter. You can download an example [here](#) or find one at the back of this pack as Appendix 2.

Communicating about availability and places in your area

It's good to share information across your local area about where spaces are available.

You can update your unit's GO record to include the maximum number of young members your unit team is happy to take. This doesn't limit the number of members you can have, but will help your local area to spot gaps and start to fill them. To add this information on GO, click on 'My units' and 'View units' on the action tab. Change the number under 'Total unit capacity' and click 'Submit'.

This information can then be run off in a report by commissioners and shared at district/division meetings.

Be prepared to share your ideas in your district/division and create a consistent approach to provide the best start for every girl moving on.



Unit transfers on GO

Being able to transfer a girl to another unit/section or adding a girl from another unit to your waiting list is a vital part of the transition process. We are more likely to keep girls in guiding if the transfer process is easy and transparent. It is important that parents/carers and girls are kept informed of the process and any changes to their position on GO.

For a step-by-step guide on how unit transfers on GO work, a helpfile called 'Young members' has been created and added to the Help zone on GO.

Alongside this, why not download our ['Best practice guidelines for waiting to transfer and waiting to join'](#) resource for additional guidance.



Appendix 1 - Letter to parents

[Want to add a local logo to your letter template? Our online design centre allows you to create an on-brand logo in minutes. You can either create a general Girlguiding logo or a logo for a specific section. Visit the Girlguiding website and search for 'Create a logo' to find out more.]

Dear parents,

Your daughter's next adventure awaits

After a wonderful [length of time with section], it's now time for [name] to leave [section/unit name] and move on to her next guiding adventure with [section moving into].

[name] has achieved so much during her time with us - from [insert some of the things that the young member has achieved] to [badges/achievements/qualifications].

We've really enjoyed seeing [name] having fun, making friends and trying new things, but know that she has so many exciting new opportunities to look forward to, and so many new friends to meet.

Onwards and upwards

Moving from one section to another can be a big change and sometimes girls might feel nervous about moving up. But this is a great opportunity for your daughter to step into her next adventure, to try new things, learn new skills, make new friends and continue to grow in confidence. There is so much more she can achieve through guiding and we want to help support her to take this next step.

[name] may need some encouragement and support in her first few weeks, and her new leader, [Leader name] and the girls in her new group will be sure to give [name] a really warm welcome too.

We can't wait to hear what your daughter gets up to and would love to welcome her back to our unit to tell our [insert section] all about her new group at some point soon.

Best wishes

[Leader name]



Appendix 2 - Letter to girls

Hi [girl's name],

Your next adventure awaits

We've been so happy to have spent the last [length of time with section] with you and will very much miss you in [section name], but you're about to start a wonderful new adventure!

[Insert new section Leader's name] is very excited that you're joining [insert section name], and is looking forward to meeting you next term and introducing you to all your new guiding friends.

You've achieved so much during your time with us - from [insert some of the things that the young member has achieved] to [badges/achievements/qualifications].

We've really enjoyed having you as part of our unit, but we know that you're going to love the next step on your guiding adventure. [insert section] has so many exciting new activities and opportunities to offer you, and so many new friends for you to meet.

If you want to add some more information you could work with the next section Leader and add: In [section] you will be [insert a few activities the next section up will be doing next term]. [Leader name] will be in touch to tell you more. The new term starts [add month/start date].

Good luck in your next adventure - we can't wait to find out what you get up to and would love it if you'd come back to our unit to tell us all about your new group soon.

Have fun!

[Leader's name]