



## Safeguarding young people in Scouts

Dear parent/carer,

There have been recent media reports about safeguarding cases in the Scout Movement. As a parent/carer of a young person in Scouts it's important you know that we take the safety of the young people in our care very seriously. It's our number one priority.

We take all reports of abuse extremely seriously and have apologised to these victims. We appreciate the bravery it must have taken survivors to talk about their experiences. We know it takes courage to do so and we urge anyone who has concerns to come forward. See details on how to report below.

Nothing is more important to us as Scouts than keeping young people safe. We know that young people thrive in safe surroundings. We're deeply committed to ensuring that Scouts is both enjoyable and safe for everyone who takes part, and we work hard to achieve this through robust training, processes and procedures.

Some of the reports referred to Scouts paying millions of pounds in compensation to hundreds of safeguarding cases. 96% of these cases are from before 2013. Many relate to offences that took place in the 1960s and 1970s, with some dating back to the 1940s. However, we are constantly reviewing how we manage safeguarding risks on a day to day basis, and we want to share how we do this currently.

All leaders who run our activities are volunteers who give their time freely to help young people enjoy Scouts. Every volunteer must undergo safeguarding training when they take up a role with us, and must refresh their training every three years. Extra training is provided for those taking young people away on residential events, such as camps and sleepovers and to our volunteer line managers.

Everyone working with young people is required to undertake a criminal records disclosure. We have systems in place to address non-compliance, including suspending volunteers.

Our robust safeguarding training and processes are regularly externally reviewed by independent experts in child safety such as the NSPCC. Over recent years we have significantly increased the size of the safeguarding staff team to ensure that we robustly respond to any safeguarding concerns.

We have a **clear code of behaviour** (also known as the 'Yellow Card') which all

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adults volunteering with Scouts sign up to. This is in the training that all leaders complete. This gives advice about how young people should be treated and we require everyone to follow it. This means everyone in Scouts has a duty to report any allegations, suspicions and concerns immediately and challenge inappropriate attitudes or behaviours.

The 'Yellow Card' is shared with parents, carers and young people, giving everyone the ability to challenge behaviour. This approach to safeguarding aims to drive a culture where all concerns must be reported, no matter how small, enabling us to identify and address early warning signs. We do update our Yellow Card based on what we learn. This is a continual learning process, and we keep it under regular review.

### Further guidance and support

We always want to address any situations where our rules aren't being followed. If there are concerns or personal experience you want to report, we urge you to contact our safeguarding team on [safeguarding@scouts.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@scouts.org.uk). You don't have to go via local volunteers. You can also report anonymously to us using **our whistleblowing policy**, or through the **NSPCC's whistleblowing advice line**.

More information about **how we keep our young people safe** can be found on Scouts website.

We also have a **complaints procedure**.

If you have other enquiries about safeguarding practice or policies in Scouts then please speak to your child's Leaders or contact the Scout Information Centre on [info.centre@scouts.org.uk](mailto:info.centre@scouts.org.uk)

Scouts offers fun, challenge and adventure to nearly half a million young people every week and we are committed to making sure that it's enjoyable and safe for everyone who takes part.

Yours,

Carl Hankinson  
UK Chief Commissioner  
Scouts

Jennie Price  
Chair of Trustees  
Scouts

Matt Hyde  
Chief Executive  
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