

# **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

**VERSION 1.0**

**Guides and Scouts of Europe - United Kingdom ('the Charity')**

**A registered charity in England and Wales (number TBC)**

**Approval Date: [TBC]**

Date of last review: [TBC]

## 1. Introduction and purpose

It is the policy of GSE UK to provide Scouting in a safe manner without risk to health, so far as is reasonably practicable.

The Charity believes that this responsibility ranks equally with the other responsibilities incumbent upon those providing Scouting activities and functions.

It is the responsibility of all those involved in Scouting to seek, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure that:

- All activities are conducted in a safe manner without risk to the health of participants.
- The provision and maintenance of equipment and buildings for Members and others is safe and without risk to health and adequate for their welfare.
- Information, instruction, training and supervision is provided with the object of ensuring the health and safety of all those involved in Scouting activities or who may be affected by them.
- Appropriate arrangements are made to ensure safety and the absence of risks to health in connection with the use, transport, storage and handling of equipment, and substances which are inherently or potentially dangerous.

## 2. General Statement of Policy

### a) Aim

The policy of GSE UK (the Charity) is to provide and maintain safe and healthy activities, working conditions and equipment for all volunteers and members of the Charity.

The Charity shall endeavour to provide all necessary information, training and support for its members and maintain their awareness of health, safety and welfare issues.

The allocation of responsibility for safety matters and the specific arrangements to implement this policy is the responsibility of the Board.

This policy, and the way in which it operates, is reviewed annually by the Board.

### b) Duty of Care

All members of the Charity have personal responsibility under 'Duty of Care' This is a general legal duty placed on all individuals and organisations to avoid carelessly causing injury to persons or property. It requires everything '**reasonably practicable**' to be done to protect the health and safety of others.

### c) Responsibilities

**The Board** has overall responsibility for health and safety for all scout-related activities. Specifically, the Board is responsible for ensuring that:

- The Charity is fully insured for all use and activities. The person with individual responsibility for obtaining and retaining the insurance policy certificates and all related documents is the President.

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- Proper records are kept by each Group and each Branch within that Group for all activities, and that, for emergency purposes, a register of members is available on demand and/or when needed. Currently all membership details are kept securely and digitally on Google Drive. Group Leaders have access to this and the Board have overall access and control.
- Any premises hired for scouting activities have adequate Health and Safety procedures in place to ensure those premises are properly maintained and are in a safe and healthy condition including:
  - cleanliness
  - fire safety
  - safety checks
  - registers of dangerous substances.

Group Leaders are instructed in the use of fire-fighting equipment and first aid.

**The Group Scout Leader (GSL)** is responsible for ensuring that:

- All adult volunteers are “Enhanced DBS” cleared and follow the GSE UK Safeguarding Policy.
- Risk assessments are carried out for all scout-related activities and that all leaders of the Scout Group fully understand their personal responsibility under ‘Duty of Care’.
- Accidents and near misses, are properly recorded and investigated.
- First Aid kits are in date.

**Branch Leaders** are responsible for:

- Attending training when required to do so.
- Carrying out risk assessments before and during scouting activities.
- Following food safety guidelines.
- Recording all accidents and near misses in the accident book provided and reporting serious matters to the Board as soon as possible.
- Providing first aid assessment and ensuring that a suitable first aid box is available when carrying out any scouting activity.
- Abiding by the health and safety procedures of any premises hired.

### **3. Arrangements and Procedures**

#### **a) Safeguarding Children**

GSE UK considers the safety of young people its paramount concern. Criminal record checks are an important part of the Charity’s approach to safeguarding young people. The fact that adults in Scouting are subject to checks reinforces that Scouting is a safe organisation.

All leaders must undertake an Enhanced DBS check (Disclosure and Barring Service) as an integral part of the appointment process.

The procedures used by the Charity to ensure safeguarding can be found in the GSE Safeguarding Policy.

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## b) Risk Assessments

The **Group Scout Leader** is responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are carried out by Branch Leaders for all Scout related activities. Risk assessments help to protect everyone in the Group by focusing attention on the risks with potential to cause harm.

Risk assessments will be carried out for all activities. A risk assessment should:

- **Look for the hazards** – Stand back from the situation and assess it. Identify all the hazards, list them (e.g. a slippery surface, an arrow, or very high piece of equipment).
- **Decide who might be harmed and how** – Think particularly about participants who might have become accustomed to the presence of the hazard and young people with special needs, who might not appreciate the hazard. Also, consider visitors or members of the public close by who might not know that the hazard is present.
- **Evaluate the risks** – Consider the likelihood of the hazards causing harm to someone (e.g. if a surface is always slippery, perhaps it needs ‘roughing up’ as a precaution). Do whatever is reasonably practicable to make the situation safe and aim to minimise all the risks by maintaining or adding to the precautions as necessary.
- **Record your findings** – Tell those involved in the activity what action they should take and what actions they must not.
- **Review and revise** – Hazards, and the risks, will not stay the same. Review risk assessments periodically and revise them where necessary.

It is the responsibility of the leader in charge of the activity to carry out the risk assessment which should be regularly reviewed both before and during an activity. Experience shows it is often the activity that is run regularly with little perceived risk where incidents may occur. Regular re-assessment of familiar activities will allow changes in the risks over time to be identified.

## c) Premises

GSE UK does not own any premises, but will abide by the Health and Safety procedures for any premises it hires.

## d) Fire Safety

1. The Board has overall and final responsibility for reviewing the fire safety arrangements and making recommendations for improvements and maintenance.

## e) Accidents and Near Misses

- All accidents and near misses are recorded in the accident book provided. Serious matters must be reported to the Board as soon as possible, providing additional information as necessary.

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## **f) First Aid**

Branch Leaders are responsible for first aid assessment and for ensuring that a suitable first aid box is available when carrying out any Scouting activity.

## **g) COSHH Regulations**

- Under the COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations 2002, the Group has a duty of care to make an assessment of the risks related to hazardous substances, e.g. chemicals, noxious fumes etc.
- All members of the Group shall avoid using hazardous substances at all times if at all possible. Where substitute materials are available, they should be used (e.g. water-based markers, correction fluid, etc). If there is no way of avoiding such use, members must use the substance in an enclosed, ventilated environment away from other members, and use proper protective equipment which shall be made available by the Group.

## **h) Manual Handling**

- All members of the Group should avoid manual lifting where at all possible. However, members may occasionally be required to manually lift and handle loads.
- Correct manual lifting and handling reduces the effort required and prevents strain and risk of injury.
- Members should not put themselves at risk by attempting to lift heavy loads which could be taken apart or divided into smaller quantities. The assistance of other members should always be sought for moving large quantities or for lifting heavy and awkward loads. When lifting is done by a team, instructions should be given by one person only.

## **i) Food Safety**

Everyone has a responsibility under 'Duty of Care' when preparing and serving food. There are also responsibilities under the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations and Food Safety (Temperature Control) Regulations.

## **j) Lone Working**

Lone working refers to a person working by themselves without close or direct supervision or without immediate peer contact. Lone working must be avoided unless a risk assessment has been carried out and there are suitable control measures in place.