

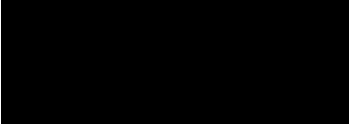
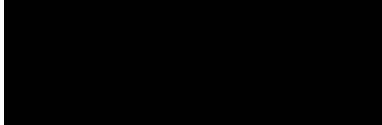
# CODE OF CONDUCT

## VERSION 1.0

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

**A registered charity in England and Wales, number 1198968**

**Approved by:**

<b>Position:</b>	<b>General Commissioner, GSE UK</b>	<b>President, GSE UK</b>
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Robert Colquhoun</b>	<b>Paul Hammond</b>
<b>Signature:</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>17 June 2025</b>	<b>17 June 2025</b>

## 1. Purpose

This Code of Conduct sets the expected standard of behaviour for all members, including children and youth, adult leaders, volunteers, and parents involved in the Scouting organisation. It aims to ensure a respectful, safe, and inclusive environment that supports the values of the Guides and Scouts of Europe and promotes personal growth, teamwork, and community responsibility.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or whenever there is a major change in the organisation or in the relevant legislation of guidance, by the Chair of Trustees.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all members during all scouting activities—whether in-person or online—including camps, meetings, events, excursions, and digital communication platforms.

## 3. Core Principles

All members are expected to uphold the core values of Scouting:

- Respect – for oneself, others, property, and the environment.
- Responsibility – for actions, words, and safety.
- Integrity – honesty, fairness, and accountability in all dealings.
- Leadership – setting a positive example and supporting others.
- Purity – developing a pure heart.
- Devotedness – showing dedication to one's group and its activities.
- Frankness – courageously speaking the truth, lucidly and openly.

## 4. General Conduct

Members must:

- Show respect to leaders, helpers, peers, and the public at all times.
- Follow instructions given by adult leaders and event organisers.
- Be punctual, prepared, and participate fully in Scouting activities.
- Avoid name-calling, bullying, harassment, or any behaviour that threatens the wellbeing of others.
- Avoid swearing and lewd language.
- Respect personal space and physical boundaries.
- Adhere to the organisation's safeguarding and child protection guidelines.

## 5. Social Media and Digital Communication

The responsible use of technology is essential to protect the safety, reputation, and values of Scouting.

### 5.1 General Expectations

- Members must not post content that is offensive, inappropriate, harassing, discriminatory, or damaging to the reputation of the organisation.
- All online behaviour must reflect the values of Scouting—even outside official activities.
- Do not store, share or tag photos/videos of other members without their permission (or the permission of their parent/guardian if they are under 18).

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- Avoid sharing personal information (home address, phone number, location) in public forums.

## **5.2 Leaders and Adults**

- Leaders must maintain professional boundaries when communicating with youth members.
- Communication directly with youth must occur only via approved channels (e.g., official emails, group chats monitored by multiple leaders).
- Private or one-on-one messaging between adults and youth is prohibited unless in emergencies and reported.

## **5.3 Youth Members**

- Youth should use mobile phones and devices appropriately, and only when permitted by leaders. Ordinarily, children and youth should hand over any mobile phones to leaders for safe keeping during meetings, except when needed for taking photos or for emergency contact.
- Cyberbullying, sexting, or misuse of digital platforms will result in disciplinary action.
- Be respectful in all messages, comments, and online interactions with fellow Scouts and leaders.

## **6. Mobile Devices Policy**

- Use of mobile phones during activities is discouraged unless permitted by leaders for specific purposes (e.g., navigation, photos, emergencies).
- For taking photos or videos, ideally a dedicated camera should be used, rather than a mobile phone.
- Devices must be on silent or off during meetings, activities, or campfires.
- Taking photos or videos during private moments (e.g. in tents, changing areas, bathrooms) is strictly prohibited.
- Leaders may restrict or collect devices during certain activities to maintain focus and group cohesion.

## **7. Dress and Personal Presentation**

- Members are expected to wear the appropriate uniform or activity attire.
- Clothing must be modest, practical, and appropriate for the activity and environment.
- Berets, neckerchiefs and personal equipment such as plates, bowls, mugs and cutlery should be named so that they can be reunited with their owners when lost.

## **8. Health, Safety, and Wellbeing**

- Safety rules must be followed at all times.
- Members must report any injuries, hazards, or unsafe behaviour to a leader immediately.
- The use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs is strictly prohibited during any youth activity or event.
- Cutting tools – Scouts and Guides only. As young people move up through the group, they will learn to use cutting tools (knives, saws and axes). Scouts and Guides may have their own penknives or multi-tools which they want to bring to meetings, but they must let a leader know on arrival that they have such a tool with them and show it to them for inspection, to ensure it complies with local laws and activity types. Knives must only be used under direct supervision, unless a Scout or Guide has demonstrated sufficient competence and maturity. See Annex 1 for more information.

## **9. Conflict and Dispute Resolution**

- Disputes should be handled calmly and respectfully. All disciplinary measures / sanctions are non-violent and do not involve humiliating children and young people.
- Members should seek support from leaders when needed to resolve conflicts.
- Retaliation against anyone reporting concerns is not tolerated.

## **10. Breaches of the Code**

Violations of this Code of Conduct may result in:

- Warnings or mediation
- Temporary suspension from activities
- Termination of membership (in serious or repeated cases)
- Involvement of law enforcement or child protection authorities where required

## **11. Acknowledgement**

All members, leaders, and volunteers (and parents/guardians of youth members) must read and agree to this Code of Conduct. Compliance is a condition of membership.

## **Annex 1: Knife Usage**

### General Rules

- Knives are not toys. They are tools to be used responsibly for specific, approved purposes only.
- No member may bring or use a knife without prior approval from a Scout or Guide Leader.
- The only knives that will be permitted are those that abide by local laws and are suitable for the activity type.
- Knives must only be used under direct adult supervision unless a Scout or Guide has demonstrated sufficient competence and maturity.

### Eligibility to Carry and Use a Knife

A Scout may only carry or use a knife if:

- They have received training in safe handling and care.
- A leader has approved their use of the knife for a specific activity (e.g., whittling, food preparation, camp tasks).
- They understand and agree to follow this policy.

### Knife Use Guidelines

When permitted, knife use must follow these safety rules:

- Always cut away from yourself and others.
- Use knives only in designated, well-lit areas.
- Never carry a knife in hand when walking or running.
- Knives must be kept folded or sheathed when not in use.
- Sharing of knives between Scouts is discouraged without leader supervision.

### Knife Storage and Transport

- Knives must be stored securely when not in use (e.g., in a personal gear bag or lockbox, not in open sight).
- Knives may only be brought to scouting events when explicitly approved and must be handed in for safekeeping if required by leaders.
- Carrying knives in public places outside scouting activities is strictly prohibited and may violate local laws.

### Prohibited Knives

- The following types of knives are not permitted under any circumstances:
- Flick knives or switchblades
- Butterfly knives
- Knives with blades longer than 3 inches or 7.5 cm
- Knives designed as weapons rather than tools

### Breaches of the Policy

Failure to follow this policy may result in:

- Confiscation of the knife
- Immediate removal from the activity
- Suspension from further activities
- Permanent removal from the group (in serious or repeated cases)
- Notification of parents/guardians or law enforcement (as appropriate)

### Parent and Guardian Responsibilities

Parents/guardians must:

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- Ensure their child understands and abides by this policy.
- Only provide age-appropriate knives for approved use.
- Never send a knife with their child without prior consent from leaders.

#### Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually or after any significant incident involving knives. Updates will be communicated to all members and guardians.