


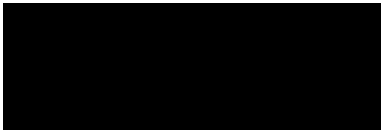
SAFEGUARDING POLICY

VERSION 2.5

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

A registered charity in England and Wales, number 1198968

Approved by:

Position:	General Commissioner, GSE UK	President, GSE UK
Name:	Robert Colquhoun	Paul Hammond
Signature:		
Date:	17 June 2026	17 June 2026

1. Introduction and purpose

1.1. The Charity recognises that children and young people may be subject to harm or abuse. It is never acceptable for children or young people to be abused. As a Christian and values-led organisation, the Charity must take steps to:

- Minimise the risks.
- Prevent abuse wherever it can.
- Respond to the needs of all children and young people it comes into contact with, and whenever it suspects they are being abused.

1.2. This policy sets out how the Charity operates to keep children and young people safe from abuse. Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children or young people who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. Everyone working within the Charity has a responsibility to safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare. When considering matters of safeguarding, the Charity has regard to the following:

- The child or young person's welfare is paramount.
- All children and young people, regardless of age, culture, disability, ethnic origin, gender, political persuasion, racial origin or religious beliefs have a right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- This is stated in both UK legislation (The Children Act 1989) and in international law (The UN Convention on the Rights of the Children, 1989). Article 19 states that:
 - "Parties shall protect the children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse".
- It is everyone's responsibility to report concerns, but it is the responsibility of children and young people's services and/or the police to determine whether or not abuse has taken place.

Discrimination, prejudice and oppressive behaviour or language is unacceptable within all of our activities, programmes or services.

1.3. The Charity has a duty of care towards its volunteers and service users. We are committed to the protection and safety of young people and children, whether they are volunteers and/or participants in our activities. We will protect and support the volunteers who work with us as well as users of our services.

1.4. The Charity will provide ongoing support for as long as needed to those who raise safeguarding issues and to anyone who is a victim or possible victim. This includes paying for any counselling needed and putting in place any special arrangements at meetings, for further protection.

1.5. The aim of this policy is to outline the practice and procedures for volunteers within the Charity, in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people accessing our services and activities. This policy relates to children and young people under the age of 18.

1.6. This policy is stored and available for anyone to read on the Charity's website, www.gseuk.org. It is also given to all volunteers and to all new families who join. Reminders are regularly sent to all parents to ensure they are aware of it.

1.7. At the time of writing, all trustees, volunteers, parents and children are proficient in English. However, should anyone in the future require to see this policy in a different language or to have it presented to them via a walkthrough, along with Q&A, the trustees will facilitate this.

2. Links / Useful Contacts

Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency: Tel: 020 7901 1920 or 07855 23398
www.catholicsafeguarding.org.uk

NSPCC: Tel: 0800 800 500, www.nspcc.org.uk

ChildLine: Tel: 0800 111, www.childline.org.uk

Police: Tel: 101 (in an emergency, ring 999)

Emergency medical help: Tel. 999

Contact numbers for the Local Authority Children's and Adult's Services in your locality can be found in your local Phone Directory.

Domestic Violence Helpline: Tel: 0808 2000 247, www.cedar.uk.net

Family Action: Tel: 020 7254 625, www.family-action.org.uk

MASH: <https://www.multiagencysafeguardinghub.com/>

LADO: <https://national-lado-network.co.uk/the-role-of-the-lado-local-authority-designated-officer/>

3. Definitions

3.1. Abuse and Neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or young person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child, children or young person.

Types of Abuse

Type of abuse	Children
Physical	✓
Verbal	✓
Emotional	✓
Sexual	✓
Neglect	✓
Psychological	✓
Financial	✓
Discriminatory	✓

Type of abuse	Children
Domestic	✓
Institutional	✓
Spiritual	✓

3.2. *Physical abuse*

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child or young person.

3.3. *Verbal abuse*

Verbal abuse may involve name-calling, criticism, condescension, manipulation, blame, accusation, discrimination, threats, gaslighting, shouting or swearing.

3.4. *Emotional Abuse*

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child or young person's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children or young people frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child or young person, though it may occur alone.

3.5. *Sexual Abuse*

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

3.6. *Neglect*

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child or young person from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure

adequate supervision including the use of inadequate caretakers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or young person's basic emotional needs.

3.7. Psychological Abuse

Psychological Abuse includes 'emotional abuse' (see above) and takes the form of threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, rejection, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, indifference, harassment, verbal abuse, and isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks.

Psychological abuse is the denial of a child's human and civil rights including choice and opinion, privacy and dignity and being able to follow one's own spiritual and cultural beliefs.

It includes preventing the child from using services that would otherwise support them and enhance their lives. It also includes the intentional and / or unintentional withholding of information (for example information not being available in different formats / languages).

3.8. Financial Abuse

Financial Abuse includes any theft or misuse of a child's money, property or resources by a person in a position of trust or by another child.

3.9. Discriminatory Abuse

Discriminatory Abuse includes racist, religious, sexist, homophobic, and disablist abuse.

3.10. Domestic Abuse

Domestic Abuse is when one person hurts, bullies, or controls someone they have a close relationship with. This can happen between adults or young people, and it can happen in any kind of relationship — like between spouses, family members, or people living in the same home.

Domestic abuse isn't just physical violence — it can include many forms of harmful behaviour, such as emotional, psychological, financial or sexual abuse.

3.11. Institutional Abuse

Institutional Abuse is when poor care or harmful behaviour happens within settings that are supposed to care for people — like care homes, hospitals, residential schools, or other organisations. It usually involves abuse by staff or carers, and it often affects more than one person.

This type of abuse can happen when rules, routines, or attitudes in the organisation lead to people being treated unfairly, neglected, or harmed.

3.12. *Spiritual Abuse*

Spiritual Abuse is when someone uses religion, faith, or belief systems to control, harm, or manipulate another person. It can happen in religious groups, families, or relationships, and often involves using spiritual beliefs or positions of power to make someone feel guilty, scared, or ashamed.

Spiritual abuse can affect a person's self-worth, freedom, and even their relationship with their faith.

3.13. *Indications of abuse in children and young people*

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The child or young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them.
- Someone else (another child, young person or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of child or young person.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or emotions such as becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden bursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour, sexually explicit talk inappropriate to the child or young person's age.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Uncharacteristic eating disorders, depression and suicide attempts.
- The young person may become withdrawn, introverted and depressed and have low self-esteem and lack of confidence.

There are certain signs of abuse, both in a child or young person's appearance and behaviour, which may alert an individual to the possibility that abuse is occurring. Some of these signs are common to all types of abuse; others are more specific.

Knowing the signs to be aware of is essential for recognising a real or potential problem. However, the presence of any one sign in itself may not necessarily mean abuse is occurring, and conversely, a child or young person who is being abused may show none of the obvious signs. Such factors make the issue of child abuse more complex, but all concerns and suspicions should be reported and acted upon accordingly.

3.14. *Volunteers*

"Volunteers" refers to any and all people who undertake voluntary duties for the Charity in any capacity whatsoever. There are no staff working for the Charity.

3.15. *Direct contact with children and youth*

“Direct contact with children and youth” refers to being in the presence of a child or youth in the context of the Charity’s activities. This includes any virtual, online meeting.

3.16. *Indirect contact with children and youth*

“Indirect contact with children and youth” refers to having access to information on a child, children or youth in the context of the Charity’s work, such as photographs and reports.

4. Our Policy

4.1. The Charity takes a zero-tolerance approach towards abuse of any kind. There are no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect children and young people at risk from abuse, exploitation, radicalisation and mistreatment.

4.2. *Designated Safeguarding Lead*

There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead for safeguarding at the Charity, who is supported by Local Designated Safeguarding Representatives from time to time (collectively referred to as ‘Designated Safeguarding Leads,’ for the purposes of the policy). For further details regarding this, please see the contact details at the end of this policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities in a way that ensures that children and young people are safeguarded from harm. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for following up and reporting any suspected reports of abuse.

The absence of a Safeguarding Lead should not delay any reporting if there is any immediate risk of harm.

4.3. *Volunteers and Trustees working with children and young people*

The Charity recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children and young people in some way and that all necessary steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with them.

All volunteers and Trustees offered a role within the Charity will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Volunteers and Trustees working with children and young people will have an Enhanced DBS check every 3 years.

All volunteers and Trustees working with children are given an induction to the Charity, which includes awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if they have a safeguarding concern. Appropriate Safeguarding training is provided to volunteers as part of their induction; and they have a safeguarding refresher course every two years.

All volunteers and Trustees working with children are required to report any suspected abuse and be aware of the appropriate reporting and support procedure for safeguarding including the reporting of people at risk of radicalisation and extremism.

All volunteers and Trustees working with children must be clear on appropriate behaviour and responses and follow our agreed policies. Where appropriate, failure to maintain standards will be dealt with in accordance with the Charity's policies and procedures.

All volunteers and Trustees working with children who come into contact with children, young people and their families as part of their duties will be alert to possible signs of abuse and consider whether there may be safeguarding concerns. They will discuss their concerns with a Designated Safeguarding Lead, to get appropriate support.

5. Our Procedure

5.1. It is important that all volunteers are aware of the reporting procedures if they have a concern about child protection or a young person's welfare.

5.2. They should:

- Refer their concerns to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. Use the form in Annex 10 if not urgent. If the concern is urgent, telephone the DSL.
- In the absence of a Designated Safeguarding Lead, refer their concerns to a Trustee, who will be responsible for making contact with the appropriate authorities. There must be no delay in reporting if there is an immediate risk of harm.
- If there is potential abuse, neglect, or a need for support from family services, also make a referral to MASH. See Annex 9 for more information.
- Where concerns relate to the actions of a Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Trustee and in the absence of another Designated Safeguarding Lead or Trustee, take steps to make contact with the appropriate authorities directly. See Section 7 for more information.
- Record all complaints, injuries or behaviours that cause concern in the manner directed by Trustees from time to time.
- If the concerns involve immediate harm or risk of harm, the volunteer must act without delay and contact the police.
- The DSL or Trustee will ensure there is ongoing monitoring of allegations or actual incidents of abuse.

6. Communication Guidelines

6.1. Access to printed and electronic personal information about children is covered by the Data Protection Act and the [UK General Data Protection Regulation](#). It should, however, be explicit that the duty of care towards children is more important than the duty of confidentiality within Data Protection legislation.

- 6.2. All children have the right to be accurately represented through both words and images. The Charity's portrayal of any children must not be manipulated or sensationalised in any way.
- 6.3. The Charity **must** have written and informed consent from the parents/guardians of children to use an image for publicity, fundraising, awareness-raising or other purpose (which should be made clear to the individual or organisation giving consent).

7. Allegations involving a Volunteer or Trustee

- 7.1. The Charity recognises that there may be occasions where there is an allegation against a volunteer or Trustee. Allegations against those who work with children and young people can cover a wide range of circumstances.
- 7.2. All allegations of abuse of children and young people, by those who work with or care for them must be taken seriously and acted upon immediately. All reports of allegations, however uncertain, must be submitted within one working day to a Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the Reporting Procedure **[Annex 6]**.
- 7.3. The following procedure **[Annex 5]** should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a person who works with children or young people has:
- Behaved in a way which has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child or young person;
 - Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or young person;
 - Behaved towards a child or young person in a way which indicates that they are unsuitable to work with children.
- 7.4. The allegations may relate to the person's behaviour as part of volunteering with the Charity, at home or in another setting.
- 7.5. A Designated Safeguarding Lead will discuss the matter to determine what steps should be taken and where necessary obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The Charity should not examine whether an allegation is false or unfounded, but must report all allegations.
- 7.6. Some allegations will be so serious as to require an immediate referral to the police, but common sense and judgement must be applied in reaching a decision about what action to take. If there is cause to suspect that a child or young person is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a Designated Safeguarding Lead may immediately refer the matter to the police.
- 7.7. Some allegations may appear to be less serious and at first sight and might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent to the Charity. Consequently, a Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed of all allegations that come to the Charity's attention and

appear to come within the scope of this procedure so that they may consult the relevant authorities, as appropriate.

7.8. The LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) must be contacted within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children;
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- Behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not have to directly relate to a child.
- As a parent or carer, has a child that has become subject to child protection procedures
- Is closely associated with someone in their personal lives (e.g. spouse, member of the family or other household member) who may present a risk of harm to child/ren for whom the member of staff is responsible in their employment/volunteering.

7.9. A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) should be made when the Charity has concerns that an individual has harmed, or poses a risk of harm, to children or vulnerable adults. This includes situations where someone has been dismissed, resigned, or changed roles due to harm or potential harm. Additionally, a referral is necessary when an individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offense and is working or might work in regulated activity.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

When a referral is legally required:

- Harm or risk of harm:

When the Charity believes an individual has harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or poses a future risk of harm, they have a legal duty to refer them to the DBS. This includes situations where the individual has been dismissed, resigned, or changed roles because of concerns about potential harm.

- Relevant offenses and regulated activity:

If an individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offense, and they are working, or might work in the future, in regulated activity, a referral is also required. Regulated activity typically involves close contact with children or vulnerable adults, such as in schools, healthcare settings, or social work.

When a referral can be made:

- Safeguarding concerns: Even if the conditions for a legal duty to refer are not met, the Charity can still make a referral to the DBS on safeguarding grounds if they have serious concerns about an individual's potential to harm vulnerable groups.

Key considerations:

- Investigation and evidence:

Before making a referral, the Charity should thoroughly investigate the situation and gather enough evidence to support their concerns.

- Harm test:

The "harm test" refers to whether there is credible evidence of a risk of harm to vulnerable groups.

- Representations:

Individuals who are referred to the DBS have the opportunity to make representations (provide their views and evidence) to the DBS before a barring decision is made.

Online form:

The DBS's secure online referral form should be used for making referrals:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-referrals-form-and-guidance>

8. Overview and review

8.1. The Chair of Trustees will have overall responsibility for the Charity's safeguarding arrangements.

8.2. The Trustees will monitor and evaluate Safeguarding procedures. The Charity reserves the right to vary the terms of the policy if the needs of the organisation change or other circumstances deem it necessary. This policy must be reviewed annually, or whenever there is a major change in the organisation or in the relevant legislation of guidance, by the Chair of Trustees, in liaison with the other Trustees and by consulting children, young people, parents, guardians, helpers and leaders.

8.3. Designated Safeguarding Lead:

Position	Trustee, GSE UK
Name	Paul Hammond
Contact details	paul.hammond@gseuk.org, [REDACTED]

8.4. Local Designated Safeguarding Representatives:

Group	1st and 2nd Bedford
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Name	Simon Lubbock
Contact details	[REDACTED]

Group	1st and 2nd Gateshead
Name	Paul Hammond
Contact details	paul.hammond@gseuk.org, [REDACTED]

Group	1st and 2nd Knightsbridge
Name	Anne Moulner
Contact details	[REDACTED]

Group	1st and 2nd Southwark
Name	Joseph Treloar
Contact details	[REDACTED]

Group	1st and 2nd Birmingham
Name	Joby Mundackal
Contact details	[REDACTED]

Group	1st Bookham
Name	Noel Murphy
Contact details	[REDACTED]

9. Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers

9.1. The Charity recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children and young people. All reasonable steps will be taken so that unsuitable people are prevented from coming into contact with children and young people.

9.2. The recruitment of all volunteers, having direct or indirect contact with children and young people, will be through a thorough and standardised process including two references and an application for an Enhanced DBS Disclosure.

The process includes the following:

9.3. An enhanced disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The requirement to undertake a Disclosure check will depend on the nature of the post **[Annex 1]**.

9.4. In accordance with Catholic DBS guidelines, the Charity aims to comply with the [DBS Code of Practice](#).

9.5. If the geographical jurisdiction of the UK Disclosure and Barring Service does not apply, then the potential volunteer shall obtain equivalent documentation from the relevant service in their own country if their stay is short-term and no longer than 3 months. If their stay is longer than this, they will be required to complete the UK DBS process.

9.6. The requirement for the potential volunteer to sign a personal declaration stating any criminal convictions, including those considered “spent” is required by completing a **Safeguarding Self Declaration** form. New filtering rules will now pertain to all DBS disclosures. These can be found at **Annex 3**.

9.7. The requirement for the potential volunteer to read, understand and accept compliance with the Charity’s Safeguarding Policy and guidelines as part of their terms and conditions of engagement. This process will include signing the last page of the Safeguarding Policy and sending a copy of the page to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Charity will keep that copy as a condition of the volunteering position.

Interview

9.8. Potential candidates for any volunteering role at the Charity will undergo a standardised interview process appropriate to that position, which will include some or all of the following:

- Specific questions at interview on children and young people’s protection and the candidate’s commitment to, and respect for, children and young people protection policies, practices and procedures as well as the applicant’s motivation for working with children and young people.
- Attentiveness by the interview panel to anything suspicious in employment history (including gaps).
- The requirement to substantiate qualifications.
- As part of the DBS application process, the requirement to provide three forms of identification. These may include a full birth certificate, passport or driving licence and national insurance number. At least one piece of identification must include the candidate’s current address and evidence of previous names to ensure that they are not applying under a false identity. This complies with the requirements outlined in Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996.

Induction

9.9. All volunteers must receive an induction to reinforce the Charity’s vision and values. They must also be given a copy of the Charity’s Safeguarding Policy (this document) and sign to indicate that they have read and understood this.

The Trustees will monitor and evaluate the Safer Recruitment procedures. The Charity reserves the right to vary the terms of the policy if the needs of the organisation change or other circumstances deem it necessary.

10. Training and Support for Volunteers

Safer Recruitment Training

- All Designated Safeguarding Leads must undergo Safer Recruitment training every 2 years
- The default course for our Charity (and the minimum requirement) is the NSPCC “Safer recruitment for those in non-education settings” elearning course, which is CPD certified
- This course also provides additional resources which the DSL should download and keep for reference.

Child Protection Training

- All Leaders and Helpers must undergo Child Protection training every 2 years
- The default course for our Charity (and the minimum requirement) is the NSPCC “Child protection: an introduction” elearning course, which is CPD certified
- This course also provides additional resources which the Volunteer or Helper should download and keep for reference
- It is recommended that Group Scout Leaders also take the following NSPCC courses:
 - “Keeping 16 to 25 year olds safe from abuse”
 - “Keeping children safe online”
- All Volunteers are encouraged to access the additional guidance and information available on the NSPCC website. The local Groups will support any requests for Volunteers to undertake any additional Safeguarding courses
- Whilst remaining an independent organisation, the Group Scout Leaders are encouraged to develop a cordial relationship with their Diocesan Safeguarding team, who may also provide additional support and advice.

Supervision and Support

Regular supervision and support is provided to Leaders and Helpers by the Group Scout Leader or (at a higher level) by the Trustees, particularly during and following an incident or allegation of abuse. This includes face-to-face meetings outside of the regular Scout meetings.

11. Outings and Overnight Stays

The various groups within the Charity will regularly organise outings or trips away, whether for just a day or for an overnight, residential stay. This includes camps, pilgrimages, walking expeditions, conferences, and training events.

For any transportation provided by the Charity (i.e. in the case of any Charity volunteers transporting children, as opposed to parents or guardians transporting their own children to and from events), the vehicle must contain at least one DBS-checked volunteer in addition to a DBS-checked driver.

Adults will never be allowed to go into the bedroom or tent of any children who are not their own children.

Where possible, the toilet and washing facilities for children will be separated from those for the adults. Where this is not possible, the use of them will be time-boxed so that there is never a child and an adult using the same facilities at the same time.

Parents will be informed about the programme of activities and the adults who will be present. Parental consent will be obtained for their child to participate.

We abide by the following minimum adult-to-child ratios:

Beavers:	1 adult to 6 children
Wolf Cubs and Wolveys:	1 adult to 8 children
Scouts and Guides:	1 adult to 10 children

These ratios are considered minimums and may need to be adjusted based on the specific needs and circumstances of the children and the setting. For example, if the children have additional needs or the activity is particularly risky, a higher ratio of adults to children may be necessary.

The Code of Conduct Policy contains further information on expectations about sleeping arrangements, privacy, use of mobile phones, use of images, wellbeing and general behaviour.

Annex 1: Roles that Require a Disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service

All volunteers

The Charity's Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for administering DBS checks and for maintaining DBS volunteer records. Records are stored for 6 years after the end of the current financial year. They are stored securely in Google Drive folders that only the Board and DSL's have access to.

The level of DBS check will always take the form of an enhanced disclosure, due to the possibility of participation in overnight camping trips.

Annex 2: Steps for DBS Process

1. The Trustee or Group Leader advises its Safeguarding Rep of a new volunteer application and the work the applicant will be doing. They pass on the volunteer's full name and e-mail address
2. The volunteer is given copies of the required policies to read and sign, including this Safeguarding Policy
3. The Safeguarding Rep initiates the DBS process through the Personnel Checks portal. In the meantime, he asks the volunteer to provide the names and addresses of two referees
4. When two satisfactory referees have been received, the Safeguarding Rep advises the volunteer accordingly and stores the references centrally
5. The volunteer receives an e-mail from Personnel Checks, directing them to their portal. The volunteer uploads the required documentary evidence
6. The Safeguarding Rep receives notification from Personnel Checks of the uploaded evidence and then logs in to validate it
7. If successful, the volunteer receives the DBS certificate through the post
8. The Safeguarding Rep downloads the documentary evidence and DBS certificate and stores them centrally
9. The Safeguarding Rep updates the DBS spreadsheet with the required information, including the expiry date
10. The volunteer can begin volunteering.

Annex 3: Filtering rules for Disclosure and Barring

The rules regarding the automatic disclosure of cautions and convictions on a DBS certificate are set out in legislation.

Standard and Enhanced DBS certificates must always include the following records no matter when they were received:

- All convictions for specified offences
- Adult cautions for specified offences
- All convictions that resulted in a custodial sentence

Date of last review: 16 June 2026

Other records must be included depending on when the caution or conviction was received:

- Any adult caution for a non-specified offence received within the last 6 years
- Any adult conviction for a non-specified offence received within the last 11 years
- Any youth conviction for a non-specified offence received within the last 5 and a half years

An 'adult' is any individual aged 18 or above at the time of the caution or conviction. A 'youth' is any individual aged under 18 at the time of the caution or conviction.

A 'specified offence' is one which is on the [list of specified offences](#) agreed by Parliament, which will always be disclosed on a Standard or Enhanced DBS certificate where it resulted in a conviction or an adult caution. Youth cautions for specified offences will not be automatically disclosed.

Any cautions (including reprimands and warnings) and convictions not covered by the rules above are 'protected' and will not appear on a DBS certificate automatically.

Cautions, reprimands, and warnings received when an individual was under 18 will not appear on a Standard or Enhanced certificate automatically.

Please note that Enhanced certificates may include information relating to a protected caution or conviction if the police consider that it is relevant to the workforce that the individual intends to work in. Decisions to include information in this way are subject to [statutory guidance](#).

Annex 4: Safeguarding Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct should be interpreted in a spirit of transparency and common sense, with the best interests of the children and young people as the primary consideration.

Minimising risk situations:

- **Do** be accompanied by a second adult whenever possible; **do** meet with children or young people in a central, public location whenever possible; **do** immediately note the circumstances of any situation which occurs which may subject to misinterpretation; **do** keep in mind that actions, no matter how well intended, are always subject to misinterpretation by a third party.
- **Do not** place yourself in a compromising or vulnerable position with a single child or young person, including in the following situations: in a car (no matter how short the journey); overnight (no matter where the accommodation); in your home or the home of a child or young person. Do not show favouritism or spend excessive amounts of time with one child or young person.

Sexual behaviour:

- **Do not** engage in or allow sexually provocative games with children and young people to

take place, kiss, hug, fondle, rub or touch children and young people in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way; sleep in the same bed as children and young people; do things of a personal nature that children and young people could do for him/herself, including bathing, dressing and grooming and encourage any crushes by a child or young person.

Physical behaviour:

- **Do** use great sensitivity in initiating any physical contact, always ensuring that it is appropriate, and as a general rule, wait for the child to take the initiative.

Psychosocial behaviour:

- **Do** be aware of the power balance between an adult, children and young people, and avoid taking any advantage this may provide.
- **Do not** use language that will mentally or emotionally harm any children or young people; suggest inappropriate behaviour or relations of any kind; act in any way that intends to embarrass, shame, humiliate, or degrade children or young people; encourage any inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour, such as tantrums, by children or young people; show discrimination of age, culture, disability, ethnic origin, gender, political persuasion, racial origin, or religion.

Peer abuse:

- **Do** be aware of the potential for peer abuse; develop special measures/supervision to protect younger and especially vulnerable children and young people; avoid placing children or young people in high-risk peer situations (for example unsupervised mixing of older and younger children and young people).
- **Do not** allow children or young people to engage in sexually provocative games with each other.

Physical environment:

- **Do** develop clear rules to address specific physical safety issues relative to the local physical environment.

Annex 5: Allegations by Children or Young People

When a child or young person informs you that he/she is uncomfortable with or makes a disclosure about a specific person's behaviour, either an adult or a child, towards them or another child, the following steps must be taken:

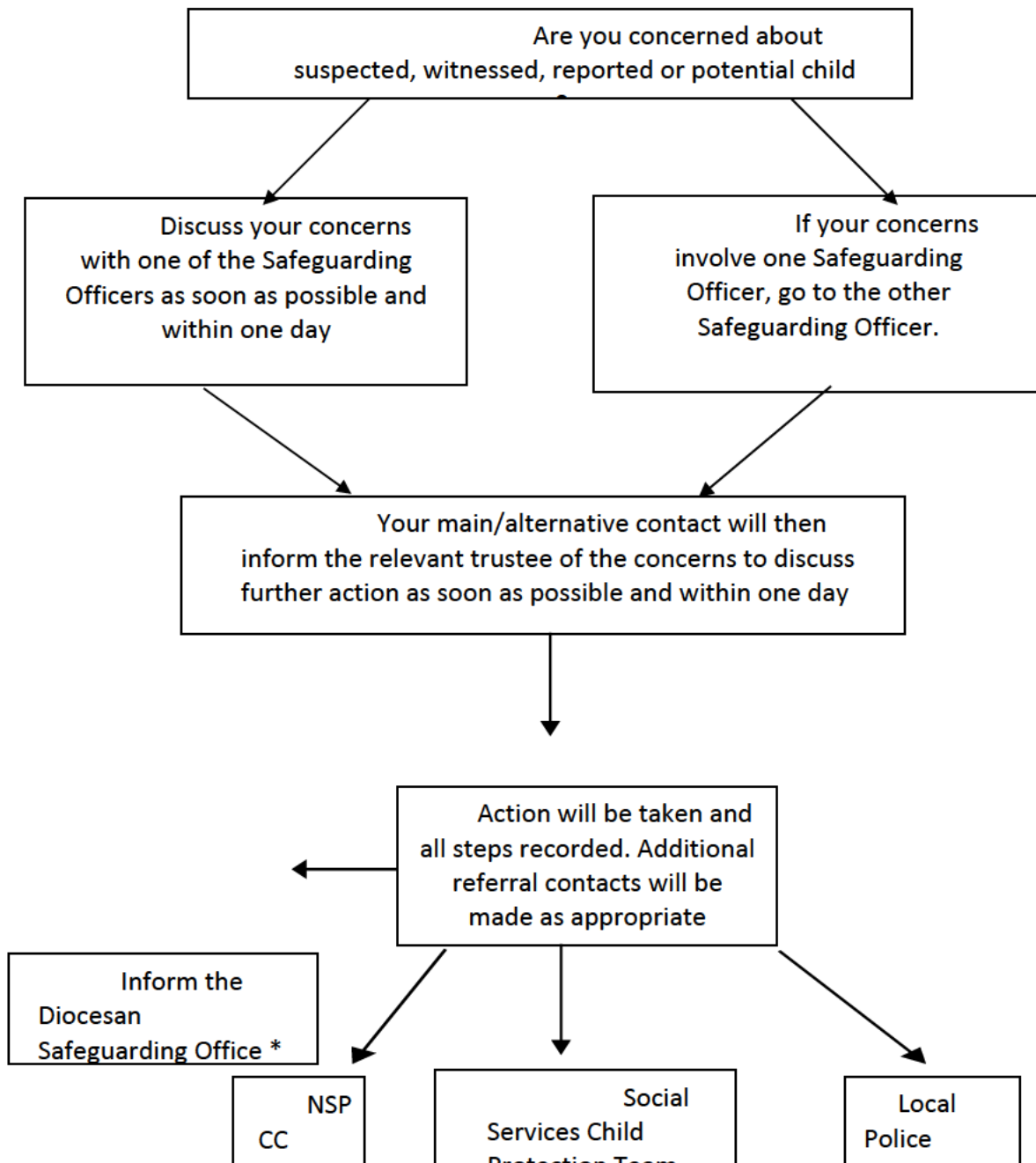
- Reassure them that they were right to report the behaviour.
- Listen carefully and calmly to them and ask minimal questions, just to clarify the allegation so that you will have sufficient information to pass on to the Safeguarding Rep or Police.
- During the conversation, try not to repeat the same questions to the child or young

person, as this gives the child or young person the impression that they did not give correct information the first time and they are not fully believed.

- Do not promise confidentiality to the child or young person. Inform the child or young person that you must report the incident to only those that need to know.
- Take proper steps to ensure the physical safety and psychological wellbeing of the child or young person. This may include referring them for treatment.
- Make certain you distinguish between what the child or young person has actually said and the inference you may have made. Accuracy is paramount in this stage of the procedure.
- Do not permit personal doubt to prevent you from reporting the allegation to the proper authority.
- Let the child or young person know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.

Annex 6: Flowchart to Report Suspected Abuse

Listen, Record, Refer



* This step will only be applicable once safeguarding is done via the diocese and CSSA.

Annex 7: Roles and Responsibilities of a Designated Local Safeguarding Representative

There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead at the Charity, who meets with the rest of the Board on a regular basis to discuss safeguarding matters. There is also a Designated Local Safeguarding Representative within each local group in which the Charity operates.

The Designated Local Safeguarding Representative's duties fall into the following key categories:

- 1) A central point of contact, whose contact details are available for any safeguarding concerns, disclosures or allegations which parents, guardians or children themselves may wish to share. The Safeguarding Representative undertakes training regarding policies and procedures and is aware of who to contact in specific circumstances.
- 2) Promoting good and safe practices in all activities involving children and, young people within the Charity. This is done by sharing national policies and procedures, and local Diocesan Guidelines, with group leaders and volunteers and ensuring that any outside organisations coming in to work with a group are aware and compliant with these requirements.
- 3) In order to protect the children and young people in the Catholic Church from **any form of abuse**, the Charity's Safeguarding Representative is involved in the safe recruitment of volunteers and has the responsibility for facilitating the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Disclosure procedure at a local level.

Organisations have a legal obligation to apply for a Disclosure Certificate, as part of their recruitment process, where any voluntary role involves meaningful contact with, or responsibility for, children or young people.

As set out in Annex 2, the process involves:

- 1) Completion of an application form which is stored securely by the Charity.
- 2) Two references are then sought by the Safeguarding Representative.
- 3) Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, an opportunity must be given to self-declare any relevant information (the Safeguarding Representative does not see this form and the information is held securely at the Diocese)
- 4) Application for a DBS Disclosure is made, and this must be supported by the verification of three appropriate identity documents.
- 5) A single copy only of the Disclosure Certificate is issued which is sent to the applicant's home address. The applicant can then see the content of their disclosure first, which will give them the opportunity to dispute any information disclosed about them, or to withdraw their application, if they wish to do so. The majority of these certificates are 'clear'; however, if they do contain information, the situation is handled in the strictest confidence. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent someone from working in the Charity, and any information which arises as part of the safe recruitment process, is risk assessed by the Diocese in relation to the role applied for. The Safeguarding Representative is then advised that the volunteer may begin their ministry who, in turn, advises the Charity.

- 6) There is a Government [online update service](#) which enables one to manage one's DBS applications and certificates, view organisations that have viewed them. It saves time and we would encourage people to use this service.
- 7) DBS Certificates from other voluntary organisations can be accepted by the Charity, provided: they have been issued by the DBS after the 17 June 2013; the applicants have registered with the online scheme; and their voluntary post is within the same workforce and disclosure level.
- 8) If applicants subscribe to the Online Update Service, this will enable the respective Diocese (from the point at which the Charity's safeguarding is done through the Catholic Church) to undertake regular online status checks of their disclosures rather than requiring everyone to complete an entirely new disclosure application together with the associated forms.

Annex 8: Staying Safe: A Guide for Children

Keeping yourself safe is really important — whether you're at school, at home, or online. This guide will help you understand the best ways to protect yourself and what to do if something doesn't feel right.

General Safety Tips

- Trust your feelings: If something or someone makes you feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or worried — tell a trusted adult straight away.
- Know your safe adults: These are people you can talk to, like your parents, teachers, or other family members.
- Use the buddy system: Try not to walk alone in places you don't know. Stick with friends or family members.
- Say "no" if you feel unsure: You have the right to say no to anything that feels wrong — even if it's someone you know.

Online Safety

- Being online is fun, but it can also carry risks. Here's how to stay safe:
- Keep personal info private: Don't share your full name, address, phone number, school, or passwords with people online.
- Be kind online: Treat others with respect and block/report anyone who is mean or threatening.
- Only talk to people you know: Don't chat or play games with strangers, even if they seem friendly.
- Think before you share: Photos, videos, and messages can be copied and shared without your permission.
- Use privacy settings: Ask an adult to help set up strong privacy settings on apps and games.
- Tell an adult if you see something upsetting or scary online.

Risks of Exploitation

Sometimes, people may try to take advantage of you in ways that aren't always obvious.

- What is exploitation? It's when someone tricks, pressures, or forces you to do something that benefits them but harms you — like giving them money, photos, or doing something you don't want to do.
- Watch out for gifts or favours: If someone gives you gifts or money and wants something in return, that's a red flag.
- Don't keep secrets: If someone tells you to keep something secret from your family or teachers, always tell a trusted adult.
- It's never your fault: If someone hurts or tricks you, it's not your fault — you deserve help and support.

Risks of Radicalisation

Radicalisation is when someone tries to make you believe extreme ideas and may encourage you to do dangerous things.

- What to look out for: People who tell you the world is against you, or that hurting others is the answer.
- Online influence: Be careful of videos, chat groups, or people trying to get you to believe or do things that seem extreme.
- Ask questions: It's okay to be curious or confused, but speak to a trusted adult if someone is pushing strong views on you.
- You are in control: No one should pressure you into believing or doing something that feels wrong.

What to Do if You're Worried

- Tell a trusted adult – they will help you.
- Call Childline (UK): 0800 1111 – it's free and confidential.
- Save evidence if something happens online — like screenshots or messages — and report it.
- Don't stay silent – speaking up helps you and might help others too.

Final Tip

You have the right to feel safe and be treated with respect — online and offline. If anything ever feels wrong, it's always okay to ask for help.

Annex 9: MASH and LADO

MASH stands for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, which is a central point for reporting concerns about a child's safety or well-being.

LADO, or Local Authority Designated Officer, is the specific professional who manages allegations of abuse against adults who work with children.

MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)

Purpose:

MASH is a team of professionals from various agencies (e.g. Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Police, Health, Education, Youth Justice Service, Housing, Hestia, Change Live Grow, Early

Date of last review: 16 June 2026

Help Service and Probation) who work together to assess and manage safeguarding concerns for children.

How it works:

Professionals across different agencies can contact the MASH to report concerns about a child's safety or well-being. A referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) should be made when there are concerns about a child's welfare or safety, indicating potential abuse, neglect, or a need for support from family services.

Examples of situations that may warrant a MASH referral:

- A child discloses being hurt by a parent or caregiver.
- A child's injuries are inconsistent with the explanation provided.
- A child is displaying signs of emotional distress or withdrawal.
- A child is not receiving adequate supervision or care.
- A child is being exposed to harmful situations or environments.

Information sharing:

The MASH facilitates information sharing between different agencies to get a comprehensive picture of the situation and decide on the appropriate course of action.

Referral:

If a concern is raised, the MASH will assess the situation and determine if further action is needed, such as contacting social services or other relevant agencies.

More information:

<https://www.multiagencysafeguardinghub.com/>

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)

Purpose:

The LADO is a designated officer within the local authority whose role is to manage allegations of abuse or misconduct against adults who work with children.

Who it applies to:

The LADO is involved when there are concerns about a professional or volunteer who works with children, including those who work for our organisation.

What the LADO does:

The LADO will provide advice and guidance on whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures. If the allegation does fall within the scope of the procedures, the LADO will oversee the management of the allegation, co-ordinate information sharing with the right people and monitor and track any investigations, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible.

When to contact:

The LADO must be contacted within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child

- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children;
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.
- Behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not have to directly relate to a child.
- As a parent or carer, has a child that has become subject to child protection procedures
- Is closely associated with someone in their personal lives (eg partner, member of the family or other household member) who may present a risk of harm to child/ren for whom the member of staff is responsible in their employment/volunteering.

More information:

<https://national-lado-network.co.uk/the-role-of-the-lado-local-authority-designated-officer/>

In essence:

- MASH is the central point for all safeguarding concerns about children.
- LADO specifically handles allegations against adults who work with children.
- Both are crucial parts of the safeguarding process, working together to protect children from harm.

Annex 10: Safeguarding Reporting Form



safeguarding-reporting-form.docx

The following slip is to be signed by the volunteer and sent to the Charity's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Guides and Scouts of Europe - UK

I, _____, have read, understood and accepted compliance with the Charity's Safeguarding Policy (version 2.3) and guidelines as part of the terms and conditions of my engagement.

Dated:

Signature: