

Mandatory Ongoing Safeguarding e-learning

– A reference guide to the content

This guide can be used for support or reference before, during or after you do the Mandatory Ongoing Safeguarding e-learning.

The Mandatory Ongoing Safeguarding e-learning contains 5 lessons. By doing the e-learning you will:

- Understand the Safeguarding Policy and your responsibilities for keeping our young people, and adults at risk, safe
- Understand the Young People First Safeguarding Card Code of Practice (Yellow Card)
- Know how to recognise abuse
- Know how to report concerns
- Know what to do to make Scouts safe

Lesson 1: Understanding the Safeguarding Policy and your responsibilities for keeping our young people, and adults at risk, safe

Half a million young people enjoy Scouts every week. Our Safeguarding Policy keeps young people safe from harm. The Scout code of practice says 'Young People First', and it is at the centre of all that we do. This training will help you to understand your part in keeping our young people safe.

Here are some of the key points of our Safeguarding Policy:

It's the policy of Scouts to **safeguard** the welfare of **all young people and adults at risk**, by protecting them from **neglect**, and from **physical, sexual** and **emotional harm**.

Scouts define a young person as anyone who is **under 18**.

We recognise that some people may have additional or complex needs. In certain circumstances they can be particularly vulnerable to abuse.

We define an adult at risk as a person aged 18 or over who:

- needs care and support, and/or is unable to protect their own wellbeing because of their care and support needs; or
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse, neglect or exploitation

So, what does this mean for you?

- Everyone in Scouts must be able to **recognise, respond to** and **refer** any reported **allegations** or **concerns** correctly.
- Everyone must **understand** their responsibility to **follow** the correct **procedures** for **protecting** young people and adults at risk from **harm**.
- The Safeguarding Policy is for **everyone** within Scouts, including all volunteers and staff. Scouts understand that **safeguarding is everyone's responsibility** and is embedded across our organisation.

- All adults must make sure that their **behaviour is appropriate at all times**, as laid out in the **Young People First Safeguarding Code of Practice**. This is known as the **Yellow Card**.
- You can download the [Yellow Card](#) from the website, get a copy from the Scout Store or ask your line manager.

To read the Safeguarding Policy in full click [here](#).

Let's find out how we work together to make sure that safeguarding is at the centre of everything we do.

All volunteers and staff

Safeguarding is the responsibility of **all** volunteers and staff; everyone must follow the Yellow Card.

Adults running meetings and activities for young people

Adults create a safe space for all activities and events to run safely for everyone. They must be alert; they must question behaviours, and they must report any allegations or concerns.

Commissioners

Commissioners (such as District Commissioners, County Commissioners, Area Commissioners or Regional Commissioners) are responsible for putting the right people in the right roles, with the correct disclosure checks. They'll consult with the Safeguarding Team about any concerns or allegations, and will suspend where necessary.

Safeguarding Awareness Co-ordinators

Safeguarding Awareness Co-ordinators are there to give general safeguarding advice to leaders and commissioners within their County.

Trustees and Executive Committees

The Board of Trustees for Scouts is responsible for making sure the Safeguarding Policy is implemented and working effectively across the UK. They may delegate some of this responsibility to the Safeguarding Committee to ensure effective quality assurance, compliance and reporting. Each Group, District and County/Area has an Executive Committee who act as the local Trustees, and who are responsible for ensuring the group, district, county or area operate within the policies of the movement.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Safer Recruitment

Scouts are committed to Safer Recruitment – and to making sure that the adults who volunteer within Scouts are appropriate people for the roles they're volunteering in.

If any adult is **not able to understand the Safeguarding Policy** and **uphold the Yellow Card**, they **cannot hold an adult appointment**.

No person aged 18 or over may be permitted to undertake any responsibilities or involvement within Scouts until the appropriate enquiries have been made. To see the appointment process, click [here](#).

It's fine for parents or carers to help occasionally, but they need to be supervised at all times and shouldn't be volunteering more than three times in a four week period.

Scouts ensures that all volunteers;

- go through a **robust application process**, including a meeting to check they understand what they're signing up for
- provide a minimum of two **references**
- take part in an **induction** that clearly explains their role and responsibilities to safeguarding within Scouts
- complete the right level of **training** for their role
- complete the appropriate **vetting** process, if needed

An adult cannot have any involvement in Scouts if a report from an appropriate professional or statutory source suggests they aren't an appropriate person to hold a position in Scouts.

Lesson 2: Understanding the Young People First Safeguarding Card Code of Practice (Yellow Card)

The **Yellow Card** sets out a code of practice that all adults in the Scouts must follow. It's a practical way of sharing the Safeguarding Policy, with all the information in one handy place.

Now that we're in a digital age, leaders need to understand how to keep online communication safe.

All online communication between adults and young people follows strict guidelines - that way we don't place anyone at risk of harm. There must be **no** individual online communication between an adult and a young person. All online communication should be within a group, age appropriate and with more than one adult involved.

Make everyone (that's young people, parents and carers, Young Leaders and other helpers) aware of our safeguarding arrangements and **share the Yellow Card**. Parents and young people need to know what to expect from adults in Scouting and so that they understand how to challenge if they are not happy. A Yellow Card poster is available which should be on display at Scout premises and meeting places. If your meeting place doesn't belong to Scouts, then put up the Yellow Card poster each time you meet.

Where there are **concerns** that an adult has not followed the Yellow Card, or where there are welfare concerns about a young person **report it** to your line manager. They'll pass it to the Safeguarding Team who'll work with the line manager to take any necessary action. If you feel that your concern has not been taken seriously enough, contact the Safeguarding Team.

It takes a lot of courage for a young person to open up about harm they may be experiencing; they deserve to be listened to and taken seriously.

If any adult is **unable** to understand or uphold the Yellow Card, they **won't** be able to hold an adult appointment.

To see the Yellow Card in full, click [here](#).

Other cards that give important safeguarding guidance are:

The Orange Card offers guidance for Explorer Scout Young Leaders. Adults must remember that Young Leaders are young people, too. To see the Orange Card, click [here](#).

The Green Card offers information and guidance for adults about alcohol. Adults must not drink alcohol when they're directly responsible for young people at any Scout event. To see the Green Card, click [here](#).

The Grey Card offers safeguarding guidance for Commissioners – it's a reminder of the procedures they must follow if any safeguarding allegation or concern arises. To see the Grey Card, click [here](#).

You can download cards from the website, get a copy from the Scout Store or ask your line manager.

Lesson 3: Knowing how to recognise abuse

Abuse can happen **any place, any time, to anyone**. It can happen in person, but also **online**, or in any virtual environment (such as social media or gaming apps).

An abuser can be anyone, but they're often an adult or another young person that the victim already knows.

Remember, it takes a lot for a young person to talk about their experience of harm. They might not recognise that what they're going through is abuse, so it's really important that they're always listened to and always taken seriously.

Types of abuse

These are the main types of child abuse.

Physical abuse

- Hitting with hands or objects
- Pushing
- Kicking
- Burning and scalding
- Biting and scratching
- Poisoning
- Inflicting illness on someone

Emotional abuse

- Making a child feel as though they're worthless or inadequate
- Making a child feel frightened or in danger
- Letting a child witness someone else being badly treated

Neglect

- Not having enough food or warm clothes
- Not being cared for or looked after

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse could involve contact or no contact.

Examples include:

- Sexual touching or rape
- Making a child undress or touch someone else
- Forcing a child to take part in sexual activities
- Exposing a child to sexual acts or pornography
- Any activity that involves indecent images of children

Be aware: both adults and young people alike can commit sexual abuse.

Young people who harm other young people

Young people can abuse or harm other young people, something that's often referred to as peer on peer abuse or harmful behaviour. We must understand that bullying is always harmful and should always be challenged. If it continues, report it.

Some common signs of abuse are:

- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- Becoming withdrawn
- Seeming anxious
- Becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- A lack of social skills and few friends, if any
- A poor bond or relationship with a parent
- A knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
- Running away or going missing
- Always choosing to wear clothes which cover the body

These signs aren't exhaustive – they don't always mean that a child is experiencing abuse.

Grooming

Grooming can be involved in most types of abuse of a young person by an adult, who will often try befriending a young person in order to cause them harm. Following the Yellow Card helps stop opportunities for grooming.

As society changes other types of harm have been recognised for young people. We don't expect you to be experts in them all but if you have concerns about a young person, contact the [Safeguarding Team](#) for advice.

Some forms of harm potentially involve a form of grooming:

- Sexual exploitation
- Criminal exploitation (gangs)
- Modern slavery and human trafficking
- Radicalisation

Some involve harmful practices:

- Forced marriage
- Female genital mutilation
- Honour based violence

The [Safeguarding Policy](#) gives detailed definitions if you would like to read more.

If you're ever unsure, reach out to the [Safeguarding Team](#) for advice.

Mental Wellbeing

Mental wellbeing is not, in itself, a safeguarding issue, but some young people (and adult volunteers) may struggle with their mental health. If you're worried about anyone's mental health within the movement, support is available from your line manager or the Safeguarding Team.

We recognise that some young people might have additional or complex needs, for instance, limited communication skills. In certain circumstances, those in need of extra care can be particularly vulnerable to abuse.

Lesson 4: Knowing how to report concerns

What should I do if I'm worried about a young person?

First of all, don't panic. It's your duty to report your concerns to your line manager, who's there to help you. Whether your concerns are about a young person's life inside or outside of Scouts, make sure you report it your line manager.

The [Yellow Card](#) also gives you guidance on what to do if a young person tells you they're being abused.

You must:

1. Allow them to speak without interruption and accept what they say
2. Be understanding and reassuring – do not give your opinion
3. Tell them you will try to help but must pass the information on
4. Report it to your line manager as soon as possible

Do NOT investigate any allegations yourself

It's the job of the police or Safeguarding Team to lead on this. By trying to investigate it yourself, you could be putting people at even more risk and jeopardise an investigation.

When you report a concern, give as much detail as you can. Include details about the young person and their parents or carers.

If the young person is at immediate risk of significant harm, call 999 and request the police. Just make sure to let your line manager know once you've done this.

Remember, all this information – and much more – is on the [Yellow Card](#). Keep it with you – it's there to help.

What should I do if there is a concern or allegation made about an adult – or about me?

Any concern surrounding an adult who's involved in Scouts must be reported to your line manager as soon as possible. This includes if the concern is about you.

You must understand as a volunteer in Scouts you're in a position of trust. This means that you have authority over the young people in the movement. The Yellow Card sets out that you must never abuse this position.

If there are any areas in your personal life that might affect your role in Scouts, it's best to talk to your line manager. For example, if the police have been called to your home for a potential offence, you'd have to let your line manager know.

If you're ever contacted by a statutory agency – the police or children's services, etc – relating to a matter that concerns your role in the Scouts or a current Scout (even if the matter is not recent) this must be reported to the Safeguarding Team.

Please note: The Wales Safeguarding procedures are not statutory guidance, but good practice. The Scouts current "duty to report" set out in The Yellow card discharges an individual's expectation to report.

Lesson 5: Knowing what to do to make Scouts safe

Most young people's experience within Scouts is a very happy one. By doing the e-learning, you will help to make sure that young people are kept safe as they move through their Scout journey.

Remember:

- To create an environment where young people feel safe, are treated with respect, and are listened to
- To report any concerns about young people or the behaviour of any adults
- To keep your training up to date
- To act in the best interests of young people at all times and follow the [Yellow Card](#)

Remember, our code of practice says 'Young People First' and that is at the centre of all that we do.