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Scouting Ireland – Equality, Diversity & Inclusiveness Policy				
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Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy document is to state Scouting Ireland’s commitment to equality in relation to equal access, fair treatment and opportunities for equal outcomes for every member of Scouting Ireland and to promote diversity and inclusiveness across Scouting Ireland. This commitment is grounded both in the fundamentals of Scouting and in legislation

Statement of Scouting Fundamentals

Our Commitment is built on the fundamental elements of Scouting and of Scouting Ireland, namely the constitution of Scouting Ireland, the Scout Promise and the Scout Law

Article 2 of the Scouting Ireland Constitution states

“Scouting Ireland is a voluntary, uniformed, non-formal educational movement for young people. It is independent, non-political, open to all without distinction of origin, race, creed, gender, sexual orientation or ability in accordance with the purpose, principles and method conceived by the Founder, Robert Baden-Powell and as stated by the World Organisation of the Scout Movement.”

Article 3 of the Scouting Ireland Constitution states

“The aim of Scouting Ireland is to encourage the physical, intellectual, character, emotional, social, and spiritual development of young people so that they may achieve their full potential and, as responsible citizens, to improve society.”

Article 5 of the Scouting Ireland Constitution states

“The principles of Scouting Ireland are enshrined in the Scout Promise and the Scout Law and they include:

- Adherence to spiritual principles, loyalty to the faith that expresses them and acceptance of the duties resulting therefrom.
- Loyalty to one’s community in harmony with the promotion of peace, understanding and cooperation.
- Responsibility for the development of ones’ self.
- Participation in the development of society with recognition and respect for the dignity of one’s fellow beings and for the integrity of the natural world.
- Use of a method of progressive self-education, known as the Scout Method, comprising programs adapted to the various age groups.”

Statement of Responsibilities Under Legislation

As Scouting Ireland operates across two jurisdictions it is necessary, as an Association, to have due regard for both legislation in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland. At all times, the general policy of Scouting Ireland is not to discriminate unlawfully or unjustifiably on any equality grounds, regardless of whether it is operating in the Republic of Ireland or in Northern Ireland¹

Scouting Ireland's Vision for Equality, Diversity and Inclusiveness.

Scouting Ireland will ensure equal opportunity of access and participation as well as fair treatment and respect for all; regardless of disability (physical/intellectual), civil/marital status, gender, family status, membership to the Traveller Community, race, ethnicity, religious belief, political opinion or sexual orientation. While it is necessary for us to have specific age limits for our youth programme sections and for particular adult roles, it is important to acknowledge both the rich experience older members contribute and the real potential of young leaders. No adult will be denied membership or the chance to play a meaningful role due to age. We will provide an environment which is free from discrimination, harassment or denial of opportunity for our youth and adult members.

Commitment to Action

To overcome existing inequalities it is not enough to state we are open to all, but we must actively seek to create a more diverse, equal and Inclusive association, reaching out to the excluded and minority groups to create opportunities. The Scout Promise calls us to service and to action, Scouting is based on learning by doing and values practical experience above theoretical instruction; and so our commitment to equality is based on action and will not be equality in theory or policy alone.

To make real the vision for equality Scouting Ireland will:

- Have due regard to equality and inclusiveness in the creation of all policies and publications.
- Identify and pursue opportunities for exploring the issue of equality in youth programme, working in partnership with outside groups (where relevant) to help foster an environment which genuinely embraces equality & inclusiveness.
- Ensure Scouters have the skills and confidence, through training and support, to create an environment which genuinely embraces equality & inclusiveness.
- Explore ways of informing our members, youth and adult, of their rights and responsibilities in relation to this policy; and in particular what procedures to follow in the event they are affected by, involved in or witness to behaviours, actions or practices which are not in keeping with this policy.
- Reach out to currently excluded and minority groups to actively encourage and create opportunities for inclusion, equal access and participation.
- Ensure reasonable accommodation with due regard for a proactive and inclusive approach and that is subject to review.
- Develop an annual Equality, Diversity & Inclusiveness Action Plan which will include, inter alia, detailed goals which are specific, measurable, and timely that will help foster an environment which genuinely embraces equality & inclusiveness and which will put in practice this vision for equality and commitment to action. The achievements of this plan will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis.
- Designate a named person/persons responsible for ensuring implementation of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusiveness Action Plan and to monitor and review how the effectiveness of the Action Plan and report on same.

Complaints

Complaints regarding matters highlighted in this policy will be processed in line with the Scouting Ireland complaints policy. This internal complaints process does not replace an individual's statutory rights.

ⁱ Scouting Ireland reserves the right to rely on any particular legal provisions and defences that may be available to it in the respective jurisdictions.