Scouting Ireland, National Office, Larch Hill, Dublin 16, Ireland.
T: 01 4956300
www.scouts.ie

Scouting Ireland – Safeguarding Department Six Monthly Update

Report: Scouting Ireland's six-monthly Safeguarding Report, previously submitted to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), is now directed to the attention of the **Department of Education and Youth.**

Author: **Steven Maclean, Safeguarding Manager, Scouting Ireland**

Date: **5th June 2025**

Contents:

Section	Contents
1	Preamble- Purpose of report
2	Safeguarding Managers Qualifications, Registration & Supervision
3	Safeguarding Team & Accommodation
4	Safeguarding Website
5	Safeguarding Reports to the Board of Directors
6	Safeguarding Sub Committee
7	Safeguarding Policies & Procedures
8	Review of Policies and Procedures
9	Connections with statutory and other services & agencies
10	Safeguarding Training – Adults
11	Safeguarding Training – Youth Members
12	Safeguarding Networks
13	World Scout Jamboree 2027
14	Scouting Irelands Safeguarding Conference 2024
15	Audits
16	Establishment of Listening Ear / Welfare Teams
17	Scouting Irelands Strategy – Beyond 2025
18	Finance
19	Conclusion
20	Signatories

1	**Preamble- Purpose of report** Scouting Ireland's six-monthly Safeguarding Report, previously submitted to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), is now directed to the attention of the Department of Education and Youth. Scouting Ireland's Scout Groups involve over 30,000 young people and over 10,000 adult volunteers across the Island of Ireland. Since 1908, young people in Ireland have been involved in Scouting. Scouting Ireland is one of Ireland's largest national youth organisations, dedicated to developing life skills for young people in a safe, respectful environment. Scouting Ireland aims to nurture the personal development of young people through the Scout Method – a non-formal educational approach unique to youth work. The programme empowers young people to build confidence, leadership, and life skills through adventure, teamwork, and service. This is delivered in a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where safeguarding, safety, and welfare are prioritised. All activities are designed to ensure that every young person feels respected, protected, and able to thrive within the Scout movement.
2	**Safeguarding Manager's Qualifications, Registration & Supervision & Training** The Safeguarding Manager and author of this report is a professionally qualified Social Worker and CORU registered (Registration Number 003369). The Safeguarding Manager leads a small team of case officers and vetting officers in Scouting Irelands Safeguarding Department. With 20 years' experience in safeguarding and child protection the Safeguarding Manager is committed to ensuring the highest standard of safeguarding practices and services are provided in Scouting Ireland. Staff in the Safeguarding Department receive regular individual professional supervision and ongoing training in accordance with their individual needs and in meeting the needs of the service. External supervision/counselling is also available to the staff team on an individual basis where need is identified. The Safeguarding Manager provides individual and group supervision to the staff team and in turn receives external clinical supervision and is committed to ongoing training and development.
3	**Safeguarding Team & Accommodation** Scouting Ireland's Safeguarding Department has separate office accommodation based in Scouting Ireland's National Office in Larch Hill. Only the safeguarding staff can access the office accommodation by an electronic 'fob'. This ensures that highly sensitive phone calls and casework discussions can be carried out in privacy and confidentiality is maintained. Non-recent files are stored in fire-proof safes, and more recent files are in data-protected electronic 'case management' systems. The case management team comprise of two committed and long-standing safeguarding case officers - experienced professionals who carry out duties in a skilled, respectful manner

	and with the upmost diligence. As noted in the previous report a highly experienced and qualified social worker, working on a part time basis and carrying out specific duties in line with her experience and qualifications are central to Safeguarding responses in our organisation. In 2024 the Safeguarding Department Staff have engaged in ongoing professional development including: • Designated Liaison Person Training -Tusla • Allegations and Complaints - NYCI • Sex Offenders use of technology – Joe Sullivan / Global Safeguarding • Young People with Problematic Behaviour – Joe Sullivan • Just Looking, Online Offending – Marre Crabbe • Speaking to children about CSA – The CSA Centre • Spotting the signs and indicators of CSA – The CSA Centre • Speaking to children about abuse – The CSA Centre • Global Safeguarding Conference, London. • 'Fair Procedures' Training • NOTA Conference Staff in the Safeguarding Department by association are members of the following organisations: • Children's Alliance, • NOTA, an organisation committed to the prevention of all forms of sexual violence, abuse and sexual exploitation and we work to exceed National and International standards with these organisations. Vetting Officers, registered with the appropriate authorities—The Garda National Vetting Bureau in the Republic of Ireland and AccessNI in Northern Ireland—are responsible for processing vetting applications for adult members in a timely and professional manner. Both officers receive regular training and supervision to ensure compliance with legal requirements and best practices in safeguarding. Their role is vital in maintaining a safe and trusted environment for all members of Scouting Ireland.
4	**Safeguarding Website** A dedicated Safeguarding website is available on Safeguarding (scouts.ie) The website is an information area for stakeholders and other interested parties to access Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. It provides contacts to Scouting Ireland's Safeguarding Department as well as updated bulletins, "Safeguarding Specifics", which focus on topical themes. Our 'Make a Report' and 'Ask a Question' features introduced in 2024 have been welcomed by Scouters who can report non-emergency concerns and ask questions via our general Safeguarding email address.

	Our website is being constantly updated to keep Safeguarding fresh for our members and others who are interested in our work.
5	**Safeguarding Reports to the Board of Directors (BOD)** Safeguarding is a standing agenda item at every meeting of Scouting Ireland's Board of Directors. The Safeguarding Manager prepares a detailed update report for the Board on a quarterly basis and additionally as required. The Safeguarding Manager attends one Board meeting in person each quarter to provide direct updates and answer any safeguarding-related queries. In addition, the Safeguarding Manager maintains a direct line of communication with the Chair of the Board of Directors and for urgent or sensitive safeguarding matters. This structure ensures that safeguarding remains a priority at the highest level of governance within the organisation.
6	**Safeguarding Sub Committee** Scouting Ireland's Safeguarding Subcommittee, established as a formal subcommittee of the Board of Directors (BOD), serves as an oversight body for all safeguarding matters within the organisation. It plays a vital role in supporting and monitoring the implementation of safeguarding functions and ensuring that best practices are upheld across all levels of Scouting. The Subcommittee meets regularly with the Safeguarding Manager and convenes formally at least once per quarter to provide oversight, guidance, and strategic input on safeguarding issues. It is chaired by a member of the Board of Directors, who provides regular updates and reports to the full Board, ensuring strong alignment between safeguarding practices and organisational governance in Scouting Ireland. In addition to Scouting Ireland members, the Subcommittee includes two independent members—both qualified social work practitioners—who bring valuable expertise and an external perspective to its work. An open call remains active for both internal and external candidates interested in contributing to the Subcommittee. We particularly welcome expressions of interest from individuals with experience in legal practice or law enforcement (An Garda Síochána or Police services), to further strengthen the group's multidisciplinary expertise. The Subcommittee operates under a clear Terms of Reference, which outlines its purpose, structure, and responsibilities. This document is publicly available on Scouting Ireland's Safeguarding webpage.
7	**Safeguarding Policies & Procedures** Scouting Ireland's Child Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and Procedures exist to ensure the safety and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults in our organisation, which is a priority. Policies specific to Safeguarding include:

	• Scouting Ireland's Code of Behaviour to assist adults engaging with children in Scouting. • Scouting Ireland's Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy • Membership Risk Assessment Policy: Adult members suspended without prejudice for a safeguarding purpose. • Membership Risk Assessment Policy: Youth members suspended without prejudice for a safeguarding purpose. • Responding to Victims of Abuse within Scouting Ireland • Scouting Ireland's Procedure for Suspension without Prejudice • Scouting Ireland's 'Stay Away' Policy • Scouting Ireland's Disciplinary Process
8	**Review of Policies and Procedures** A full review of Scouting Ireland's Safeguarding Policies is currently underway, with the aim of launching the updated suite of policies at Cruinniú (National event) in September 2025. This review will ensure that all safeguarding procedures remain aligned with current legislation, best practice, and the evolving needs of our members. In parallel, Scouting Ireland is piloting a revised process for assessing Scouters who have been suspended without prejudice and subsequently cleared by the relevant statutory authorities. As part of this process, 'Suitability to Return to Scouting Assessments' are being conducted to determine whether these individuals are appropriate to resume volunteering within the organisation. This approach prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all members and reinforces our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding in all areas of Scouting.
9	**Safeguarding Department's connections with statutory and other services & agencies** The Safeguarding Department, in line with its statutory responsibilities, have regular contact with the statutory services in the Island of Ireland, namely The Child & Family Agency (Tusla), An Garda Siochana, The Police Service Northern Ireland and The Gateway Service Northern Ireland. This department has established relationships with these services on a National, Local and Departmental Level. Scouting Ireland's Safeguarding department has contacted the Charity Regulator in the Republic of Ireland and the Charity Commissioner for Northern Ireland when appropriate and in line with our legal and policy requirements. The Safeguarding Department continues to regularly collaborate with other relevant services, departments and agencies as was outlined in previous reports.
10	**Safeguarding Training – Adults** Overview of modules:

1. **Bespoke Scouting Ireland On-Line Safeguarding Training for *ALL* SI members from the age of 16. "On My Honour" Expires three yearly. "One Source of Truth".**

eLearning

Scouting Ireland's Safeguarding eLearning Training Programme "On My Honour" launched in September 2024 is designed to equip scouting Irelands adult members (and 16-18year olds with parental consent) with the essential knowledge and skills needed to protect children, young people and vulnerable individuals, ensuring compliance with the latest safeguarding standards and best practices. The course is an integral part of Scouting Ireland's extensive safeguarding programme which trains over 7,000 people every year through a combination of in-person and online training.

2. **In-Person Safeguarding module in the Being a Scouter (BAS). For all New Scouters**

Child Protection Awareness Programme (CPAP) is a nationally recognised training course designed and delivered by the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI). This programme provides essential safeguarding knowledge for those working with young people in the youth sector. Scouting Ireland delivers CPAP to its adult volunteers through a team of trained Scouters, who themselves are trained and accredited by NYCI. The CPAP forms a core part of Scouting Ireland's commitment to ensuring all adults working with youth members understand their responsibilities in recognising, responding to, and reporting child protection concerns in line with national legislation and best practice.

3. **Safeguarding Module in 'Scouting Together'**

This is a new Scouting Ireland safeguarding course specifically designed for experienced Scouters and staff who already have a strong foundation in Scouting, youth engagement and safety. Prior to attendance on this course, there is a mandatory requirement that the "On my honour course" has been completed.

The course has been designed and being facilitated by the senior Safeguarding Officer (Social Worker) who has specialist expertise, experience and knowledge in the area under the supervision of the Safeguarding Manager. The course builds on the Scouters existing knowledge while introducing deeper insights into areas such as child abuse, radicalisation and disclosures. As this course is currently in its trial phase, we are currently welcoming all feedback from participants to help shape and improve the content, delivery, and overall impact.

4. **In-Person Safeguarding module for GL's, CC's, PC's (People in charge of people)**

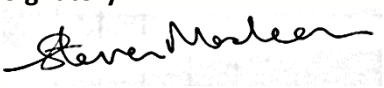
This safeguarding module forms a key part of the Group Leader/County Commissioner (GL/CC) Course and is specifically designed for Scouters who hold leadership or supervisory responsibilities. The course focuses on fostering a strong safeguarding culture within Scouting Ireland by learning from past experiences and embedding good practice at all levels. It reinforces the importance of ensuring that all adults under their supervision are fully compliant with vetting requirements and safeguarding training. In addition, the course provides clear guidance on how to support the appropriate reporting of safeguarding

	concerns, equipping leaders with the knowledge and confidence to uphold the highest standards of child protection and welfare within their groups or counties. **5. In Development: In-Person Safeguarding module for Overnights and Camp/Expedition Leaders(2025).** This module equips Scouters with the knowledge and confidence to identify signs of welfare concerns, respond appropriately to disclosures, and take action in line with Scout Ireland's safeguarding procedures. It will place a particular focus on scenarios that may arise during camping expeditions within Ireland or overseas, where young people may be away from their usual support networks. The training also covers how to manage safeguarding concerns in remote or high-pressure environments, how to maintain appropriate boundaries, and the importance of timely communication with the Safeguarding Team. This course will ensure that Scouters are not only legally compliant but also emotionally prepared to support young people in a safe, respectful, and compassionate manner. **6. Bespoke Safeguarding Training** The Safeguarding Team offers bespoke safeguarding training tailored to specific needs and groups upon request. Examples include specialised sessions for campsite staff or groups preparing for overseas trips. This customised approach ensures that the training is relevant, practical, and addresses the unique challenges and responsibilities of each type of group, thereby enhancing safeguarding awareness and best practices across all areas of Scouting Ireland. **7. Further Training in Safeguarding:** The Safeguarding Department continue to work with our internal and external partners with regards to the development of further Safeguarding training for our adult members. Our 2025 work plan in this regard includes the further development of: 1. Safeguarding 'Afloat' – the Sea Scouts are looking to develop awareness training specific to sea scouting. 2. Develop awareness training in the area of Transgender & equality / LGBTQI+ 3. Welfare/Listening Ear Teams (as will be outlined later in this report)
11	**Safeguarding Training – Youth Members** A project team to develop a Youth programme in Safeguarding for Scouting Ireland was established in 2023. This age-appropriate child-centred programme was launched at our Safeguarding conference in September 2024. Safeguarding training for Scouting Ireland's Youth Members will empower them with knowledge and skills to protect themselves and seek help in situations where their safety or well-being may be at risk. The activity-based programme aims to educate our Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, and Venture Scouts about their rights, personal safety, and how to recognise and

	respond to potential risks or harm. The programme is intertwined in our 'One Programme' and will be reviewed throughout 2025/26.
12	**Safeguarding Networks** The Safeguarding Manager continues to attend regular meetings of two National Safeguarding Networks Committees – One for Children/Young People and one for adults. Both committees exist to share best practices in the Safeguarding arena and are a source of valuable learning for policy and practice implementation. The Safeguarding Department regularly liaise and meet with external partners such as: • World Organisation for the Scout Movement (WOSM) • The UK Scout Association (in particular the Safeguarding Manager and Team). • BelongTo • TENI • Invisible Traffick (Northern Ireland) • The National Youth Council of Ireland • Cara Friend (Northern Ireland) • Others as appropriate
13	**World Scout Jamboree (WSJ) – Poland 2027** Scouting Ireland has committed to taking 500 members to the World Scout Jamboree (WSJ) in Poland in 2027. The WSJ is held every four years and typically hosts approximately 40,000 Scouts from around the world. The Safeguarding Manager plays a crucial role on the Contingent Management Team, acting as the key liaison between the volunteer team and Scouting Ireland's Senior Management Team working closely with the Volunteer Contingent Leader/ 'Head of Contingent for Ireland. This role ensures that safeguarding principles are upheld before, during, and after the Jamboree, helping to deliver a safe and memorable experience for all participants. Responsibilities include coordinating safeguarding logistics, and line-managing a dedicated 'events coordinator' for practical logistics, finances, balance sheets, travel and accommodation organisation, participant data securely, supporting clear communications, and other duties in line with this event. During the event, the World Organisation for the Scout Movement (WOSM) Safe From Harm Team will be present, providing an invaluable opportunity for Scouting Ireland to collaborate and exchange best practices in safeguarding and child protection. This partnership will help ensure that the highest standards of safety and wellbeing are maintained throughout the Jamboree, supporting a protective environment for all participants and reinforcing Scouting Ireland's commitment to exemplary safeguarding standards and knowledge and experience following the event.
14	**Scouting Irelands Safeguarding Conference 2024** The Safeguarding Conference took place on the 13th September 2024 in the conference centre at Larch Hill.

	Guest Speakers included: • Dr Ruth Elliffe, Trinity College Dublin on Domestic Violence and the impact on children & families. What volunteers should look for. • Simon Davis, Safeguarding Manger the Scout Association, UK • Lisa O'Loughlin, NIAP – The work of NIAP and Sexually Harmful Behaviour • Adult Safeguarding and others • Inspire Wellbeing • Micheal Lynch The Safeguarding Conference welcomed. • Scouting Ireland's (SI) Safeguarding Trainers • SI Provincial Training Coordinators • SI Provincial Commissioners • SI Scouting Irelands Support/ and other staff • External Partners and Colleagues from the Safeguarding Networks Committees • Other invited guests • Other interested SI members by agreement with their local Provincial Commissioner The event was linked to Scouting Irelands 'Cruinniu weekend' which is an annual event consolidating national events into one weekend – National Youth Assembly, National Conference, Group Leader Conference. This is Scouting Ireland's flagship event, marking the start of the Scouting Year. We welcomed the Chief Social Worker from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth who's parting comments were extremely positive and encouraging. We envisage that Guest speakers will become an integral part of our ongoing learning for staff and our Safeguarding Trainers and that a Conference like this will take place every second year/as required and as resources allow.
15	**Audits** Scouting Irelands Safeguarding Department have engaged with Tusla's trial self-audit tool and formed part of Tusla's provisional collaborative meetings to progress. In addition, we are currently working on WOSM's 'Safe from Harm' self-assessment tool. This will provide a check/balance on where Scouting Ireland is with regard to Safeguarding and Safe from Harm processes and procedures on a Scout world stage. The audit is due for completion this quarter.
16	**Establishment of Listening Ear / Welfare Teams** As part of its ongoing commitment to member well-being, Scouting Ireland is developing a dedicated volunteer Listening Ear/Welfare Team to provide emotional support at national and other events. This initiative, currently in the planning phase aims to create a safe,

	supportive environment for both youth members and adult volunteers. The team will be made up of trained, empathetic volunteers equipped to offer confidential support and guidance, further strengthening Scouting Ireland's culture of care and safeguarding.
17	**Scouting Irelands strategy – Beyond 2025** Scouting Ireland has established a strategic working group tasked with developing a comprehensive long-term plan for the organisation. This initiative is being driven by dedicated volunteers from across the country including young people from our National Youth Representatives who are playing a key part reflecting a strong commitment to shaping the future of Scouting Ireland. Safeguarding plays a central and pivotal role in this process. The safeguarding manager is actively involved in the working group to ensure that the development and implementation of the strategy are firmly grounded in a culture of safety first ensuring that safeguarding principles are embedded across all areas of the strategic plan, reinforcing Scouting Ireland's commitment to maintaining a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all youth members and adult volunteers alike.
18	**Funding** The Safeguarding Manager and team would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Government for the funding specifically ringfenced for safeguarding in Scouting Ireland. This dedicated support is very much appreciated and has been instrumental in maintaining essential safeguarding measures. It is important to note, however, that the current funding is fully accounted for and allocated to critical areas. Should additional funds become available, the Safeguarding Department would be well-positioned to expand its professional efforts, undertake further preventative work, and enhance safeguarding and welfare standards even more effectively. This could include: • Further bespoke online training for Scouting Irelands members • Increase Safeguarding Training and in particular address prominent societal issue areas such as extremism, radicalisation, the rise in misogyny attitudes in adolescence and young men and other areas of Safeguarding and child protection and protecting vulnerable adult's work • Increased youth engagement • Strengthen welfare and mental health support, and for example; address the rise in anxiety amongst our young people • Improve Vetting processes and AccessNI compliance and systems – in particular digital systems • The development of more inclusive and accessible safeguarding initiatives across a wider range of communities and needs. • Carry out studies and research with respect to known and reported Safeguarding and child protection concerns with the aim of learning from the past and implementing good practice into the future. • Bespoke Safeguarding Conferences

19	**Conclusion** Scouting Ireland remains firmly committed to ensuring that every youth member can participate in Scouting activities within a safe, supportive, and respectful environment. Our continuous efforts to strengthen safeguarding practices are built on the expectation that all adult volunteers not only follow our Policies and Procedures but actively lead by example in promoting and upholding them. As with many youth-focused and youth-led development organisations, Scouting Ireland is a place where young people are encouraged to be brave in the fullest sense—not only physically, but emotionally. Scouting creates a space where our youth members learn to understand and embrace difference, to connect across genders, cultures, religions, and age groups, and to grow in character and confidence and learn basic life skills. There is no place in Scouting Ireland for individuals who seek to harm children, young people, or vulnerable adults. The safeguarding theme introduced in 2003—"Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding should be effortless."—continues to guide our work in 2025. It is consistently embedded in all training, communications, and national events through the Safeguarding Manager and the Safeguarding Team. This commitment to safeguarding is not only a core responsibility, but a reflection of our values and our vision for a Scouting community that is safe, inclusive, and empowering for all.
20	**Signatory**  Steven Maclean Safeguarding Manager Scouting Ireland.