
Policy Document:

Safeguarding

Last updated: November 2023

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1. Overview:

- 1.1. This document lays out how SSAGO members and clubs attend or organise an activity or event where there will be some form of interaction with children, young people aged under 18. or adults at risk.
- 1.2. It lays out the precautions and disclosure check requirements that must be adhered to for SSAGO events.

2. Information:

- 2.1. SSAGO is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all our members and members of The Scouts and Girlguiding who are involved in SSAGO activities, especially children, young people and adults at risk, by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.
- 2.2. The safeguarding policy is for everyone in SSAGO and following it is everyone's responsibility.
- 2.3. For this policy, we use 'children and young people' to refer to those under the age of 18 in line with statutory safeguarding legislation.
- 2.4. We define an 'adult at risk' as a person over the age of 18 who:
 - 2.4.1. needs care and support, and/or
 - 2.4.2. is unable to protect their own well being because of their care and support needs; or
 - 2.4.3. is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse, neglect or exploitation
- 2.5. SSAGO follows all relevant legislation and both The Scout's Policy, Organisation and Rules and Girlguiding's A Safe Space. Where there is

any disagreement between these documents this policy should be overruled.

3. Disclosure Checks:

- 3.1. Throughout this document 'disclosure check' refers to the relevant criminal record check required by SSAGO members depending on which part of the UK they are based as stated below.
 - 3.1.1. Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) - England and Wales
 - 3.1.2. Access Northern Ireland (ANI) - Northern Ireland
 - 3.1.3. Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) - Scotland
- 3.2. Where a member requires a disclosure check but not membership of the SSAGO SASU any disclosure checks provided by either The Scout Association or Girlguiding is acceptable.
- 3.3. Any member requiring a disclosure check may request one from the National SSAGO Executive who will request a check through the SSAGO SASU.
- 3.4. Where SSAGO members have specific responsibility for a member of SSAGO under the age of 18 they must be members of the SSAGO SASU and obtain a disclosure through this method.
- 3.5. A full member of the SSAGO SASU shall be classed as any member who has completed the disclosure check and all mandatory training requirements.

4. Child Protection:

- 4.1. All SSAGO members aged 18 and over must follow both The Scout's Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Code of Practice (known as the Yellow Card) and Girlguiding's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (summarised in the A Safe Space pocket guide).
- 4.2. All SSAGO members must follow The Scout's Scouting and Alcohol Policy (known as the Green Card).
- 4.3. All SSAGO members under the age of 18 are classed as young people in SSAGO.

- 4.4. SSAGO members under the age of 18 require permission from a legal guardian to join SSAGO and to take part in activities and residential events.
 - 4.5. This guardian should receive a minimum of 7 days notice of any activity and residential event the young person is invited to and may revoke permission for the young person to take part.
 - 4.6. All electronic communication between adults and children or young people must take place in a group setting with more than one adult engaged in the conversation. There must be no individual electronic communication.
 - 4.7. SSAGO members over the age of 18 should not enter into relationships with members of SSAGO, The Scouts or Girlguiding under the age of 18. Where such a relationship pre-dates their SSAGO membership the member should immediately inform the National SSAGO Executive who may place restrictions on what the SSAGO member can do.
 - 4.8. While National SSAGO is not subject to 'The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015' we aim to prevent our members from being drawn into terrorism. Affiliated SSAGO clubs may have a 'Prevent Duty' through affiliation to a higher education institute and National SSAGO shall take action where any concerns are raised about a member or event by any affiliated club, higher education institute, The Scouts or Girlguiding.
5. Member Requirements for Disclosure Checks
- 5.1. SSAGO Members as Participants
 - 5.1.1. At a SSAGO event, SSAGO members undertaking an activity or event where they are participants in their own programme and have no responsibility for children, young people and adults at risk do not require a disclosure check even if there are young people present.
 - 5.1.2. SSAGO members undertaking an activity or event run by The Scouts or Girlguiding should follow the same disclosure requirements as those attendees from Scout Network or

Girlguiding Inspire, this will be at the discretion of the event organisers.

- 5.1.3. SSAGO members who are not providing care, training or supervision to children, young people or adults at risk either regularly (more than once per month), on an unsupervised basis or overnight do not require a disclosure check.
- 5.1.4. No SSAGO members require disclosure checks for activities or events where no children, young people or adults at risk are present.
- 5.2. SSAGO Members working with children, young people and adults at risk
 - 5.2.1. All SSAGO members taking part in a regular (defined as more than once per month) activity or event working with children, young people or adults at risk (by providing care, training or supervision with or for them) must have a suitable disclosure check.
 - 5.2.2. All SSAGO members taking part in an occasional (defined as less than once per month) activity or event working with young people aged under 18 (by providing care, training or supervision with or for them) and having potentially unsupervised access to young people must have a suitable disclosure check.
 - 5.2.3. All SSAGO members taking part in activities or events that are overnight, working with young people aged under 18 (by providing care, training or supervision with or for them) must have a suitable disclosure check.
 - 5.2.4. Where activities are being run for members of The Scouts or Girlguiding then their safeguarding policies must be followed.
- 5.3. SSAGO Events with Under 18s
 - 5.3.1. For SSAGO events with a young member aged under 18 in attendance, there must be at least two people taking specific

responsibility for supervising them. These individuals must be full members of the SSAGO SASU.

- 5.3.2. For national events all members of the organising committee are deemed to have supervisory responsibility for all children, young people and adults at risk in attendance.
- 5.3.3. The SSAGO Exec may request any online event nominate two full members of the SSAGO SASU to be responsible for any under 18s who may attend.

6. Activities and Nights Away

- 6.1. Under no circumstances are children or young people to share sleeping accommodation with anyone aged over 18. Separate sleeping accommodation must be provided for overnight events. This must be either a separate room or tent.
- 6.2. Activities and Nights Away should be run in accordance with the "Activity Guidelines and Nights Away" Policy, with specific mention to the clauses relating to under 18s.
- 6.3. Residential events with children or young people must designate an alcohol-free zone and inform all attendees as to its location.

7. Checking a member has a valid Disclosure Check

- 7.1. It is the responsibility of the activity or event organisers to ensure all relevant SSAGO members involved in that event have the appropriate disclosure checks.
- 7.2. Organisers may check either physical disclosure certificates or may validate them by using either The Scout's Compass or Girlguiding's GO system or through confirmation from the National Exec.
- 7.3. When disclosure is checked its date of expiry should be recorded and the organisers may class this as valid for a series of events up to the expiry date.

- 7.4. Activity and event organisers are not responsible for procuring any disclosure check, this responsibility lies with individual SSAGO members who should contact the National Exec.

8. **Support with this policy**

- 8.1. If any SSAGO Committees or Members have any doubt on whether a certain activity requires SSAGO members to have a DBS check, they are advised to contact the National Exec for advice, who will contact The Scouts and/or GirlGuiding Safeguarding Teams for advice.
- 8.2. Where this policy is incompatible with safeguarding rules enforced by a club's Students' Union the club must contact the National SSAGO Executive Committee.

9. **Reporting**

- 9.1. This section of the policy is currently under review following the Scouts' changes to the Yellow Card and their Safeguarding policy, announced in November 2023 and effective from January 2024. If in doubt, please seek advice from SSAGO's factsheets (which can be updated more regularly), the SSAGO Exec, or the Scouts' Safeguarding Team.
- 9.2. All safeguarding incidents should be reported to the National SSAGO Exec, these may be as part of a complaint, accident or incident as specified in the "Complaints" and "Accident and Incident Reporting" policy.
- 9.3. Reports may be made anonymously however this may impact how the report can be dealt with.
- 9.4. From January 2024, the reporter is responsible for also reporting any safeguarding concerns directly with the [Scouts' Safeguarding Team](#), in line with the Yellow Card.
- 9.5. The National Exec are responsible for sharing any reports with The Scouts, and ensuring the initial reporter has also done so. If any of the members involved are Girlguiding members, the National Exec are also responsible for reporting it to the Girlguiding Safeguarding Team.

- 9.6. Where a safeguarding issue involves a member of the National SSAGO Exec it should be reported to the chair directly and where it involves the chair it should be reported to the secretary. Where this is not possible then they should make the report directly to both The Scout's and Girlguiding's Safeguarding Teams.
- 9.7. If a member feels a report has not been satisfactorily dealt with they may submit a complaint in line with the "Complaints" policy.
- 9.8. SSAGO will take all reasonable steps to prevent any complainant from experiencing any unfavourable treatment and are supported through the report. Where victimisation, discrimination or unfavourable treatment occurs this should be reported.
- 9.9. Complainants will be informed when their report is resolved however it is not always possible to disclose any or all outcomes of a report to the complainant.