

## Overview

Communication is essential for any organisation and it is crucial to have an effective communication structure within your own Scout Group.

Communication covers both internal and external. Internal being Group Scouters, youth members, Parents, Group Council and communication between programme sections. External being that with the media, community groups, government departments and others.

## Relevance to you

### Internal

As Group Leader, it is vital that you have the contact details of every Scouter and member of Group Council and parents/guardians of your youth members. You will need this information not only to communicate with those associated with your Scout Group but also to update the Scouting Ireland database, the database should be updated as soon as you are aware of any changes. Make sure you are familiar with the Data Protection Act when handling and storing the personal details of members etc.

There are numerous options available to you to communicate with your members and their parents/guardians, such as typed notes, text messages, emails or other social media platforms such as Facebook. Whatever method you choose, make sure that you double check the content before sending to avoid confusion or upset and ensure that you follow the guidelines in the Scouting Ireland Code of Good Practice. When communicating with youth members it is best to do this through parents, however if you wish to communicate directly with youth members in the older sections it is vital that you get permission in writing from their parents to do so.

It is important to consider what you are putting down in printed form, ill-chosen words can come back to haunt you, also some discussions (for example, youth member medical conditions or behavioural problems) are best done in person, with a witness.

All Scouters should be receiving all relevant information. If it is a case that information is passed first to the programme section team lead and then sent on to the other Programme Scouters, make sure you regularly check that the information is actually being passed on. Check that email addresses are updated regularly to ensure that Scouters receive mailings from Scouting Ireland.

## **External**

When communicating with agencies or the media outside Scouting Ireland you must always double check that the information you are passing on is correct and is in line with Scouting Ireland Policies.

You should take full advantage of any opportunities that arise to promote Scouting Ireland through the media. However you should consult Scouting Ireland's Communications Policy which provides guidelines on the use of Scouting Ireland logos and emblems and appropriate attire when conducting visual interviews. For more details on logos and branding see the Identity Zone under the Resources tab on the Scouting Ireland website.

## **Useful documents and publications**

SID 18.04 - Communications Policy Document - Interaction with the Media

## **Where to get help**

The County Commissioner should be your first point of contact for any support you might need, the Group Support Facilitator and the Provincial Support Officer may also be called upon for assistance.

If you have any questions on how to deal with the media for a specific event you can contact the Scouting Ireland Communications Team by calling National Office on 01 495 6300 during normal office hours.