

## Introduction to 8ú Calafort

The following pages are designed to give an insight into the structure and organisation of the group and what is required of members. This information was taken from the 8ú Calafort Members Handbook, which is distributed to each member, and also contains all the necessary forms for parental consent and contact details for leaders in the group.

### The Scout Movement

#### The Global Perspective

The origins of the Scout movement date back to August 1907 when a group of 20 boys attended what was probably the first ever Summer Camp at Brownsea Island in the south of England. The organiser of that camp and as a consequence, founder of the Scout Movement was Robert Baden-Powell, a distinguished soldier, war hero and later to become Lord Baden-Powell.

While serving in South Africa during the Boer War, Baden-Powell was forced to rely heavily on boys and younger adults to withstand enemy attack and hold out under siege in difficult conditions. He was immediately struck not only by how efficient these young soldiers proved to be but also by their enthusiasm and interest in learning basic survival skills – essential for soldiers in South Africa at that time!

Following the success of the Brownsea Island camp, Baden-Powell set out in writing his ideas for the skills, training methods and activities which he thought would be of interest to young people and which form the basis of today's scouting programmes.

Since 1907 some 250 million children, young adults (and some not so young adults) have been members of the scout movement. There are currently in excess of 25 million active members in more than 150 countries around the world with the membership doubling in the last 20 years.

#### The Irish Dimension

#### The Irish Dimension

Following its foundation in 1907, scouting quickly spread to Ireland and in 1908 the first troops were established in Ireland in Greystones and Dundalk. Today there are several thousand scouts in groups throughout Ireland.

In many countries, there are several scout organisations each owing its existence to some historical, cultural and even religious origin. In any event, all are affiliated to the World Scout Movement which has its headquarters in Geneva.

In Ireland up to 1 January 2004 there are two scout organisations. Up to then our Group was a part of Scouting Ireland SAI (formerly known as the Scout Association of Ireland), the other organisation was Scouting Ireland CSI (formerly known as the Catholic Boy Scouts of Ireland). On 1 January 2004 the two organisations merged to form Scouting Ireland.

Scouting Ireland has a structure that one might expect from any national charitable, sporting or cultural organisation. There is a central governing body with appointed national officers overseeing overall organisation, administration, policy and rules.

Further information about Scouting Ireland can be obtained from:

Scouting Ireland

National Office,

Larch Hill

Dublin 16

Phone: 5946300,

e-mail: [questions@scouts.ie](mailto:questions@scouts.ie)

website: [www.scouts.ie](http://www.scouts.ie).

{mospagebreak title=The Organisation of Scouting}

The Organisation of Scouting  
Scout Groups

At the local level, scouting is organised into Scout Groups which operate as quasi-independent components of Scouting Ireland SAI.

Some groups because of their location or the interests of their founding members operate as Sea Scout Groups and include extensive water-based activities in their programmes.

Regardless as to whether the group is a Sea Scout Group or not the structure and management/administration of the group remains the same.

Each group operates under the supervision of the Group Leader (GL) who is the primary contact between the group and the national organisation and who is ultimately responsible for the members, leaders and every aspect of his/her group's activities.

Each Group is comprised of separate sections, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Venture Scouts and in large groups such as ours there can be some duplication. Each section has its own leader and team of assistant leaders who organise and supervise the activities of that section in accordance with the recommended programme of activities as set out by the national organisation.

Any section may be single sex or mixed, depending on each groups particular needs and resources. Mixed sections pose additional resourcing problems as there are strict requirements with regard to the ratio of male and female leaders to male and female members of the section.

#### Training & Leadership

All leaders undertake leadership training to ensure consistency of leadership quality across the organisation and to ensure that all leaders are fully briefed on the requirements and considerable responsibilities placed upon them.

Leaders and other adult members also undertake proficiency training to ensure that any activities carried out by the section are done so in a proper and safe manner and under appropriate supervision. Best practise in any area of activity is observed and is consistent with the requirements as outlined by organisations other than Scouting Ireland SAI. eg Irish Sailing Association or Irish Canoe Union.

All leaders give their time on a voluntarily basis for the benefit of the scouts not only to attend weekly meetings but also to attend training sessions and regional and national conferences for their sections. Very often leaders are required to supervise at weekend and summer camps, usually away from some if not all of their own children and families.

Without leaders, scout groups couldn't function and our children wouldn't be able to enjoy the benefits that being involved in scouting brings them. As parents we are all deeply appreciative of them.

Proficiency training is also undertaken by scouts at all stages to ensure maximum standards of safety are observed. For all boating, scouts, venture scouts and leaders train for Charge Certificates in the various disciplines, rowing, sailing, power boating and canoeing. Only on achieving the appropriate qualification may a scout or leader take 'charge' of a boat and organise boating in the area covered by his certificate.

{mospagebreak title=8ú Calafort}

8ú Calafort  
Cuan Dún Laoghaire, Gasóga Mara

Our group is identified as 8ú Calafort, Cuan Dún Laoghaire, Gasóga Mara (8th Port of Dublin, Dun Laoghaire Harbour, Sea Scouts Group) and also by the national identity of 39th Dublin. Sea Scouts groups traditionally use the Sea Scouting identity rather than the national identity.

In 8ú Calafort members receive an excellent grounding in seamanship in addition to the other outdoor skills and sporting activities normally associated with scouting such as hillwalking and camping.

In addition to being a Sea Scout Group our group was also founded as an Irish speaking group. The history of our group is documented [here](#).

In 8ú Calafort we operate 2 Sea Cub Scouts 'Packs', 2 Sea Scout 'Troops' and 1 Venture Scout 'Unit' with total membership exceeding 170.

Banba (mixed)  
9 – 12 years  
meets Saturday 11.30 – 13.00

Eirú (mixed)  
9 – 12 years  
meets Wednesday 19.00 – 20.30

Fodhla (female)  
12 – 17 years  
meets Thursday 19.30 – 21.30

Mannanán (male)  
12 – 17 years  
meets Friday 19.30 – 21.30

Fiontar (mixed)  
17 – 21 years  
meets by arrangement.

Joining this group involves commitment. All scouts are expected to participate in all organised events and to attend all meetings unless the scout has occasional genuine reasons for being unable to attend. Any scout that is unable to attend on a regular basis will be asked to withdraw from the section to allow space for the many young people on the waiting lists.

Regular attendance and participation in events helps to build the team spirit within the watches (or patrols) into which the troops are divided. Team spirit is the basis of scouting and when a scout frequently misses events and meetings he/she lets down their whole watch. In addition, scouts and cubs are expected to be punctual in their attendance at their weekly meetings and parents are asked to be punctual when collecting them.

Scouts are expected to enter into the activities of the group with enthusiasm and in a spirit of camaraderie and fun. Scouts are also expected to show by example adherence to rules applicable elsewhere such as the Safe Cross Code, Rules of the Road and bye-laws on public transport.

{mospagebreak title=Membership and Uniform}

## Membership

Membership of 8ú Calafort is open to all regardless of race, creed, or fluency in the Irish language. However, because resources are limited (mainly human resources) and the growing popularity of scouting in general and 8ú Calafort in particular, the group is forced to operate a waiting list system for new entrants to most sections.

## Uniform

Scouting is a uniformed organisation and all members must wear the prescribed uniform as laid down by the national organisation. Each section has a slightly different uniform to distinguish them, the younger sections being less formal than the older ones.

Details of the uniforms are provided to scouts when they join and the leaders of each section will advise you when it is appropriate to obtain a uniform. Uniforms can be purchased new or sourced second hand from within the group or from families of former members.

As part of the uniform each member must wear a neckerchief or scarf. Each scout group wears a uniquely coloured or patterned scarf creating a bond within the group and a sense of identity outside it. The 8ú Calafort scarf is green and gold.

We cannot emphasise how important it is that cubs and scouts attend their weekly meetings in full and proper uniform unless instructed otherwise by the leaders. Failure to comply with this requirement on a persistent basis may result in the member being sent home from his/her section meeting.

Nor can we emphasise enough how important it is that uniforms are maintained in a proper and presentable fashion. The group sets itself a high standard in everything it does – the uniform is the outward expression of this.

Uniforms and other scouting equipment and accessories can be obtained from

The Outdoor Activity Store,

34/35 Upper Liffey St,

Dublin 1.

(phone 01- 872 5177)

[www.outdooradventurestore.ie](http://www.outdooradventurestore.ie)

{mospagebreak title=Fees and Finance}

Fees and Finance

As you can imagine, operating a Sea Scout Group for 170 people with all the equipment and physical resources that that entails costs money.

The group is fortunate to own a sizeable fleet of boats, canoes, related equipment and a sizeable premises on the West Pier, Dun Laoghaire Harbour. All of this must be maintained, renewed and insured by US!!

All members participating in activities with the group are covered by appropriate personal insurance arranged by and through the national organisation.

As with all insurances, costs have been increasing out of all proportion to the ability of most of us to pay. To cover these costs, in addition to paying for light & heat etc, all members are required to pay an annual membership fee or subscription, details of which are sent to each member of the Group.

## Fundraising

In addition to the annual subscription or fee the Group is forced to undertake various fund raising activities throughout the year such as a table quiz, raffles and Christmas tree sales etc. to make ends meet. It is absolutely essential that all parents do their utmost to support these events if membership fees are not to escalate to such an extent that scouting becomes inaccessible to some. It should also be remembered that these events only meet the day to day costs of the group. Raising funds for new equipment or for future development of the premises is over and above this.

In these rapidly changing and uncertain times, parents may have some difficulty meeting the annual subscription or the costs of a camp or event. Should this situation arise parents should contact the Treasurer or Group Leader who will be glad to discuss it in the strictest confidence.

We would encourage you not only to attend these events and support the fund raisings but to bring along friends and relatives too, they are always enjoyable! Scouting, contrary to what some might believe receives no funding whatsoever from national or local government other than the occasional grant for equipment or training.

{mospagebreak title=Parents and Friends Committee}

## Parents & Friends Committee

As with most scout groups, 8ú Calafort operates a Parents & Friends Committee. The purpose of this committee is to act as a support to the leaders of each section in the group and in this group assume responsibility for finance, planning and development of the group thereby leaving leaders fully available to pursue their section programmes unfettered by routine and mundane administrative chores.

The committee undertakes many secretarial aspects of the group and the treasurer is responsible for managing the finances of the group including collection of annual subscriptions from member families.

Any parent who would like to attend a Parents & Friends Committee meeting is free to do so and should contact the secretary to arrange this in advance. There is at the moment no limitation on joining the committee but in the event of a swamping of the committee by new members, a limitation on numbers might have to be imposed.

It is the ambition of the Parents & Friends Committee to establish a tiered level of involvement by parents in the group. Parents can become involved at a level which is practicable for them. Perhaps you would be prepared to give just one half day a year for some purpose and no more? The Parents & Friends committee will be undertaking to collate all this information together during the coming year.

{mospagebreak title=Welfare and Safety}

## Welfare and Safety Safety

Safety is paramount in all of the activities that the group undertakes and is the foremost consideration in the scout sections especially when engaged in boating, canoeing and outdoor activities. All participants in any activity are required to equip themselves with the appropriate essentials for that activity and all activities are undertaken under the supervision of suitably trained and accredited members.

If you have any concern with regard to safety whatsoever you are positively encouraged to make contact by phone and discuss your concerns with the Group Leader.

Cubs and scouts are liable to be reprimanded by the leader if found flouting safety procedures and in persistent cases may be asked to refrain from participation in an activity. In the most extreme cases where the safety of others is being compromised, a member may be asked to leave the group for a period of time or on a permanent basis.

## Accidents & Injury

While every precaution is taken to avoid accident or injury to members and leaders alike when involved in Scout activities, parents should be mindful that there is an element of risk attaching to some activities especially boating and mountaineering. Members have sustained injury in the past and undoubtedly, despite all our best efforts will do so again.

Hearing of a child's injury can be a shocking and upsetting experience for any parent, especially if the parent was not involved in Scouting as a child

and so is unfamiliar with the nature of many of the activities that the child is likely to becoming involved in.

Parents are encouraged to maintain regular contact with the leaders in the group and with other parents. This will ensure that all parents are fully aware of the activities their children are involved in and any concerns can be raised with the section leaders or the Group Leader.

Possibly you may need some reassurance about safety aspects or about your child's ability to be involved. It is common for parents to underestimate the resourcefulness of their own children especially when away from home for what might be the first time.

Each year the leaders organise open days where parents can attend an activity usually at the Group's Head Quarters in Dun Laoghaire 'the den' where they can observe the nature of the activities undertaken. All parents are urged to attend these and satisfy themselves of the level of safety applied.

For particular activities such as attending a camp, parents will be requested to sign a consent form and return it to the leader prior to the particular activity. Any questions arising from being asked to provide consent should be addressed to the leader but parents should note that if consent is withheld, under no circumstances can the scout be permitted to participate.

#### Child Protection

The welfare and safety of all members and leaders is a foremost priority of the group and the national organisation.

Scouting Ireland SAI endeavours to safeguard the welfare of all young members by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.

The association in conjunction with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children introduced guidelines on Child Protection and provides on an ongoing basis special Child Protection Training sessions for adult leaders. All leaders who may come in contact with your children are screened by the association to ensure their suitability.

In the event of an allegation of child abuse being made against a leader it is the policy of the association to remove the leader from all involvement and activities pending a full investigation. Furthermore, it is the policy of the association to notify the relevant Health Board of any allegation or suspicion of child abuse.

## Discipline and Behaviour

Members of all sections in the group are required to adopt the same standards of behaviour when involved in Scouting activities as you would as parents expect of them at school. Disruptive behaviour, whether it is verbal or physical in nature, undermines the authority of the leaders and weakens the effectiveness of rules and procedures which are put in force to ensure the maximum standards of safety are observed.

Where a member's behaviour becomes problematical, it will be discussed with the parent. In the event of extreme or persistent misconduct by a member, in the interest of the safety of others, the member may be asked to discontinue as a member of the group. In the unlikely event of this extreme action becoming a possibility there will be ample opportunity for parents to discuss problems with the Group Leader.

Often a deterioration in behaviour can occur due to a change in circumstances at home, especially in the case of unemployment, bereavement, marriage breakdown or other stress. In such circumstances attending Scout meetings can be a support to children. Parents are advised to notify the leader of the section or the Group Leader if there is anything of this nature which they feel the leader should be aware of or is likely to lead to a change in behaviour. Parents should use their own judgment in this regard and leaders will of course be totally discreet and treat all conversations in the strictest confidence.

## Personal Equipment

Throughout their time in Scouting every Scout will need certain personal equipment such as a Lifejacket, Waterproof clothing and camping equipment etc. Every Scout is expected to be responsible for their own equipment, its maintenance and safekeeping.

There is no storage for personal equipment in the Den and all equipment, especially lifejackets and other boating gear, should be brought home after every time it is used.