



## Child Protection Policy

### Written referring to the RYA Policy

It is the policy of South Staffs Sailing Club to safeguard children and young people taking part in boating from physical, sexual or emotional harm. The Club will take all reasonable steps to ensure that, through appropriate procedures and training, children participating in Club activities do so in a safe environment. We recognise that the safety and welfare of the child is paramount and that all children, irrespective of sex, age, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual identity or social status, have a right to protection from abuse.

For the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child. All members of the Club should be aware of the policy.

The Club Child Protection Officer is: Nicola Morgan (jedihattie@gmail.com)

#### **Members and Volunteers**

All Club members and volunteers whose role brings them into regular contact with young people will be asked to provide references. The Club Child Protection Officer and those regularly instructing, coaching or supervising young people will also be asked to apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure, with Barred List check if appropriate.

#### **Good Practice**

All members of the Club should follow the good practice guidelines included, agree to abide by the Club Code of Conduct and the RYA Racing Charter contained in the Racing Rules of Sailing. Those working or volunteering with young people should be aware of the guidance on recognising abuse (see RYA Appendix A).

The Club will seek written consent from the child and their parents/carers before taking photos or video at an event or training session or publishing such images. Parents and spectators should be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state their purpose for photography/filming. If the Club publishes images of children, no identifying information other than names will be included. Any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography or the inappropriate use of images should be reported to the Club Child Protection Officer.

#### **Concerns**

Anyone who is concerned about a young member's or participant's welfare, either outside the sport or within the Club, should inform the Club Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence. The Club Child Protection Officer will follow the attached procedures (see RYA Flowcharts 1 and 2).

Any member of the Club failing to comply with the Safeguarding policy and any relevant Codes of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action under the club rules.

## **Procedures** Designated Person – Child Protection Officer

Although everyone has a role to play in ensuring that children are safe, it is recommended that a designated individual has specific responsibility for implementing your policy, and acts as the point of contact to receive information and advice from the RYA.

The designated person's general terms of reference could include:

- Maintaining an up to date policy and procedures, compatible with the RYA's.
- Ensuring that relevant staff and/or volunteers are aware of and follow the procedures,
- Advising the management committee on safeguarding and child protection issues.
- Maintaining contact details for local Children's Services\* and Police.

RYA designated person The RYA's Safeguarding and Equality Manager is Jackie Reid, tel. 023 8060 4104, e-mail [jackie.reid@rya.org.uk](mailto:jackie.reid@rya.org.uk)

If Jackie Reid is unavailable and the matter is urgent, contact Jackie Bennetts, RYA Club Support Advisor, tel. 023 8060 4199, e-mail [jackie.bennetts@rya.org.uk](mailto:jackie.bennetts@rya.org.uk)

Confidentiality and data storage Revised Jan 2012

All personal information should be treated as confidential, stored securely and only shared with those who need to see it in the course of their duties or to protect children. When data is no longer relevant it should be destroyed securely, eg. by shredding. If your organisation is Notified under the Data Protection Act, you should check that Criminal Records are included in the list of types of data held about your members.

### **Good practice**

It is important to develop a culture within your organisation where both children and adults feel able to raise concerns, knowing that they will be taken seriously, treated confidentially and will not make the situation worse for themselves or others.

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse or find it more difficult to express their concerns. For example, a disabled child who relies on a carer to help them get changed may worry that they won't be able to sail any more if they report the carer. A deaf child may not be able to express themselves or speak confidentially if they need an interpreter. A child who has experienced racism may find it difficult to trust an adult from a different ethnic background. Children with low self-esteem or mental health problems can be more vulnerable to bullying or abuse, as can gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender young people, or any child who has a characteristic that marks them out in others' eyes as 'different'.

### **Minimising risk**

Plan the work of the organisation and promote good practice to minimise situations where adults are working unobserved or could take advantage of their position of trust. Good practice protects everyone – children, volunteers and staff.

These common sense guidelines should be available to everyone within your organisation:

- Avoid spending any significant time working with children in isolation

- Do not take children to your home as part of your organisation's activity
- Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure that they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation or the child's parents
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child.
- If a child is having difficulty with a wetsuit or buoyancy aid, ask them to ask a parent to help if at all possible
- If you do have to help a child, make sure you are in full view of others, preferably another adult

**You should never:**

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged, or use such language yourself when with children
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- fail to respond to an allegation made by a child; always act
- do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of both the child (where possible) and their parents/carers. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, parents/carers should be informed as soon as possible. In such situations it is important to ensure that any adult present is sensitive to the child and undertakes personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

**Responsibilities of members and volunteers**

Make sure your members or volunteers are given clear roles and responsibilities, are aware of your organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures and are issued with guidelines on:

- following good practice and
- recognising signs of abuse (see RYA Appendix A).

RYA Coaches and Instructors are expected to comply with the RYA Codes and Conduct (see Appendices B and C).

**Parental responsibility and club liability**

Parents play an essential part in their children's participation, but occasionally their desire to see their child achieve success can put the child under too much pressure or give rise to friction between families or interference in coaching. Clubs and class associations may wish to consider adopting a Code of Conduct can be signed up to by everyone involved, whether they are participants, parents, staff or volunteers, so that everyone is aware of their responsibilities towards each other and appropriate action can be taken if anyone's behaviour fails to meet the expectations set out in the Code.

Although clubs have a duty of care to their members, and particularly to young people who cannot take full responsibility for their own safety, parents must be responsible for their children's welfare and behaviour, or designate another adult to take that responsibility, outside formal club-organised activities.

When children are attending an organised training or coaching session or activity, the organisers have a duty of care for their safety and welfare at all times. If the

must be made clear at what point responsibility transfers from the instructor, coach or organiser to the parent.

For information on a Club's legal liability and duty of care, please go to the Clubs section of the RYA website (you'll need your club's login) and select Support, Club Management, Health & Safety, Organising and Managing Events, or click on the link below.

<http://www.rya.org.uk/clubs/support/management/healthandsafety/Pages/organisingandmanagingevents.aspx>

## **Changing rooms and showers**

Shower areas should, where possible, be designed to allow both adults and children to shower and dress in reasonable privacy. As a minimum there should be separate male and female changing rooms and, if relevant, unisex disabled changing. If there is an opportunity to redevelop or refurbish changing facilities, clubs/centres should endeavour to provide some family changing areas similar to those provided at public swimming pools.

It is preferable for adults to stay away from the changing rooms while there are children there. If this is unavoidable because adults are sailing at the same times, or the site is open to the public, it is better if one adult is not alone. Parents should be made aware that adult club members and/or members of the public may be in the changing rooms.

Bullying can be an issue in changing rooms and showers (see below).

If it is essential, in an emergency situation, for a male to enter a female changing area or vice versa, it is advised that they are accompanied by another adult of the opposite sex.

## **Bullying**

If a child alleges bullying or shows signs of being bullied, this must be investigated. For a definition of bullying, see Appendix A. Safeguarding and child protection procedures should include an Anti-Bullying policy. The RYA's Anti-bullying policy is available on the website under Racing, Youth and Junior, Information, Policies or click on this link:

<http://www.rya.org.uk/racing/youthjunior/information/Pages/Policies.aspx>

The Child Protection in Sport Unit also publishes a sample Anti-bullying policy and guidance, see

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/anti-bullying/>

Children and young people could be asked to sign up to the Club Code of Conduct.

## **Managing challenging behaviour**

Guidance for instructors and coaches on handling young people who display challenging behaviour is available as a download from the RYA website under Information and Advice, Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults, RYA Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidelines.

First aid and medical treatment Revised Dec 2005 First aid is part of your normal duty of care. Obtain consent if medication or medical treatment is

When hosting an open junior or youth event at your club, liaise with the relevant class association to ensure that all involved in the organisation of the event are operating to similar policies. It should be made clear to all young competitors and their parents that

there is someone responsible for their welfare who can be contacted if they have any concerns.

The RYA Racing Department, in conjunction with the recognised junior and youth classes, has developed guidelines covering all aspects of running a major junior or youth event and these are available to clubs and class associations on request. RYA organised events will be run under these guidelines. The Child Protection in Sport Unit also publishes a comprehensive guide 'Safe Sports Events' (see page 23 for contact details).

## **Away events**

It is essential that those accompanying young people to away events or training camps, and the competitors themselves, have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the conduct expected of them.

The RYA Racing Department has Sailor Supervision Guidelines and other detailed policies for the RYA junior and youth squad programmes. These are available on the RYA website, see Racing, Youth and Junior, Information, Policies, or click on [www.rya.org.uk/racing/youthjunior/information/Pages/Policies.aspx](http://www.rya.org.uk/racing/youthjunior/information/Pages/Policies.aspx) They may be a useful reference for events organised by bodies other than the RYA but should not be taken as prescriptive.

## **Communicating with young people**

The world of the internet, social media and apps is constantly and rapidly evolving and it is hard to keep up to date, but it is important for parents and for anyone working with young people to develop some understanding of how they use technology, the risks involved and how to keep them safe. Suggested sources of information, mainly intended for parents but useful for anyone, are:

[www.nspcc.org.uk/shareaware](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/shareaware) [www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk) [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)  
[www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)

## **Club websites and social media**

When promoting your club and encouraging your members to interact online, there are a few issues to bear in mind in relation to children and young people:

- follow the RYA guidance on the use of images of children (see Photography section below)
- ensure that the content and language on your site or page, including contributions to blogs, forums etc, is not inappropriate for younger visitors and does not link directly to unsuitable material on other sites
- provide a clear process for parents and others to report inappropriate content or online bullying and to request that content is removed
- have a robust procedure for handling and assessing such a report or request and acting promptly to remove the offending content.

## **Coaches and Instructors**

When working with children and young people you are advised to:

- where possible have a business phone and a personal phone
- only contact sailors on your business phone (or using your organisation's text system)
- avoid using over-familiar language and try to copy in the child's parent/carer
- only communicate regarding organisational matters, not for social or personal

When using social media, it is recommended that you:

- have a personal and a professional page for your social media
- do not allow young sailors to follow or be friends with your personal account
- set your privacy settings as high as possible on your personal account
- challenge the way that young sailors post or comment to you or others on social media if it is inappropriate
- educate young sailors about the boundaries between them and their Coach or Instructor.

## Parents

Organisations are responsible for the content published on their sites, but parents must accept responsibility for their children's access to and use of computers, tablets and smartphones. See the links at the top of this page for guidance.

## Children and young people

Unfortunately online communication and texting can often be used as a means of bullying. 'Cyberbullying' should be treated in the same way as any other form of bullying.

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) provides guidance for children and young people in different age groups.

## Photography

Publishing articles, photos and videos in club newsletters, on websites, in local newspapers etc is an excellent way of recognising young people's achievements and of promoting your organisation and the sport as a whole. However it is important to minimise the risk of anyone using images of children in an inappropriate way. Digital technology makes it easy to take, store, send, manipulate and publish images.

There are two key principles to bear in mind:

Before taking photos or video, obtain written consent from the child and their parents/carers for their images to be taken and used

- A consent form could be included with the event entry form
- Any photographer or member of the press or media attending an event should wear identification at all times and should be fully briefed in advance on your expectations regarding his/her behaviour and the issues covered by these guidelines.
- Do not allow a photographer to have unsupervised access to young people at the event or to arrange photo sessions outside the event.
- Consent should also be obtained for the use of video as a coaching aid. Any other use by a coach will be regarded as a breach of the RYA's Code of Conduct.
- Care must be taken in the storage of and access to images.

When publishing images, make sure they are appropriate and that you do not include any information that might enable someone to contact the child

- It is preferable to use a general shot showing participants on the water, or a group shot of the prize winners, without identifying them by name.
- If you are recognising the achievement of an individual sailor and wish to publish their name with their photo, **DO NOT publish any other information** (eg. where they live, name of school, other hobbies and interests) that could enable someone to contact, befriend or start to 'groom' the child.
- Ensure that the young people pictured are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of

Most sailing activity takes place in areas that are open to the public and it is therefore not possible to control all photography, but any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography, or about the inappropriate use of images, should be reported to the organisation's child protection/welfare officer and treated in the same way as any other child protection concern. Parents and spectators should be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state their purpose for photography/filming.

**The use of cameras or smart phones/tablets in changing areas should not be permitted in any circumstances. Such use by young people should be regarded as a form of bullying.**

### **Handling concerns, reports or allegations** Revised Jan 2015

This section is primarily for the organisation's designated Child Protection Officer but everyone should be aware of the procedures to follow if there are concerns (see flowcharts below).

A complaint, concern or allegation may come from a number of sources: the child, their parents, someone else within your organisation. It may involve the behaviour of one of your volunteers or employees, or something that has happened to the child outside the sport, perhaps at home or at school. Children may confide in adults they trust, in a place where they feel at ease.

An allegation may range from mild verbal bullying to physical or sexual abuse. If you are concerned that a child may be being abused, it is NOT your responsibility to investigate further BUT it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and report them to the appropriate statutory authorities. For guidance on recognising abuse, see Appendix A.

### **Handling an allegation from a child**

#### **Always:**

- stay calm – ensure that the child is safe and feels safe
- show and tell the child that you are taking what he/she says seriously
- reassure the child and stress that he/she is not to blame
- be careful about physical contact, it may not be what the child wants
- be honest, explain that you will have to tell someone else to help stop the alleged abuse
- make a record of what the child has said as soon as possible after the event, using the child's own words
- follow your organisation's child protection procedures.

#### **Never:**

- rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- make promises you cannot keep (eg. you won't tell anyone)
- ask leading questions (see 'Recording and handling information' below)
- take sole responsibility – consult someone else (ideally the designated Child Protection Officer or the person in charge or someone you can trust) so that you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself.

You may be upset about what the child has said or you may worry about the consequences of your actions. Sometimes people worry about children being removed from their families as a result of abuse, but in reality this rarely happens. However, one thing is certain – you cannot ignore it.

## **Recording and handling information**

If you suspect that a child may have been the subject of any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, the allegation must be referred as soon as possible to Children's Social Care or the Police who have trained experts to handle such cases. Do not start asking leading questions which may jeopardise any formal investigation.

Confidential information must be stored securely. It is recommended that it should be retained for at least 3 years and destroyed by secure means, eg. by shredding or burning.

Procedures Revised Feb 2013 It is essential to have clear and agreed procedures to follow. These include:

- procedures to be followed by anyone concerned about a child's welfare, either outside the sport or within your organisation (see flowcharts below)
- a procedure for handling a complaint about a member

The RYA's information sheet on the Expulsion of Members on the website in the Clubs section (you will need your club's login) under Support, Members, includes the key elements of a fair hearing.

## **Statutory Authorities**

If your club or centre is contacted by the Police or Children's Services concerning information received or a complaint made by or about a member, volunteer or employee, you are advised to contact the RYA Safeguarding Manager as soon as possible for guidance and support. Co- operate fully with official requests for factual information, but do not express any personal opinions on the person's conduct. See also 'Handling the media' below.

## **Handling the media**

If there is an incident at your premises which attracts media interest, or if you are contacted by the media with an allegation concerning one of your members or employees, do not give any response until you have had an opportunity to check the facts and seek advice. You may wish to contact the RYA's Communications department on 023 8060 4215 for professional advice on handling the media.

## **Reference to the Disclosure and Barring Service**

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) maintains the lists of people barred from working with children or with vulnerable adults in England and Wales and in Northern Ireland. Disclosure Scotland fulfils this function in Scotland. If your organisation permanently dismisses or removes someone from regulated activity/work, or would have dismissed them if they had not resigned, because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult or placed them at risk of harm, you have a duty to refer them to the DBS, as appropriate. It is a criminal offence not to make such a referral. For guidance on the grounds and process for making a referral, see the relevant website (see Section 7 Useful Contacts) or contact the RYA Safeguarding Manager.

**Reporting Procedures** If you are uncertain what to do at any stage, contact the RYA's Safeguarding Manager on 023

8060 4104 or the NSPCC free 24-hour helpline 0808 800 5000.

Details of Children's Social Care departments and emergency duty teams are listed on



appropriate contact number, call the RYA's Safeguarding Manager or, if a child is at immediate risk, the Police.

### **INFORMATION Useful Contacts**

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 E-mail: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) Website: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Childline 0800 1111 Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Royal Yachting Association

Jackie Reid, Safeguarding and Equality Manager RYA House, Ensign Way  
Hamble Southampton

SO31 4YA

Tel: 023 8060 4104

E-mail: [jackie.reid@rya.org.uk](mailto:jackie.reid@rya.org.uk)

Website: [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding)

Community text phone (for people with a hearing impairment): 07823 559018

**Signed: Nicola Morgan Child Protection Officer**

Signed:

Reviewed: May 2016

Next review date: [May 2017](#)