

# **Hastings & St Leonards Sailing Club**



## **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines**

# Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

## Part 1 – Policy

### Policy Statement

It is the policy of Hastings & St Leonards Sailing Club to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults 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. The policy also applies to vulnerable adults. All members of the Club should be aware of the policy.

### Club Welfare Officer

The Club Welfare Officer is: Melanie Clark mobile: 07711677773  
email: melanie.sailing@gmail.com

### Officers, Members and Volunteers

All Club Officers, members and volunteers whose role brings them into regular contact with young people will be required to fill in a Self Disclosure Form (*Appendix A*) and sign a record maintained by the Principal to confirm they have read the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. The Youth Promotion Officer, and Welfare Officer and those regularly instructing, coaching or supervising young people will also be asked to apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure. The Youth Promotion Officer will be responsible for ensuring that all assisting with events involving young people have read and understood the requirements of the Policy and Procedures and that Self Disclosure forms (where required) are filled in and returned to the Principal. The Principal will be responsible for ensuring Criminal Record forms are processed where necessary and will maintain the records for these, self disclosure forms and recording that the policy and procedures have been read.

### Good Practice

All members of the Club should follow the good practice guidelines attached (*Appendix B*) and agree to abide by the Club Code of Conduct (*Appendix C*) 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 (*Appendix D*).

Adults are requested to avoid where possible entering the showers and changing rooms at times when children are changing before or after junior/youth training or racing. If this is unavoidable it is advised that they are accompanied by another adult. 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.

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's Welfare Officer.

## Concerns

Anyone who is concerned about a young member's welfare, either outside the sport or within the Club, should inform the Club's Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence. The Club's Welfare Officer (or Club Officer in their absence) will follow the attached procedures.

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 Club Rule 7 (E)

## Part 2 – Procedures

### Designated Person

The Club's Welfare Officer is the designated individual with specific responsibility for implementing the Club's Safeguarding Policy. They are the point of contact for receiving information and advice from the RYA on safeguarding issues.

The designated person's terms of reference are to:

- Maintain an up to date policy and procedures, compatible with the RYA's.
- Ensure that members are aware of and follow the procedures.
- Advise the Sailing Committee and Executive Committee on safeguarding and child protection issues.
- Maintain contact details for Children's Services and Police.

If there is a concern, the designated person is:

- The first point of contact for any concerns or allegations, from children or adults, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained in all cases.
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken, in line with the organisation's procedures and in conjunction with the Commodore.
- Keep the RYA informed as necessary.

The information in the appendices to this document describes the ways children will be safeguarded from abuse and the actions to be taken if abuse is suspected.

#### **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)

### **Useful Contacts:**

**Duty and Assessment Team (Hastings and Rother) 01424 724144**

**Out of hours Emergency Duty Service 01273 335905 or 01273 335906**

#### **NSPCC Helpline**

0800 800 5000

E-mail: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

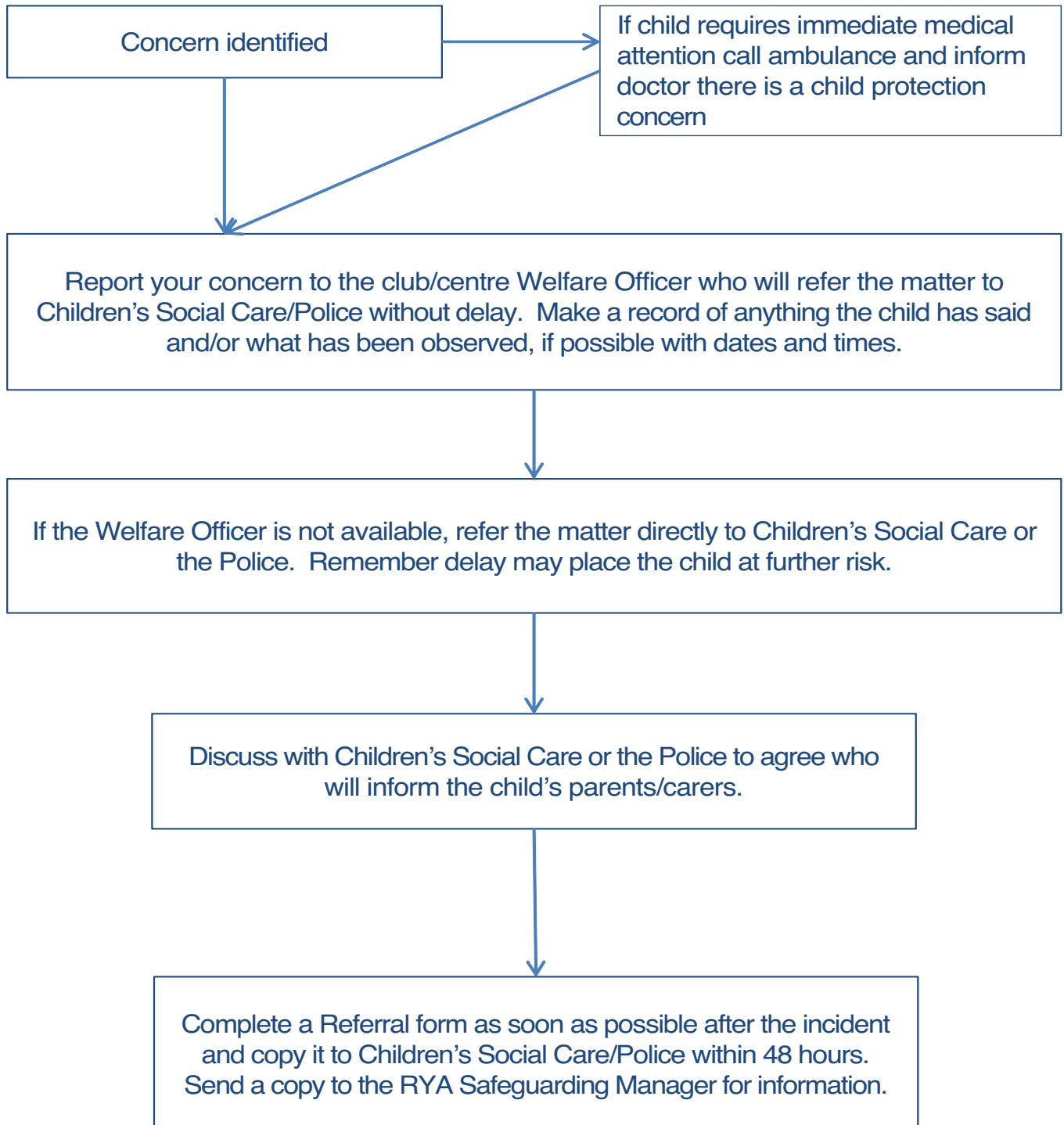
Website: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

#### **Childline**

0800 1111

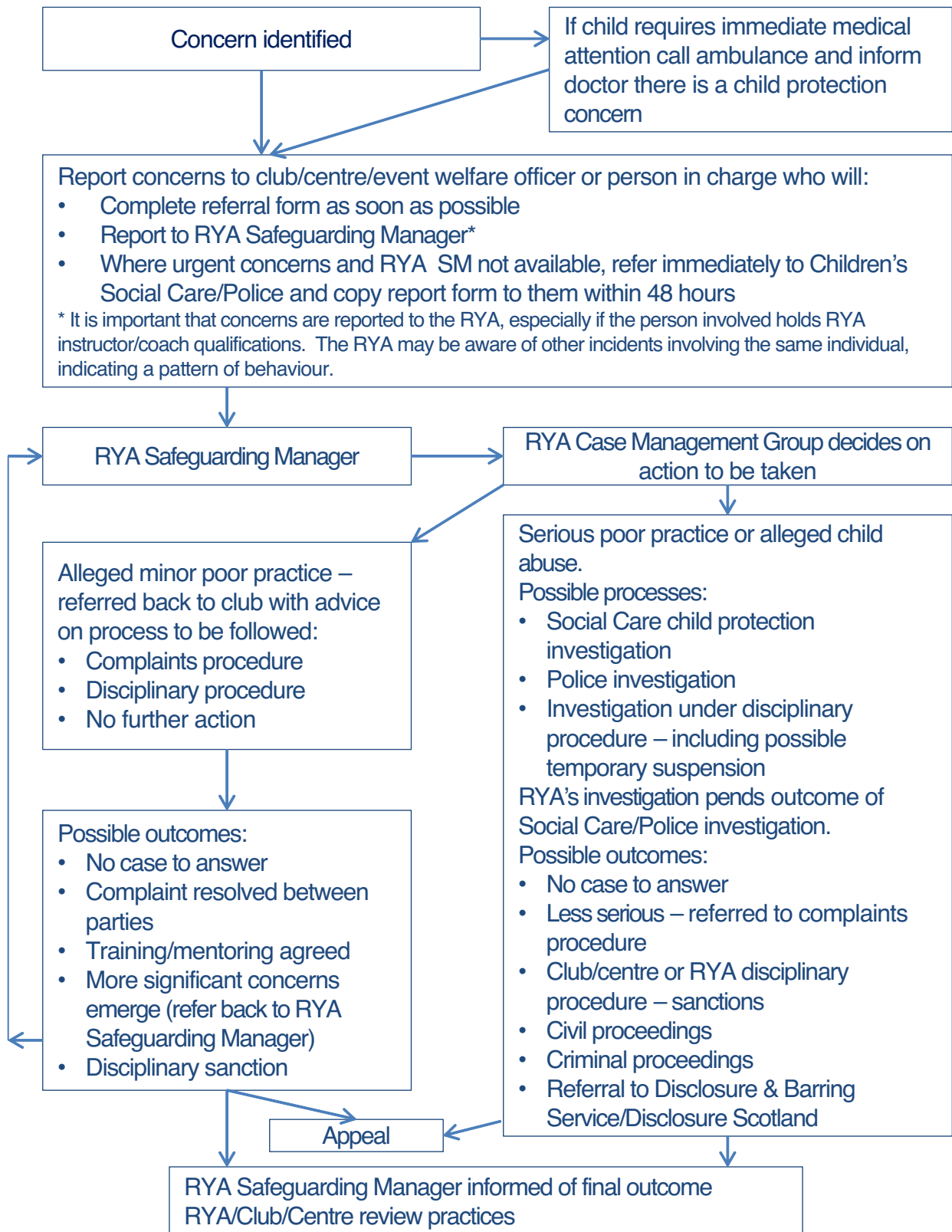
Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

## Reporting procedures Concern about a child outside the sport environment



## Reporting procedures

### Concern about the behaviour of someone at a club/centre



## SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION REFERRAL FORM

Date and time of incident	
Name and position of person about whom report, complaint or allegation is made	
Name and age of child involved	
Name of club or organisation (if relevant)	
Nature of incident, complaint or allegation (continue on separate page if necessary).	
Action taken by organisation (continue on separate page if necessary)	
If Police or Children's Social Care Services contacted, name, position and telephone number of person handling case	
Name, organisation and position of person completing form	
Contact telephone number and e-mail address	
Signature of person completing form	
Date and time form completed	
Name and position of organisation's child protection/welfare officer or person in charge (if different from above)	
Contact telephone number and e-mail address	

**This form should be copied, marked 'Private and Confidential', to the RYA Safeguarding and Equality Manager, Jackie Reid, RYA House, Ensign Way, Hamble, Southampton, SO31 4YA, e-mail [safeguarding@rya.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rya.org.uk) and to the statutory authorities (if they have been informed of the incident) within 48 hours of the incident**

# **Appendix A- Self-disclosure Form For Officers, Members, and Volunteers having regular contact with children and/or vulnerable adults**

Hastings & St. Leonards Sailing Club is committed to safeguarding children from physical, sexual and emotional harm. As part of our Safeguarding policy, we require applicants for roles involving frequent or regular contact with children to complete this self-disclosure form. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you undertaking this role but it will depend on the circumstances and background of your offences.

All information will be treated as confidential and managed in accordance with data protection legislation and guidance. You have a right of access to information held about you under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Name .....

**1. Have you ever been known to any Children Services Department or the Police as being an actual or potential risk to children? YES / NO**

If yes, please supply details.

**2. Have you ever been the subject of any disciplinary investigation and/or sanction by any organisation due to concerns about your behaviour towards children? YES / NO**

If yes, please supply details.

### **Declaration**

I declare that to the best of my knowledge the information given above is correct and understand that any misleading statements or deliberate omission may be sufficient grounds for disciplinary action and/or the withdrawal of my appointment.

I understand that I may be asked to provide a Criminal Records Disclosure and consent to do so if required. I agree to inform the organisation within 24 hours if I am subsequently investigated by any agency or organisation in relation to concerns about my behaviour towards children or young people.

I understand that the information contained in this form and in the Disclosure, or relating to subsequent concerns about my behaviour, may be shared with regulatory bodies and/or other persons or organisations, in circumstances where this is considered necessary to safeguard children.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Note: if the applicant is aged under 18, this form should be counter-signed by a parent or guardian

## **Appendix B - Good Practice Guidelines**

### **Culture**

It is important to develop a culture within the club 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 child who has experienced racism may find it difficult to trust an adult from a different ethnic background.

### **Minimising risk**

The Club promotes 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 followed:

- Avoid spending any significant time working with children in isolation
- Do not take children alone in a car, however short the journey
- Do not take children to your home as part of the club's activity
- Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure that they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge 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 friend 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.



## **Parental responsibility and club liability**

Although the club has 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 club/class/centre requires a parent (or designated responsible adult) to be on site, it must be made clear at what point responsibility transfers from the instructor, coach or organiser to the parent.

## **Bullying**

If a child alleges bullying or shows signs of being bullied, this must be investigated.

## **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**

First aid is part of the Club's normal duty of care. Consent if medication or medical treatment is required in the absence of the parent/carer.

## **Organising and hosting events**

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.

## **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 the club and encouraging 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 the 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 contact.

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.

Coaches on the RYA's Youth and Junior squad programmes are expected to comply with the RYA Youth Racing Communications Policy.

## 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) and [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) provides guidance for children and young people in different age groups as well as parents and carers.

## 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 the Club and sailing. 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 they 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 prizewinners, 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 inappropriate use.

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 Youth Promotion and Children's 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.

## **Appendix C – Club Code of Conduct**

It is the policy of Hastings & St Leonards Sailing Club that all participants, coaches, instructors, officials, parents and volunteers show respect and understanding for each other, treat everyone equally within the context of the sport and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the club/class. The aim is for all participants to enjoy their sport and to improve performance.

**Abusive language, swearing, intimidation, aggressive behaviour or lack of respect for others and their property will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action.**

### **Participants - young sailors, windsurfers and powerboaters**

- Listen to and accept what you are asked to do to improve your performance and keep you safe
- Respect other participants, coaches, instructors, officials and volunteers
- Abide by the rules and play fairly
- Do your best at all times
- Never bully others either in person, by phone, by text or online
- Take care of all property belonging to other participants, the club/class or its members

### **Parents**

- Support your child's involvement and help them enjoy their sport
- Help your child to recognise good performance, not just results
- Never force your child to take part in sport
- Never punish or belittle a child for losing or making mistakes
- Encourage and guide your child to accept responsibility for their own conduct and performance
- Respect and support the coach
- Accept officials' judgements and recognise good performance by all participants
- Use established procedures where there is a genuine concern or dispute
- Inform the club or event organisers of relevant medical information
- Ensure that your child wears suitable clothing and has appropriate food and drink
- Provide contact details and be available when required
- Take responsibility for your child's safety and conduct in and around the clubhouse/event venue

### **Coaches, Instructors, Officials and Volunteers**

- Consider the welfare and safety of participants before the development of performance
- Encourage participants to value their performance and not just results
- Promote fair play and never condone cheating
- Ensure that all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part
- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect
- Work in an open environment
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people
- Be an excellent role model and display consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance
- Do not drink alcohol or smoke when working directly with young people
- Communicate clearly with parents and participants
- Be aware of any relevant medical information
- Follow RYA and club/class guidelines and policies
- Holders of RYA Instructor and Coach qualifications must also comply with the RYA Code of Conduct
- Holders of RYA Race Official appointments must also comply with the RYA Race Officials Code of Conduct.

If you are concerned that someone is not following the Code of Conduct, you should inform the Club Welfare Officer or the person in charge of the activity.

## Appendix D – Recognising Abuse: What is child abuse?

(Based on the statutory guidance ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2013)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Physical abuse** may involve adults or other children inflicting physical harm:

- by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating
- giving children alcohol or inappropriate drugs
- in sport situations, physical abuse might also occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child’s immature and growing body.

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate
- imposing expectations which are beyond the child’s age or developmental capability
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
- allowing a child to see or hear the ill-treatment of another person
- serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- the exploitation or corruption of children
- emotional abuse in sport might also include situations where parents or coaches subject children to constant criticism, bullying or pressure to perform at a level that the child cannot realistically be expected to achieve.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child.

**Sexual abuse.** Sexual abuse involves an individual (male or female, or another child) forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, to gratify their own sexual needs. The activities may involve:

- physical contact (eg. kissing, touching, masturbation, rape or oral sex)
- involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images
- encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
- grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)
- sport situations which involve physical contact (eg. supporting or guiding children) could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Abusive situations may also occur if adults misuse their power over young people.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- respond to a child’s basic emotional needs
- neglect in a sailing situation might occur if an instructor or coach fails to ensure that children are safe, or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury.

**Bullying** (including ‘cyber bullying’ by text, e-mail, social media etc) may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated or sustained over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The bully may often be another young person. Although anyone can be the target of bullying, victims are typically shy, sensitive and perhaps anx-

ious or insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons – being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

The acronym STOP – Several Times On Purpose - can help you to identify bullying behaviour.

## **Recognising Abuse**

It is not always easy, even for the most experienced carers, to spot when a child has been abused. However, some of the more typical symptoms which should trigger your suspicions would include:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- sexually explicit language or actions
- a sudden change in behaviour (eg. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper)
- the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- a change observed over a long period of time (eg. the child losing weight or becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt)
- a general distrust and avoidance of adults, especially those with whom a close relationship would be expected
- an unexpected reaction to normal physical contact
- difficulty in making friends or abnormal restrictions on socialising with others.

It is important to note that a child could be displaying some or all of these signs, or behaving in a way which is worrying, without this necessarily meaning that the child is being abused. Similarly, there may not be any signs, but you may just feel that something is wrong. If you have noticed a change in the child's behaviour, first talk to the parents or carers. It may be that something has happened, such as a bereavement, which has caused the child to be unhappy.

## **If you are concerned**

If there are concerns about sexual abuse or violence in the home, talking to the parents or carers might put the child at greater risk. If you cannot talk to the parents/carers, consult your organisation's designated Welfare Officer or the person in charge. It is this person's responsibility to make the decision to contact Children's Social Care Services or the Police. It is NOT their responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place, BUT it is their responsibility to act on your concern.

## Appendix E – Handling Concerns, Reports or Allegations

A complaint, concern or allegation may come from a number of sources. It may involve the behaviour of one of a club member, or something that has happened to the child outside the club, 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 D

### 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

#### 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 Youth Promotion and Children's Welfare 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.

A leading question is where you suggest an answer or provide options that only need a 'yes' or 'no' answer, instead of allowing the child to explain things in their own words. An example would be asking 'did X hit you?' instead of 'how did you get that bruise?'. Use open questions such as 'what happened next?'. Only ask questions to confirm that you need to refer the matter to someone else. Listen to and keep a record of anything the child tells you or that you have observed and pass the information on to the statutory authorities (see Sample Document 7 for Referral Form).

**All information must be treated as confidential and only shared with those who need to know.** If the allegation or suspicion concerns someone within your club or centre, only the child's parents/carers, the person in charge of the organisation (unless they are the subject of the allegation), the relevant authorities and the RYA Safeguarding Manager should be informed. If

the alleged abuse took place outside the sport, the Police or Children's Social Care will decide who else needs to be informed, including the child's parents/carers. It should not be discussed by anyone within the organisation other than the person who received or initiated the allegation and, if different, the person in charge.

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

### **Statutory Authorities**

If the club is contacted by the Police or Children's Services concerning information received or a complaint made by or about a member, volunteer or employee, then 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.

### **Handling the media**

If there is an incident at the Club's 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. Consider contacting the RYA's Communications department on 023 8060 4215 for professional advice on handling the media.