



Wells Sailing Club

Safeguarding Policy

February 2023

Adopted at the Committee Meeting in March 2023

Next Review Date: February 2024

1. Overview

It is the policy of Wells Sailing Club (“the Club”) to safeguard children and young people taking part in all aspects of boating or other club activities from physical, sexual, or emotional harm, including neglect. 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, whatever their age, gender, disability, culture, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, social status or sexual identity, 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’s Welfare (Safeguarding) Officer

In order to fulfil the Club’s responsibilities to safeguard all children taking part in any Club activities, a nominated Welfare (Safeguarding) Officer will oversee all aspects of Safeguarding.

Wells Sailing Club Welfare (Safeguarding) Officer: Tim Gibbs – K77tjg@gmail.com
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The designated Club Welfare Officer’s general terms of reference include:

- Maintaining an up to date policy and procedures, compatible with the RYA’s.
- Ensuring that all members are aware of the need to safeguard children, and how to do this, as well as how to report concerns.
- Advising the management committee on safeguarding and child protection issues.
- Maintaining contact details for local Children’s Services and Police.

If there is a concern, the designated person would:

- Be 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 club's officers.
- Keep the RYA informed as necessary.

For any further safeguarding information from the RYA please see details below. www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding or contact Jackie Reid (see below).

RYA designated person

The Safeguarding Leads for the RYA are Safeguarding and Equality Manager Katie Loucaides and Safeguarding Officer Andrea Gates.

Katie can be contacted on 02380 604104 and Andrea on 02380 604226.

2. Objectives

The Club will follow the RYA's guidance: www.rya.org.uk/infoadvice/childprotection

<https://www.rya.org.uk/about-us/policies/safeguarding/safeguarding-policies-procedures-and-guidelines>

It will also take account of guidance issued through: *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2022) and *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2018)

The Club will:

- Ensure that there is a named Welfare (Safeguarding Officer) – Tim Gibbs
- Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually at a committee meeting
- Ensure that all members and people using the Club have access to the Safeguarding Policy, with a version available on the website and displayed within the Club
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the Welfare Officer or the Police
- Recognise that safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone within the Club, not just those working directly with them
- Ensure children's experience of the sport is everyone at the club's priority.

We will create a safe and welcoming environment, both on and off the water, where children can have fun and develop their skills and confidence. We will treat all children with respect, celebrate their achievements and listen to their views and experiences.

3. Definition of a child

The Children Act 1989 defined any person under the age of 18 as a 'child'. In this document and in day to day communications the terms 'children' and 'young people' are both used, recognising that older teenagers may prefer not to be referred to as 'children' although they are still children in the eyes of the law.

4. Types of Abuse

People working with children within the Club should be aware of the four types of abuse and possible signs. The following indicators are not an exhaustive list.

- **Abuse**: a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.
- **Physical abuse**: a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- **Emotional abuse**: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- **Sexual abuse**: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- **Neglect**: 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.

5. Images of Children (taking pictures/videos)

All members of the Club should follow the good practice guidelines attached. The Club will seek written consent from the child and/or their parents/carers before taking photos or video at an event 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 without consent. Any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography or the inappropriate use of images should be reported to the Club Welfare Officer.

6. Concerns over a child or young person

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

Alternatively, if you feel a child is being harmed or likely to be harmed then you must immediately contact the Police or Norfolk Local Children Safeguarding Board:

Useful contacts

NSPCC 24 hour free helpline, for advice
on any aspect of children's welfare

phone: 0808 800 5000
e-mail: help@nspcc.org.uk
website: www.nspcc.org.uk

MIND mental health charity;

phone: 0300 123 3393
e-mail: info@mind.org.uk
website: www.mind.org.uk

Children Childline 24hour

phone: free helpline 0800 1111
website: www.childline.org.uk

Royal Yachting Association

Safeguarding and Equality Manager RYA House,
Ensign Way Hamble Southampton SO31 4YA

phone: 023 8060 4104
email: safeguarding@rya.org.uk
website: www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding

Child Protection in Sport Unit

phone: 0116 366 5580
email: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk
website: www.thecpsu.org.uk

Appendix 1 – Good Practice Guidelines

Culture: 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.

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 alone in a car, however short the journey
- 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 (if carried offered) 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
- Restrict communications with young people via mobile phone, e-mail or social media to group communications about organisational matters. If it’s essential to send an individual message, copy it to the child’s parent or carer.

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.

Changing Rooms: 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. Adults are requested not to enter 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.

The Club will seek written consent from parents/carers before taking photos or video of a child 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 Welfare Officer.

Appendix 2 – Handling concerns, reports or allegations

This section is primarily for the organisation’s designated Welfare 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 or carers, someone else within your organisation, a member of the public, or the statutory authorities (Police or Children’s Social Care). 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.

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/ 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

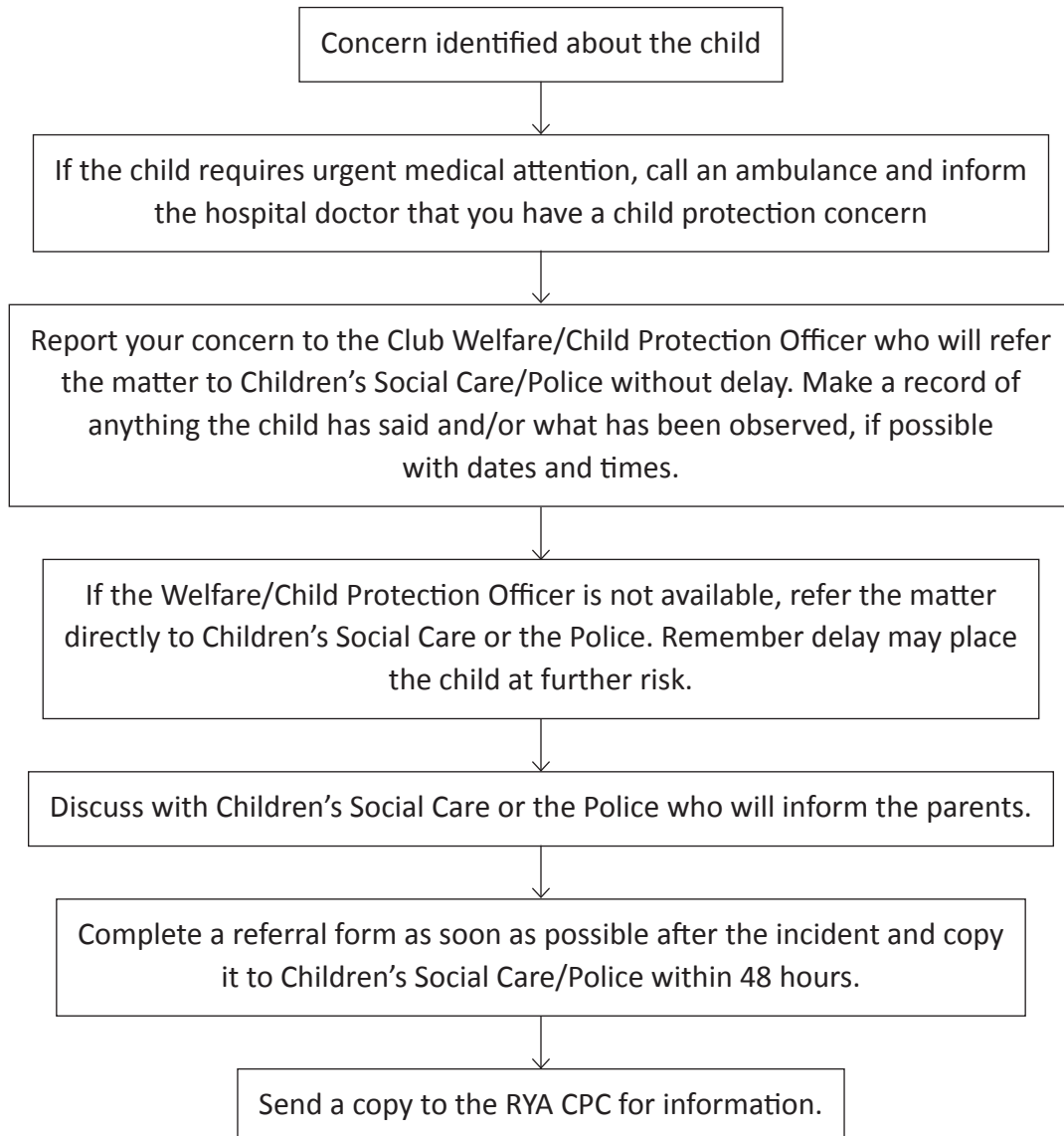
If you suspect that a child may have been the subject of any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, the allegation must be referred as soon as possible to Children's Social Care or the Police who have trained experts to handle such cases. Do not start asking leading questions which may 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 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 organisation's Welfare Officer, the person in charge of the organisation (unless any of them are the subject of the allegation), the relevant authorities and the RYA Safeguarding and Equality 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.

Flowchart 1

What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused outside the sport's environment (but the concern is identified through the child's involvement in the sport)



If you are uncertain what to do at any stage, contact the RYA's Child Protection Co-ordinator on 023 8060 4104 or the NSPCC free 24 hour helpline 0808 800 5000.

Wells Sailing Club Safeguarding 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	
Nature of incident, complaint or allegation (continue on separate page if necessary)	
Action taken (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	
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	

Appendix 3

Handout for Instructors, Coaches and Volunteers – Good Practice Guide

This guide only covers the essential points of good practice when working with children and young people. You should also read the organisation's Child Protection Policy and Procedures which are available for reference at all times.

- 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 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 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 the child (where possible) and their parents/carers. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed. 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.