

## Safeguarding Policies & Procedures 2023

### Policy 1 Safeguarding Young People

#### Introduction

In accordance with RYA advice and national legislative documents we have updated the terminology and widened the scope of our safeguarding policy.

These are the main changes:

- Across relevant documentation the term 'Safeguarding' has replaced 'Child Protection'.
- The 'Child Protection Officer' is now known as the 'Welfare Officer' (WO).
- Where appropriate, safeguarding policies and procedures should consider adults at risk as well as children and young people. Therefore as there is potential for the Felixstowe Ferry Sailing Club Training Centre (FFSCTC) to provide training and / or activities for adults at risk, the club is advised to follow RYA recommendations and adopt a policy specifically designed to safeguard this group of learners. FFSC Policy 2: Safeguarding Adults at Risk has been developed to meet this requirement.
- All policies must be adopted by FFSC as a whole and members should be made aware that the safeguarding principles apply to all so that the culture within the club clearly reflects the statutory guidance which states:

***'Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility'***

All members of the Club should follow the **GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES** on page 4. Those working with young people should be aware of the guidance on recognising abuse (see page 11) and the new RYA guidelines regarding Trans and Non-binary Inclusion, and Using Inclusive Language. Any member of the Club failing to comply with the Safeguarding Young People Policy and any relevant Codes of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action.

**ALL INSTRUCTORS MUST ALSO FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTOR CODE OF CONDUCT on page 5**

Please sign the appropriate sections of the helper's registration form at the beginning of each season to confirm you agree to meet these requirements.

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## SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE – OUR POLICY STATEMENT

Felixstowe Ferry Sailing Club (FFSC) is committed to safeguarding young people taking part in all our club activities, from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or bullying. We recognise that the safety, welfare and needs of the young person are paramount and that any young person irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual or gender identity or social status, has a right to protection from discrimination and abuse. FFSC takes all reasonable steps to ensure that, through safe recruitment, appropriate operating procedures and training, it offers a safe, welcoming and fun environment for everyone taking part in its events and activities, both on and off the water. We will treat everyone with respect, celebrate their achievements and listen to their views and experiences. In addition, we have incorporated within our policies the key points of the recently published RYA guidance documents 'Trans and Non-binary Inclusion in Sailing and Boating' and 'Modern Day Manners - Using Inclusive Language', and the updated guidance on changing rooms. The full documents are available to consult on the FFSC website.

All RYA Training Centres that teach under 18s are required to have a formal safeguarding policy which is checked as part of their annual inspection. For the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 is considered as a young person. At FFSC we have 2 RYA training centres: Youth Sailing @ Felixstowe Ferry (YS@FF) and the Felixstowe Ferry Sailing Club Training Centre (FFSCTC)

### **PROCEDURES: Recruitment of Volunteers and Employees**

- ALL club members whose role brings them into regular contact with young people (instructing, coaching or in a supportive role including support on the water) will be asked to apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure, with Barred List check. **This will include under 18s if they are regularly instructing / regularly part of safety boat crew.** The Welfare Officer (WO) will monitor the currency of the ECR disclosures and BL checks and will request updates accordingly. It is anticipated that all our ECR checks will eventually be made online (no cost for volunteers) but in order for this to work smoothly applicants should register with the online service immediately on receipt of their ECR certificate. Checks can then be carried out by the WO annually before the beginning of each season and again at any time as necessary without the need to generate a new ECR check. The WO will provide information and guide the application for the ECR checks. Volunteers and employees may also be required to provide references prior to appointment.

**FFSC WO is Jane White, 07768 233445, janeawhite23@gmail.com**

If there is a concern, the WO would:

- Be the first point of contact for any concerns or allegations from adults at risk, carers, young people or others, 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 person in charge (Commodore, Principal etc).
- Keep the RYA informed as necessary

The RYA's Safeguarding Team can be contacted on 02380 604297 (option one)

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

All advice and guidance within this document is taken from the RYA website Safeguarding section: [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding)

## **PROCEDURES: Working with Young People at FFSC (specifically YS@FF / FFSCTC)**

- All YS@FF / FFSCCTC volunteers and employees will be emailed an electronic version of the current Safeguarding Young People Policy. There will be hard copies available in the Session Folder for YS@FF and on the club notice board and we will also make sure that there is a link to the policy on the FFSC / YS@FF / FFSCCTC web pages
- All volunteers / FFSCCTC employees are required to read the latest Safeguarding Young People Policy.
- All volunteers / FFSCCTC employees are required to sign the appropriate forms to confirm that they have read and agree to abide by this Policy, will follow the Good Practice Guidelines and, where relevant, adhere to the Instructor Code of Conduct. The Helper's Form for YS must be completed within a month of the beginning of the new season and prior to employment as appropriate.
- It is now a mandatory requirement for all those intending to qualify as RYA Instructors, Senior Instructors or Racing Coaches to complete an online safeguarding course prior to their Instructor or Coach course. The course will also be available to anyone wishing to gain a basic awareness of safeguarding issues, or to refresh their knowledge. When appropriate a briefing can be provided by the club SO and this will incorporate the key elements of the RYA training.
- FFSC requires every individual holding a ECR disclosure to notify the WO if the individual obtains a criminal record that would officially appear on an ECR disclosure or BL check. Such notification will be in confidence unless the WO decides that the matter should be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee and / or Principal of the club.
- All personal information will be treated as confidential, stored securely and only shared with those who need to see it in the course of their duties or to safeguard young people in accordance with the club's Data Privacy Policy (available on FFSC website).

## **GOOD PRACTICE**

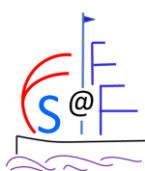
### **The culture of our club**

It is important to show that FFSC is an organisation where all members, young people, their parents / carers and others feel able to raise concerns or queries, knowing that they will be taken seriously and treated with an appropriate level of confidentiality. FFSC aims to create an welcoming environment with inclusive and accessible facilities and we are developing policies and procedures that promote anti-discrimination, and equality and inclusion for all, in order to create an inclusive community. The work of the club will be planned to promote good practice. Good practice protects everyone.

Therefore:

- All members of FFSC to follow the Good Practice Guide overleaf
- In addition, RYA Coaches and Instructors are expected to comply with the RYA Code of Conduct (see page 5)
- Parental responsibility. Although FFSC Club has a duty of care to our members and must ensure that on-water activities are conducted safely, particularly for 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. To make it clear when responsibility transfers from the instructor, coach or organiser at YS@FF to that person, we have defined a YOUTH SAILING session with YS@FF as commencing with the arrival of the first student and finishing with the completion of the signing out process.
- We have also drafted a Code of Conduct for participants and parents/ guardians (adapted from RYA) which will be introduced should the YS@FF committee consider it helpful

For further information on a club's legal liability and duty of care, see the Club Zone of the RYA's website [www.rya.org.uk/the-club-zone](http://www.rya.org.uk/the-club-zone) (you'll need the FFSC login, please contact [membership@rya.org.uk](mailto:membership@rya.org.uk) if not known and select Club Management, Health & Safety, Organising and Managing Events to find a link to the 'Race, Training and Event Management' guide).



## **FFSC GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES 2023**

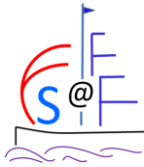
### **General**

- Always communicate clearly to participants in whatever way best suits the individual, check their understanding and expectations
- Always consider your use of inclusive language - check appropriate and acceptable terms when referring to disability, ethnicity, gender identity, religion etc (see the RYA guidance 'Modern Manners')
- Always communicate clearly with parents/guardians
- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect
- Ensure training programmes are designed within the ability of the individual young person
- Encourage participants to value their performance and not just results
- Work in an open environment
- Do not drink alcohol or smoke when working directly with young people
- Restrict communications 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 young person's parent or carer
- Do not take a young person alone in a car, however short the journey
- Do not take a young person to your home as part of your organisation's activity  
Where either of these are unavoidable, ensure that they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation and / or the young person's parents or carers.
- If a young person 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 an individual, make sure you are in full view of others, preferably another adult.
- It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature for youth sailors. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of both the individual concerned (where possible) and their parents/carers. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, if the individual lacks the capacity to give consent, parents / carers should be fully informed as soon as possible. In such situations it is important to ensure that any adult present is sensitive to the individual and undertakes personal care tasks with the utmost discretion. Never do things of a personal nature that a young person can do for themselves.
- Always display high standards of behaviour- abusive language / swearing will not be tolerated

### **Never:**

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allow youth sailors to use inappropriate language unchallenged, or use such language yourself when with young people
- make sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun
- fail to respond to an allegation made by a young person; always act

*(Updated 2023 from RYA codes of practice)*



## **RYA Code of Conduct for RYA Instructors, Coach Assessors, Trainers and Examiners**

This document outlines the code of conduct under which all holders of RYA instructor qualifications and RYA training appointments (hereafter referred to as instructors) are required to comply. The code of conduct is intended to make clear to all participants, instructors and RYA appointment holders the high standards to which all are expected to conform. Instructors must:

- If working with people under the age of 18, read and understand the Safeguarding Young People Policy as detailed on the RYA website at [www.rya.org.uk](http://www.rya.org.uk)
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of their sport.
- Place the wellbeing and safety of the student above the development of performance or delivery of training.
- They should follow all guidelines laid down by the RYA with regards specific training or coaching programmes.
- Hold appropriate insurance cover either individually or through the training centre in which they are working.
- Not develop inappropriate working relationships with students (especially children). Relationships must be based on mutual trust and respect and not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Encourage and guide students to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
- Hold relevant up to date governing body qualifications as approved by the RYA.
- Ensure that the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual.
- At the outset, clarify with students (and where appropriate their parents) exactly what is expected of them and what they are entitled to expect.
- Always promote the positive aspects of the sport (eg courtesy to other water users).
- Consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.
- Not do or neglect to do anything which may bring the RYA into disrepute.
- Act with integrity in all customer and business to business dealings pertaining to RYA training.
- Not teach or purport to provide RYA courses or RYA certification outside of the framework of an RYA recognised training centre
- Notify the RYA immediately of any court imposed sanction that precludes the instructor from contact with specific user groups (for example children and vulnerable adults).
- Not carry out RYA training, examining or coaching activities whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Failure to adhere to the RYA Instructor Code of Conduct may result in the suspension or withdrawal of RYA qualifications or appointments.

## GUIDANCE TO MINIMISE RISK

### Changing rooms and showers (updated 2023)

Changing facility areas should, where possible, be designed to allow both adults and children to shower and dress in reasonable privacy. Adults often feel uncomfortable either showering and changing in front of children and vice versa. It is important that staff and volunteers try to balance the needs of adults and children with the right to privacy and manage supervision where necessary.

As a minimum there should be separate male and female 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 aware that adult club members and/or members of the public may be in the changing rooms. Extra vigilance may be required if there is public access to the venue. 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** can be an issue in changing rooms and showers. **The recording of images or video using any type of camera or photographic equipment, including cameras on smartphones and tablets and action cameras used on the water, will not be permitted in showers or changing areas by anyone in any circumstances..** Such use by young people should be regarded as a form of bullying. All phones and other such equipment must be left in safe keeping at the signing in desk before entering the changing rooms at any time.

**Inclusion for people who are Trans and Non-binary.** People who are trans or non-binary should be supported to use the changing facilities of their choice – this includes the option to use the facilities of their preferred gender or private facilities. People who are not trans or non-binary should also be provided with a safe space to express concerns, be supported to accept people who are trans or non-binary and also be allowed access to private facilities.

*A copy of the latest RYA guidance (2022) regarding changing rooms will be available on the club notice board.*

### Trans and Non-binary Inclusion in Sailing and Boating (RYA 2023)

Young people who express that they feel that they are trans and non-binary should be supported to feel welcome and treated with respect within a club setting. Equally, for young people who are concerned about people who are trans or non-binary should be supported to understand the nature of gender identity and importantly, to feel safe.

If a young person tells you that they feel that they are trans or non-binary, this may be because they value and trust your support. As a trusted adult that a young person has confided in, it is really important to ensure that you respond with respect and acceptance:

- Listen to the young person's feelings. This is a great way to show your support and build trust with them.
- Respect the young person's gender identity. No young person should be made to feel ashamed or distressed because of how they recognise their gender identity.
- Let them know you're there for them. Ask them how they would like to be supported in the club setting. What are their pronouns? How do they wish to express their gender identity? Which facilities would they prefer to use? But most importantly, a good way to first respond is by telling them "thank you for telling me, I am here for you".
- Ask young person if they feel safe and confident for their parents, carers or guardians to know. You must judge this as a case-by-case scenario. In the instance where it is safe for a young person's parents to know, it is best to tell them so that they can support their young person at home. If you are unsure, always seek guidance from the club WO or the RYA Safeguarding and Equality Team.
- Supporting or young person's parent, carer or guardian. Parents, carers and guardians may need support to understand why their young person feels that they identify differently with their gender identity. You can signpost parents, carers and guardians to the following pages for support:

NSPCC

Childline FFLAG

Webpage: Gender identity | NSPCC NSPCC Helpline - 0808 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

Webpage: Sexual and gender identity | Childline

Webpage: My Child's Transgender – FFLAG

## **Photography, Images and Video (with additional information from RYA Feb 2020)**

Publishing articles, photos and videos in our club newsletter and on our website is an excellent way of recognising young people's achievements and of promoting youth sailing. However it is important to minimise the risk of anyone using images of young people in an inappropriate way. Digital technology makes it easy to take, store, send, manipulate and publish images, our policy is therefore based on two key principles:

\*Before taking photos or video we will obtain written consent from the young person's parents/carers for their images to be taken and used

- YS@FF / FFSC will obtain written permission from the young person and their parents / carers before taking photos or video at events and training sessions, or publishing such images.
- 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 about our expectations regarding his/her behaviour and the issues covered by these guidelines.
- We will not allow a photographer to have unsupervised access to young people at events or to arrange photo sessions outside the events.
- Consent will 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.
- We will take care in the storage of and access to images. An image is personal data and will be treated in accordance with our Data Privacy Policy.

When publishing images, we will make sure they are appropriate and do not include any information that might enable someone to contact the young person

- Where possible we will use a general shot showing participants on the water, or a group shot of the prizewinners, without identifying them by name.
- If we are recognising the achievement of an individual sailor and wish to publish their name with their photo, we will 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 young person.
- We will ensure that the young people pictured are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of inappropriate use of images.

Most of our 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 club Safeguarding Officer and treated in the same way as any other safeguarding concern. Parents and spectators should be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state their purpose for photography/filming.

**Joint Activities with other organisations:** - Joint activities involving young members of FFSC with members of any other organisation must be approved by the Principal or Chief Instructor.

The Principal, Chief Instructor or their representative must be satisfied that that:

- All FFSC Safeguarding and Safety Policies will be adhered to
- All adults undertaking the joint activity have been deemed suitable to work with young people
- The other organisation is aware of FFSC internal rules and good practice
- The other organisation is suitably covered by insurance to undertake the proposed joint activities with members of FFSC
- Those responsible for making arrangements with other organisations for the use of FFSC owned or operated facilities must satisfy themselves that:
- The FFSC Safeguarding and Safety Policies will be adhered to
- All adults in the party have been deemed suitable to work with young people by their own organisation
- The above should be an integral part of any joint activity arrangement / procedures.

## **Social Media - Youth Sailors**

Young people use modern technology as a matter of course, but they don't always understand the risks involved and their parents are not always fully aware of their children's risky behaviour. 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) provide guidance and support for children and young people in different age groups, as well as for parents and carers, on matters such as online bullying, sharing images and 'sexting'.

**Social Media - Parents** - Organisations are responsible for the content published on their sites or pages, but parents must accept responsibility for their children's access to and use of computers, tablets and smartphones. See these links for guidance

[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.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

**Social Media - Adult helpers** - When working with young people our adult volunteers will:

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

When using social media our adult volunteers will:

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

Coaches working with the RYA's Youth and Junior squads are expected to comply with the [RYA British Youth Sailing Communication Policy](#).

### **Social media and YS@FF / FFSC Website**

While promoting YS@FF / FFSC and encouraging our youth sailors to interact online through the website we will:

- follow the RYA guidance on the use of images of young people (see Photography section above)
- ensure that the content and language on all pages of our website 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.

Guidance for clubs on using social media can be found at '[Club Guide to Social Media Use with Children and Young People](#)', [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding), RYA Safeguarding Guidance.

## **BULLYING.....WE CONSIDER ANY TYPE OF BULLYING UNACCEPTABLE**

### **What is bullying?**

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 anxious 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.

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. The three key bullying behaviours are:

- It does not just happen once; it is ongoing over time.
- It is deliberate and intentional - it is not accidentally hurting someone.
- It is unfair or there is an unequal power balance (imbalance of power). The person/people doing the bullying is/are stronger, there are more of them or they have 'influence' (higher status or power).

STOP  
Several Times On Purpose  
can help you to identify bullying behaviour



Bullying can be:

- Emotional; being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (for example: hiding possessions, gear or equipment, threatening gestures.)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic: because of, or focusing on, the issue of sexuality
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

**A child's behaviour might be indicative that he or she is being bullied. These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated:**

**Is frightened of being left alone with other children.**  
**Changes his or her usual routine.**  
**Suddenly doesn't wish to attend sailing or events.**  
**Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.**  
**Starts stammering.**  
**Has cuts or bruises that cannot adequately be explained.**  
**Attempts or threatens suicide. Attempts or threatens to run away.**  
**Cries his or her self to sleep or has nightmares.**  
**Feels ill in the mornings.**  
**Begins to perform poorly without good reason.**  
**Goes home with clothes torn or belongings damaged.**  
**Has possessions suddenly start to go missing.**  
**Asks for money or starts stealing money (to give to the bully).**  
**Continually 'loses' money.**  
**Become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.**  
**Is bullying other children or siblings.**  
**Stops eating.**  
**Is frightened to say what is wrong.**  
**Gives improbable excuses or reasons for any of these behaviours.**

### **FFSC Anti – Bullying Policy**

We do not expect any bullying to occur, but if it does, this policy will provide a mechanism by which it can be quickly brought to our attention so that we investigate the situation and work with both the victim and the bully in order to resolve the problem.

Bullying hurts and no one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Bullying is often a call for help by the person showing bullying behaviours. He or she needs help both to learn different ways of behaving and to understand the reason that it is unacceptable. It is often symptomatic of other issues that he or she might need help with. Therefore, promptly informing an appropriate person about these behaviours helps everyone.

If an individual alleges bullying or shows signs of being bullied, this must be investigated and If anyone, either youth sailor or adult, suspects that bullying is taking place, it is expected that he or she informs an appropriate person. This can be an Instructor, Committee member, adult helper, or the Welfare Officer. This person will then follow the procedure below.

Informing an appropriate person that you suspect bullying when you have genuine grounds will not result in disciplinary action against you and the bully will not be informed of your identity without your consent. Being found to know of bullying without reporting it contravenes our safeguarding policy.

- All interviews will be conducted under RYA Best Practice Guidelines, which includes the young people involved being accompanied by a parent or responsible adult.
- The child who is bullying will be asked to explain his or her behaviour and consider the consequences of it both to his or her self and to others. He or she might be asked to apologise. If possible, the children will be reconciled.
- It might be recommended that the child seek the help of professional health counsellors to deal with his or her behaviour.
- If incidents take place at formal sailing events such as races, hearings under RYA Rule 2 or Rule 69 might take place.
- Depending on the severity of the case, suspension or exclusion of the bully/ies, from sailing sessions or events might be necessary.
- After the incident or incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure that repeated bullying does not take place.
- In rare cases, the allegation of bullying might be false, possibly with a degree of malicious intent. In such a case, an investigation must still be conducted and appropriate action taken.

All incidents or allegations of bullying, whether founded or not, will be reported to the club WO and kept on record to monitor any future reports. *The RYA anti-bullying policy; [Youth and Junior Racing Policies](#)*

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/>

Resources and advice for young people can be found on [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) and [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

## **What is child abuse? (Based on the statutory guidance ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’)**

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 (including via the internet). 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 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 or watch sexual activities
- 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 sport 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.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs and wants (eg. attention, money or material possessions, alcohol or drugs), and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation can also occur online without involving physical contact.

**Extremism** goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable - including the young - by seeking to: sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination e.g. towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

### **Additional vulnerability**

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'.

### **Grooming**

Grooming is when someone develops a relationship with a child over a period of time to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or face-to-face, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. For more information on possible signs of grooming, see <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/grooming/> Sometimes the perpetrator grooms the entire family, building a relationship with the child's parents/carers so that they are allowed more access to the child than would normally be the case.

Similar behaviour could be used to radicalise young people and recruit them to a religious or political cause. This is unlikely to happen in a sailing club setting, but under the government's 'Prevent' strategy teachers and others working with young people are receiving training on recognising the warning signs.

### **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 concerns.

### **FFSC WELFARE OFFICER: Jane White 07768 233445**

Social Care Services: 0808 800 4005

(This number will direct you to children or adult services, and give you a link to the emergency duty officer for Suffolk Social Care)

RYA's Child Protection Co-ordinator on 023 8060 4104

NSPCC free 24 hour helpline 0808 800 5000.

Multi - Agency Safeguarding Hub - Consultation Line 0345 6061499

(If you would like to discuss whether the situation you are concerned about should be the subject of a safeguarding referral)

### **Handling concerns, reports or allegations**

**Revised Feb 2020**

This section is primarily for the Welfare Officer but everyone should be aware of the procedures to follow if there are concerns. 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 (The child must always be interviewed with the group leader or deputy instructor in the room)**

#### **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 (e.g. 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**

**Revised Feb 2020**

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 page 15 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 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.

### **Statutory Authorities**

If the club or centre is contacted by the Police or Children's or Adult 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.

### **Data retention**

**Added Feb 2020**

Confidential information must be processed, stored and destroyed in accordance with your organisation's Data Privacy Policy and Data Protection legislation. Records containing personal information should be: adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose(s) for which they are held; accurate and up to date; and only kept for as long as is necessary. They should be reviewed on a regular basis. If a person is removed from your organisation for a safeguarding reason, you need to consider whether you should retain essential details of the reasons for the action taken, and who will have access to that file in the future, in case the former member tries to re-join at a later date or a further allegation is made about them.

If someone raises a child protection concern relating to incidents that took place some time ago, follow the same procedure as you would for a new concern, even if the person about whom the allegation is being made is no longer active within your organisation. If the concern appears to relate to a criminal offence, encourage the individual to contact the Police on 101.

## Insurance

If there is a serious allegation involving harm caused to a child either at your premises or as a result of taking part in your activities, the person in charge should consider notifying your insurers in case there is a subsequent claim against the organisation.

## 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 adults at risk in England and Wales and in Northern Ireland. If we permanently dismiss or remove someone from regulated activity/work, or would have dismissed them if they had not resigned, because they have harmed a child or adult at risk or placed them at risk of harm, we have a duty to refer them to the DBS. 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 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 4297 or the NSPCC free 24-hour helpline 0808 800 5000.

If you are unable to find the appropriate contact number, call the RYA's Safeguarding Manager or, if a child is at immediate risk, the Police.

Social Care Services: 0808 800 4005

(This number will direct you to children or adult services, and give you a link to the emergency duty officer for Suffolk Social Care)

Multi - Agency Safeguarding Hub - Consultation Line  
0345 6061499

If you would like to discuss whether the situation you are concerned about should be the subject of a safeguarding referral.

## USEFUL CONTACTS:

YS@FF Welfare Officer Jane White, 07768 233445, [janeawhite23@gmail.com](mailto:janeawhite23@gmail.com)

Royal Yachting Association  
Safeguarding and Equality Manager RYA House, Ensign Way Hamble Southampton SO31 4YA  
Tel: 023 8001 2796 E-mail: [safeguarding@rya.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rya.org.uk) Website: [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding)

Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)  
Tel: 0116 366 5580  
E-mail: [cpsu@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:cpsu@nspcc.org.uk) Website: [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

NSPCC 24 hour free 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 24 hour free helpline  
0800 1111 Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS - formerly CRB) – RYA is Registered Body  
Website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Sportscoach UK – provide Safeguarding and Protecting Children training Website:  
[www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org)

## 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 / adult 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 / Adult 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	

This form should be copied, marked 'Private and Confidential', to the RYA Safeguarding and Equality Manager, 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.

## Managing Challenging Behaviour - Guidance for Instructors and Coaches

### Prior to the activity:

You should establish before taking a group of young people on an activity whether any child has a specific behavioural diagnosis, ie Autistic spectrum, ADHD, Tourette's syndrome etc. Specialist advice and support should be sought for working with these children. The following guidelines are for working with young people displaying challenging behaviour. Always confirm the group's agreement:

- Establish behaviour expectations from the outset, explain who is in charge and why (safety etc)
- Explain boundaries and respect for property and each other
- Explain sanctions and consequences for inappropriate behaviour

### During the activity:

When working with groups or individuals with challenging behaviour:

- Employ your own method for memorising individual names – but do so as soon as possible
- Try to establish a relationship with your group, particularly those exhibiting challenging behaviour, eg by showing an interest in them
- Give positive reinforcement, i.e. praise 'good' behaviour and achievements
- Keep challenging members of the group busy by giving them small tasks of responsibility
- Avoid confrontation
- Avoid physical contact, punishment or threat of such
- Avoid physical restraint – use only for safety of the young person or other members of the group (see below)
- Avoid negative instructions i.e. instead of "Stop doing ....." say, "It would be better if ....."

### Possible options and sanctions:

In responding to challenging behaviour the response should always be proportionate to the actions, be imposed as soon as is practicable and be fully explained to the child and their parents/carers. In dealing with children who display negative or challenging behaviours, staff and volunteers might consider the following options:

- Time out - from the activity, group or individual work.
- Reparation - the act or process of making amends.
- Restitution - the act of giving something back.
- Behavioural reinforcement - rewards for good behaviour, consequences for negative behaviour.
- De-escalation of the situation - talking through with the child.
- Increased supervision by staff/volunteers.
- Use of individual 'contracts' or agreements for their future or continued participation.
- Sanctions or consequences e.g. missing an outing.
- Seeking additional/specialist support through working in partnership with other agencies to ensure a child's needs are met appropriately e.g. referral for support to Children's Social Care, discussion with the child's key worker if they have one, speaking to the child's school about management strategies (all require parental consent unless the child is felt to be 'at risk' or 'in need of protection').
- Temporary or permanent exclusion.

### Should problems arise:

- Do not humiliate or verbally abuse the young person
- Discuss the problem one-to-one, ensure you always have another adult present and never in front of the whole group
- Do not criticise the young person, only their behaviour
- Remind them of consequences/sanctions, employing your own policies, ie 'three strikes and you're out' or second/ final warning etc
- Always give them a choice (and therefore responsibility) if they fail to comply, for how things turn out, ie "If you choose not to follow my instructions, then you are accepting the consequences" or "If you make the right choice .... it would be a really good result for you and the group". Give them some time to make their decision without further discussion.

### Physical Intervention:

The use of physical intervention should always be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent a child injuring themselves or others, or causing serious damage to property. All forms of physical intervention should form part of a broader approach to the management of challenging behaviour.

Physical contact to prevent something happening should always be the result of conscious decision-making and not a reaction. Before physically intervening, the member of staff or volunteer should ask themselves 'Is this the only option in order to manage the situation and ensure safety?'. It is good practice to ensure that if you have to physically intervene in a situation with a child/young person, it is in the least restrictive way necessary to prevent them from getting hurt, and used only after all other strategies have been exhausted. Studies have shown that, where this is the case, children and young people understand and accept the reasons for the intervention.

For your own protection:

- **Never be alone with a young person /Keep a written record of any specific behavioural incidents/Note the names of witnesses to such incidents**