



# Welfare, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidance

Reviewed by Burnham Week Limited Committee,

**April 2021**

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# **1. POLICY**

## **Introduction**

Burnham Week Limited takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in its care. "The welfare of the child is paramount" (Children Act 1989).

Burnham Week Limited is committed to safeguarding, from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or bullying, children taking part in its activities. We recognise that the safety, welfare and needs of the child are paramount and that all children, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual or gender identity or social status, have a right to protection from discrimination and abuse.

The child's experience of the sport is our priority. We aim to 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.

Burnham Week Limited is committed to having a formal child protection policy, which is reviewed annually by the Committee.

## **Definition of a child**

In the context of this document, 'child' refers to any young person under the age of 18 as defined in the Children Act 1989. 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.

## **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults or Adults at Risk**

Many of the safeguarding principles in these guidelines apply to 'vulnerable adults' or 'adults at risk' (Care Act 2014), but the statutory procedures to be followed in the case of a concern are different. [The Safeguarding Adults Policy and Guidance is available on the website].

It is the policy of Burnham Week Limited to safeguard children and young people taking part in boating from physical, sexual or emotional harm. Burnham Week Limited will take all reasonable steps to ensure that, through appropriate procedures and training, children participating in Burnham Week activities do so in a safe environment.

## **The aims of this policy are to:**

- Safeguard children, both on and off the water.
- Assure parents that their children are as safe as they are when taking part in any other sport or leisure activity.
- Raise awareness amongst all of our members, volunteers or employees so that they know what to do if they are concerned about a child, whether the concern relates to the child's welfare at our club or something happening outside the sport that a child discloses to someone they trust at our club.
- Protect coaches, instructors, officials or volunteer helpers by giving them some practical, common sense guidelines to avoid placing themselves in situations where they are open to allegations, which could seriously damage their lives and careers.
- Protect Burnham Week Limited, by showing that we have taken 'all reasonable steps' to provide a safe environment.

## **Burnham Week Limited actively seeks to:**

- Create a safe and welcoming environment, both on and off the water, where children can have fun and develop their skills and confidence.
- Support and encourage affiliated clubs and class associations to implement similar policies.

- Recognise that safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone, not just those who work with children.
- Ensure that Burnham Week Limited-organised events are run to the highest possible safety standards.
- Be prepared to review its ways of working to incorporate best practice.

**We will:**

- Treat all children with respect and celebrate their achievements.
- Carefully recruit and select all employees, contractors and volunteers.
- Respond swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected or actual child abuse.

This policy relates to all employees, contractors and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults in the course of their Burnham Week Limited duties. It will be kept under annual review. All relevant concerns, allegations, complaints and their outcome should be notified to the Burnham Week Limited Safeguarding Co-ordinator.

## **2. GOOD PRACTICE**

### **Culture**

Burnham Week Limited aims to have a culture 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 will not 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**

Burnham Week Limited aims to plan 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.

#### **It is important that adults:**

- Avoid spending any significant amount of 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.
- 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.
- Do not help a child who is having difficulty with a wetsuit or buoyancy aid; ask them to ask a friend or their own parent/carer to help whenever possible.
- Make sure you are in full view of others, preferably another adult if you do have to help a child.

#### **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 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.

### **Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers**

This policy is available on the website. It is the Welfare Officer's responsibility to ensure staff and volunteers read and understand it along with the procedures relating to child protection including recognising signs of abuse.

### **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 will not be able to sail any more if they report the carer.
- Deaf children 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 trans gender 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 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. Under the Government's 'Prevent' strategy those working with young people should be aware and recognise the warning signs.

### **Bullying**

If a child alleges bullying or shows signs of being bullied, this must be investigated. Burnham Week Limited has adopted the RYA's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Children and young people should be made aware of the Code of Conduct and Anti-Bullying Policy.

## **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 [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding), under RYA Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidelines.

## **Parental Responsibility and Liability**

Parents play an essential part in their children's participation, but occasionally their desire to see their child achieve success can put the child under too much pressure or give rise to friction between families or interference in coaching.

**The Code of Conduct** should be read by everyone involved, whether they are participants, parents, staff or volunteers, so that everyone is aware of their responsibilities towards each other and appropriate action can be taken if anyone's behaviour fails to meet the expectations set out in the Code.

Although Burnham Week Limited has a duty of care, and particularly to children and 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.

## **Changing Rooms and Showers**

Each Club providing these facilities during Burnham Week are designed to allow both adults and children to shower and dress in reasonable privacy. Access to the toilets is possible without walking through the shower/changing areas. There are separate male and female changing rooms but disabled access is limited. It is preferable for adults to stay away from the changing rooms while there are children there. Sometimes this is unavoidable because adults are sailing at the same times, or the sites are 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. A poster is displayed in these areas in each club as a reminder.

Bullying can be an issue in changing rooms and showers. If a child alleges bullying or shows signs of being bullied, this must be investigated.

If it is essential, in an emergency, for a male to enter a female changing area or vice versa, it is advised that another adult of the opposite gender accompany them.

## **First Aid and Medical Treatment**

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

## **Communicating with Young People**

The RYA's Youth Racing Communication Policy and The Scout Association has some helpful guidance on using e-mails and text messaging when communicating with young people, available at [www.scouts.org.uk/safeguarding](http://www.scouts.org.uk/safeguarding)

## **Photography**

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

**There are two key principles to bear in mind:**

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

- A consent form is 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.

- Burnham Week Limited does not allow a photographer to have unsupervised access to children at the event or to arrange photo sessions outside the event.
- Care must be taken in the storage of and access to images. An image is personal data and should be treated in accordance with your organisation's Data Privacy Policy.

## **2. When publishing images, it is vital to make sure they are appropriate and that Burnham Week Limited does 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 the event is recognising the achievement of an individual sailor and wish to publish their name with their photo, we will NOT publish any other information (e.g. where they live, name of school, other hobbies and interests) that would enable someone to contact, befriend or start to 'groom' the child.
- children 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 Burnham Week Limited'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 recording of images or video using any type of camera or photographic equipment, including cameras on smart phones and tablets and action cameras used on the water, should not be permitted in showers or changing areas in any circumstances. Such use by children and young people should be regarded as a form of bullying.

### **Communication and Images**

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 children and 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.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

### **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 smart phones. See the links above for guidance.

### **Website and Social Media**

Burnham Week Limited promotes and encourages sailors to interact through the website.

We aim to:

- Follow the RYA guidance on the use of images of children (see Photography section above)
- 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.

## Children and Young People

Children and 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'.

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## 3. PROCEDURES

**This section is primarily for our Welfare Officer, but everyone should be aware of the procedures to follow if there are concerns (see flowcharts attached to this policy).**

### Welfare Officer

Although everyone has a role to play in ensuring that children are safe, Burnham Week Limited has recommended that a designated individual has specific responsibility for implementing our policy, and acts as the point of contact to receive information and advice.

**The Welfare Officer's name and contact details are on the front of this policy.**

We aim to ensure that our Welfare Officer is someone with relevant knowledge and experience, who is perceived as being approachable and having a child-focused approach. He/she will be provided with training where appropriate.

He/she doesn't need to be an expert – that is the role of Children's Services and the Police.

### The Welfare Officer roles are to:

- Inform the RYA Safeguarding Manager of their appointment.
- Maintain this policy and procedures.
- Advise the Burnham Week Limited Committee on safeguarding and child protection issues.
- Maintain contact details for local Children's Services and Police.

### If there is a concern, the Welfare Officer will:

- 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 Commodore.
- Keep Burnham Week Limited and RYA informed as necessary.

A complaint, concern or allegation may come from a number of sources: the child, their parents, or someone else. It may involve the behaviour of one of our 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 these concerns and report them to the Welfare Officer who will take the appropriate action.

## 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 that 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.
- Follow the Burnham Week Limited child protection procedures.

### Never:

- Rush into actions that may be inappropriate.
- Make promises you cannot keep (e.g. you will not tell anyone).
- Ask more questions than are necessary for you to be sure that you need to act.
- Take sole responsibility – consult someone else (ideally the Club 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 because 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.** The relevant authorities and the RYA Safeguarding and Equality Manager should be informed. If the alleged abuse took place outside the event, 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 in Burnham Week Limited other than the person who received or initiated the allegation and, if different, the person in charge.

## Data retention

Confidential information must be processed, stored and destroyed in accordance with Burnham Week Limited 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 Burnham Week Limited 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 person tries to re-join later or a further allegation is made about them.

### **Safe recruitment**

It is imperative that Burnham Week Limited carries out a level of checking proportionate to the role and the level of risk involved and in line with relevant statutory requirements.

#### **Burnham Week Limited will check:**

- Paid staff [if applicable] and/or volunteers.
- New applicants/or volunteers.
- Those with specific responsibilities (e.g. instructor, child protection/welfare officer, coach, head of cadet section/Junior coordinator) or anyone who regularly helps with junior/youth activity.

#### **The level of check to be conducted for each category will be:**

- References – Verbal Or Written.
- Self-declaration where applicable (normally used at the application stage and followed up by a full disclosure at the offer stage).
- Enhanced criminal records disclosure for paid positions [if applicable] and if felt appropriate volunteer positions. (and barred list check if appropriate).

**Note:**

*It is a criminal offence under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 for a Barred individual to work in regulated activity, for an organisation to knowingly allow someone who has been Barred to work in regulated activity/regulated work, and for an organisation to fail to make a referral to the DBS/ if they have dismissed someone from regulated activity/regulated work for harming or posing a risk of harm to a vulnerable person*

#### **In some circumstance's it may be appropriate to ensure competency by:**

Providing appropriate induction, training, mentoring or supervision to cover any areas where a volunteer may lack experience or confidence and familiarise them with Burnham Week Limited operating procedures.

Providing the volunteer with a clear job or role description so that they understand what the work involves.

Drawing up a 'person specification' listing the key qualifications, skills, experience and qualities you are looking for.

Checking that the volunteer is competent for the role, e.g. they hold an appropriate and valid RYA instructor certificate, coach qualification or powerboat/safety boat certificate if deemed necessary by the committee or that they are suitably experienced.

Putting procedures in place which may deter anyone with a criminal record related to their suitability to work with children from proceeding any further.

Asking the applicant to apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure (with Barred List check if appropriate) or Protection of Vulnerable Groups scheme membership before confirming their appointment, (see note below).

## **Criminal Records Disclosures (DBS/AccessNI) and Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme**

*Organisations affiliated to or recognised by the RYA can access the DBS. Access NI or PVG processes through the RYA which is a registered Umbrella/ Intermediary Body. The procedure varies according to the home country and legal jurisdiction in which your organisation is located (see below). The service is free for volunteers. A fee is payable to the DBS/AccessNI/ Disclosure Scotland in the case of paid staff. Information is available from the RYA website [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding) or contact [disclosure@rya.org.uk](mailto:disclosure@rya.org.uk)*

*DBS checks, Access NI checks and the PVG Scheme should only be used in conjunction with the other checks listed above and not relied on in isolation. A clear Disclosure is not a guarantee that the applicant has never done anything wrong, it only shows whether they have been caught.*

*Although it is not a legal requirement for voluntary sports clubs or private employers to ask their staff or volunteers to apply for Disclosures, it is an offence to allow someone to undertake regulated activity/work if they have been barred from working with the relevant vulnerable group. There is a risk that determined known offenders who are no longer able to work undetected in the statutory sector may move into the voluntary and sports sectors. If groups from local schools come to your site, a school may request that you check your instructors or volunteers so that they are subject to the same level of scrutiny as the children's teachers.*

*An individual is only eligible to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure, which will disclose their 'spent' as well as their 'unspent' record, if they will be in a position listed under the exceptions to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, i.e. one that involves regularly teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising persons under 18. They can only be required to apply for the additional Barred List check if they will be undertaking 'regulated activity' with children or vulnerable adults as defined under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.*

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## **4.CONFIDENTIALITY**

### **Professional confidentiality**

Confidentiality is an issue which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. The only purpose of confidentiality in this respect is to benefit the child. A club member/volunteer must never guarantee confidentiality to a child nor should they agree with a child to keep a secret, as where there is a child protection concern this must be reported to the Welfare Officer and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

Members/Volunteers will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a "need to know basis" only. Any information shared in this way must be held confidentially to themselves.

### **Records and Monitoring**

All personal information should be treated as confidential, stored securely and only shared with those who need to see it in the course of their duties or to protect children.

When data is no longer relevant, it should be destroyed securely, e.g. by shredding

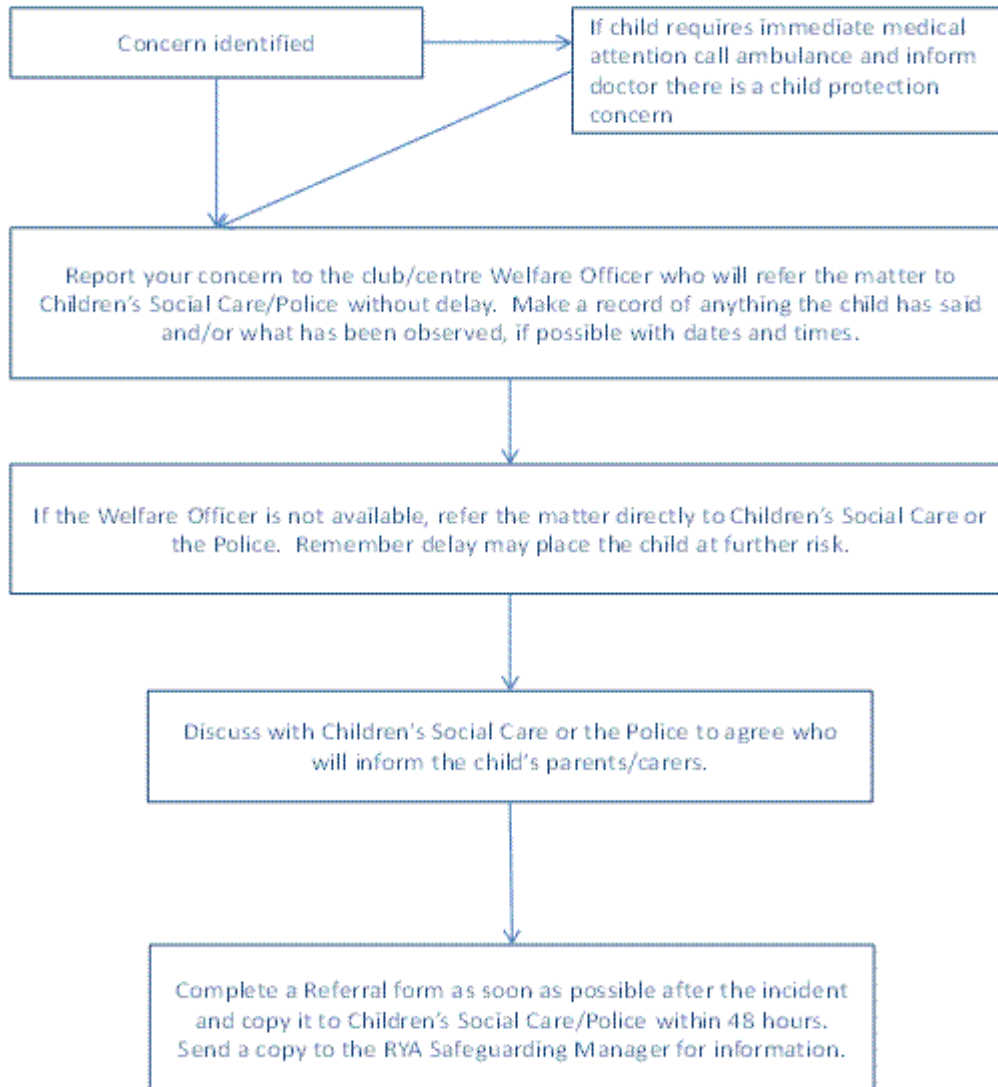
Anyone receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken.

## Useful Contacts For advice and reporting [Revised 2021]

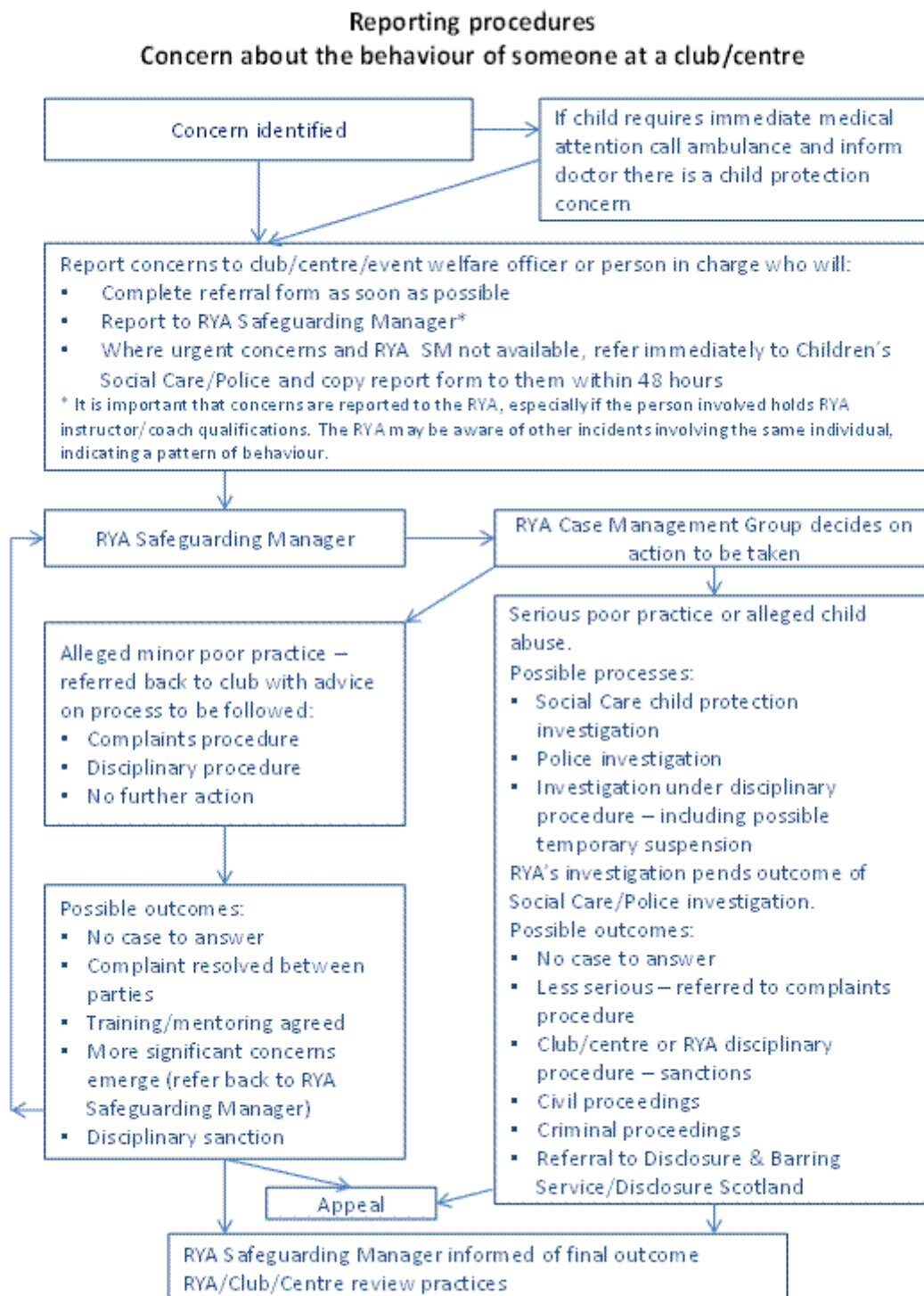
<p><b>Royal Yachting Association</b></p> <p>Safeguarding and Equality Manager          RYA House, Ensign Way          Hamble          Southampton          SO31 4YA          Tel: 023 8060 4104          E-mail: <a href="mailto:safeguarding@rya.org.uk">safeguarding@rya.org.uk</a>          Website: <a href="http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding">www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding</a></p>	<p><b>Social Care Services</b></p> <p>Your local phone book or the website for your County Council or unitary local authority will list numbers for the Children and Families Services, generally with separate numbers for Children’s Social Care and for the Emergency Duty Team (out of hours service)</p>
<p><b>Childline 24 hour free helpline</b></p> <p>0800 1111</p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.childline.org.uk">www.childline.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>MIND – mental health charity</b></p> <p>Tel: 0300 123 3393    Text: 86463</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@mind.org.uk">info@mind.org.uk</a></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.mind.org.uk">www.mind.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>.NSPCC 24 hour free helpline</b></p> <p>For advice on any aspect of children’s welfare</p> <p>0808 800 5000</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)England</b></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.thecpsu.org.uk">www.thecpsu.org.uk</a></p> <p>Tel: 0116 366 5626</p> <p>E-mail: <a href="mailto:cpsu@nspcc.org.uk">cpsu@nspcc.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) – RYA is Registered Body</b></p> <p>Website:  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service</a></p>	<p><b>AccessNI – RYA is Registered Body</b></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni">www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni</a></p>
<p><b>UK Coaching – provide Safeguarding and Protecting Children training</b></p> <p>Website: <a href="http://www.ukcoaching.org">www.ukcoaching.org</a></p>	

## Flowchart 1

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



## Flowchart 2



## Appendix A – What is child abuse?

[Reviewed 2021]

(Based on the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018)

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:

- hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating
- giving children alcohol or inappropriate drugs
- a parent or carer fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately inducing, illness in a child
- 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 (e.g. 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 (e.g. supporting or guiding children) could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Abusive situations may also occur if adults misuse their power and position of trust 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 (e.g. 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 sexually 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.

**Bullying** (not included in 'Working Together' but probably more common in a sport situation than some of the other forms of abuse described above) Bullying (including online bullying, for example via text or social media) 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 is often 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 or physically small, being gay or lesbian, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

Bullying can include:

- physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc.
- name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation or the continual ignoring of individuals
- posting of derogatory or abusive comments, videos or images on social network sites
- racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sectarianism
- sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour
- unwanted physical contact.

**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 (e.g. 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 (e.g. 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 that 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 the Club 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.