

New Forest & District Sailability

Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures Based on the Policy of the RYA

**For further information please refer to the RYA Guidelines at
www.rya.org.uk Information & Advice Child protection**

Policy Statement

The Policy applies to both children and vulnerable adults

It is the policy of New Forest & District Sailability Group to safeguard children and vulnerable adults taking part in boating from physical, sexual or emotional harm. NFDS will take all reasonable steps to ensure that, through appropriate procedures and training the children and vulnerable adults participating in our activities do so in a safe environment. We recognize that the safety and welfare of such people is paramount and that all, whatever their age, gender, disability, culture, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, social status or sexual identity, have a right to protection from abuse.

NFDS 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.
- Recognise that safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone, not just those who work with children.
- Ensure that the NFDS organised training and 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 and vulnerable adults 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 NFDS duties. It will be kept under periodic review. All relevant concerns, allegations, complaints and their outcome should be notified to the NFDS welfare officer.

Group Welfare Officer

The Club Welfare Officers are:

- Gino Manzi 01425 474677 e-mail: gm6153@gmail.com
- Christine Duncan 01425 478709 e-mail: acsduncan@waitrose.com

Volunteers

All Group volunteers whose role brings them into contact with young people and vulnerable adults will be asked to complete an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure form. A criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to acceptance of a volunteer, although any past record of abuse of children or vulnerable adults will result in an automatic bar.

Good Practice

All members of the Group should follow the good practice guidelines attached. (Appendix A) They should be aware of the guidance on recognising abuse. (Appendix B)

Adults are requested not to enter the showers and changing rooms at times when children and vulnerable adults are changing unless accompanied by another adult.

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

Concerns

Anyone who is concerned about the welfare of a young person or vulnerable adult, either outside the sport or within the Group, should inform the Group Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence. If he/she is not available, they should report to the volunteer at the desk who will inform the Group Welfare Officer who will follow the standard procedure.

Any member of the Group failing to comply with this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

Appendix A

Good practice guidelines

When relating this document to New Forest & District Sailability, volunteers must remember that we are here to encourage people of all ages and disabilities to enjoy the sport of sailing. Our prime purpose is NOT to coach for competitions. However, we do encourage people to reach their full potential which may include racing

Culture

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

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse or find it more difficult to express their concerns. For example, a disabled child who relies on a carer to help them get changed may worry that they won't be able to sail any more if they report the carer. A child who has experienced racism may find it difficult to trust an adult from a different ethnic background.

Minimising risk

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

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

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

You should never:

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

It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of both the child (where possible) and their parents/carers. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, parents 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.

Appendix B

CHILD ABUSE

Any reference to a child in this document also refers to a vulnerable adult.

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and often by people they know and trust. It refers to damage done to a child's physical or mental health. Child abuse can take many forms:

Physical abuse where adults or other children:

- physically hurt or injure children (e.g. by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning)
- give children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison
- attempt to suffocate or drown children
- 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.

Neglect includes situations in which adults:

- fail to meet a child's basic physical needs (e.g. for food, water, warm clothing, essential medication)
- consistently leave children alone and unsupervised
- fail or refuse to give children love, affection or attention
- neglect in a sailing situation might also occur if an instructor or coach fails to ensure that children are safe, or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury.

Sexual abuse. Boys and girls are sexually abused when adults (of the same or opposite sex) or other young people use them to meet their own sexual needs. This could include:

- full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, fondling
- showing children pornographic books, photographs or videos, or taking pictures for pornographic purposes
- 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 over young people.

Emotional abuse can occur in a number of ways. For example, where:

- there is a persistent lack of love or affection
- there is constant overprotection which prevents children from socialising
- children are frequently shouted at or taunted
- there is neglect, physical or sexual abuse
- 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.

Bullying 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.

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 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 Child Protection/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.