

Parents' Guide to Youth Sailing

Activities at Weir Wood Sailing club are governed by a set of bye-laws, some aspects of which apply specifically to children. This guide is provided to offer additional advice and guidance to parents whose children sailing at the club. For our purposes, anyone under the age of 18 will be considered as a child.

1. When should children sail?

If not an organised club activity parents should be guided by their own experience and the ability of the child to sail in the conditions. Parents who are inexperienced sailors may of course take advice from the OOD or other experienced sailors, however the ultimate responsibility remains with the parents.

When there is an OOD on duty and red ensign is flying a support boat(s) is available to assist all sailors; however, it should be recognised that the support crew are doing this as a membership duty and not necessarily a qualified safety crew or DBS checked. Therefore, again the ultimate responsibility remains with the parents.

When no OOD is on duty or support boat cover is available, children can sail any time during daylight hours during the months of April to November, but only if directly supervised by a parent, guardian, or nominated responsible adult on and off the water. It is recommended that only those with at least RYA Seamanship Skills or equivalent sail or supervise junior members when no OOD is on duty. Parents are fully responsible for their children's safety and should consider the following;

- What are the conditions like?
- How qualified the supervising adult is to assess the risks?
- What are the true capabilities of the child?
- How long would it take an adult to reach the child in the event of an incident?
- If both the child and the adult on the water got into difficulty, who is on the shore to assist or raise the alarm?

2. Children in Powerboats

Whilst adult members may be required to help with support boat cover as a club duty, it should be remembered that children under the age of 16 may only travel in powerboats in the following circumstances:

- If they are RYA Powerboat 2 qualified and under the supervision of an adult
- As driver, unqualified – under the supervision of a RYA Powerboat instructor
- As a passenger – during formal training or coaching sessions as necessary
- As a passenger – at any other time only if being transported to shore

3. Suitable Clothing

Ensure that your child is wearing appropriate clothing and remember, it is always a few degrees cooler on the water than the shore. Some things to consider;

- Children are likely to get wet - so bring a change for clothes and a towel.
- Wearing a buoyancy aid is a club rule – however make sure it's suitable for the weight and size of the child.

- A wetsuit is great in the summer; but short ones can leave arms and legs exposed on chillier days; so, a windproof top makes a useful addition or alternative. Dry suit is a must for winter sailing as are gloves.
- A warm hat for the winter - a sun hat for summer.
- Make sure that your child is suitably covered in suntan lotion.
- A drink (water is ideal), in a bottle with a piece of cord to tie it in the boat.
- Wet suit boots or old trainers, not flip flops or crocks that will fall off.
- If they wear glasses – a retainer (or piece of string) so they don't get lost.

Children grow fast, so shop around on-line; you don't need to spend a fortune on suitable clothing, at least until they settle into the sport.

4. Health and Wellbeing

Sailing is a physical sport so make sure they have a good breakfast and lunch. For club organised activities, if they have been unwell or have any longer term medical issues, please let the adult in charge know.

5. Club Organised Events

When children are attending an organised training, coaching session or activity the organisers always have a duty of care for their safety and welfare. The adult in charge will require the parents to have completed a registration form and to sign the young person in. The parent/guardian or other responsible adult may be required to stay on site during the organised session for any young person under the age of 14. If the parent/guardian is not required to stay on site a contact telephone number must be given to the adult in charge in case contact is required. At the end of the session the young person must be collected from the organised session and signed out by the parent/guardian and the adult in charge **MUST** be informed.

Formal training or coaching sessions will be delivered by Weir wood Sailing Club in accordance with RYA training centre guidance, and staffed by appropriately qualified and experienced RYA instructors or coaches.

1. Weir wood Sailing Club reserves the right, to cancel bookings at our discretion.
2. The club's youth provision is targeted at sailors between the ages of 8 and 18. Younger children may be allowed to take part at the discretion of the adult in charge of the activity.
3. All sailors, instructors, coaches and parents going out on the water must wear a buoyancy aid and be confident in the water.
4. All children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, signed in at the beginning and collected from the activity at the end of the session.
5. Parents or guardians must also be contactable (for example by mobile phone) for the duration of the session. Some instructors may request that you remain on site for the duration of the session.
6. Neither Weir wood Sailing Club nor any of its members or coaches shall be liable in any way whatsoever in respect of loss or damage to property.
7. Weir wood Sailing Club must be informed, at the time of booking and at arrival, of any medical condition affecting the participant, or of any medication taken by the

participant that could affect their taking part in the session, e.g. asthma, epilepsy, heart conditions. Weir wood Sailing Club reserves the right to not take any young person on the water on medical grounds.

8. All young people may attend a session on the understanding that any instructions or directions given by any member of the instructor team are to be observed. Participants are asked to respect the equipment provided; compensation will be sought from anyone deliberately causing damage to equipment.
9. Weir wood Sailing Club reserves the right to refuse or restrict the use of facilities. The right is also reserved to evict anyone who refuses to comply with the conditions as stipulated, or who behaves inappropriately or, in any way, causes damage or annoyance to any other persons.
10. If any injuries are sustained or damage to valuables occurs, participants are to notify the adult in charge immediately.