

Safeguarding at Club Organised Youth Activities

This procedure is to provide guidance for those running or involved in the provision of club youth activities.

1. Minimising risk

Plan all youth activities to 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, parents, volunteers and coaches.

These common-sense guidelines should be followed by everyone within the club:

- 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 possible;
- If you do have to help a child, make sure you are in full view of others, preferably another adult;
- Restrict communications with young people via mobile phone, e-mail or social media to group communications about organisational matters. If it's essential to send an individual message, copy it to the child's parent or carer.

You should never:

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

It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of both the child (where possible) and their parents/carers. In an emergency which requires this type of help, parents/carers should be informed as soon as possible. In such situations, it is important to ensure that any adult present is sensitive to the child and undertakes personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

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'.

2. Responsibilities of members and volunteers

The adult in charge is required to

- Ensure that parents have completed a registration form;
- On the day of the event ensure that all young people are signed in by either a parent/guardian;
- Ensure that the parent/guardian are informed before the event if they are required to stay on site during the organised session;
- 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;
- Make sure your volunteers are given clear roles and responsibilities, are aware of the club's safeguarding arrangements and are issued with guidelines on good practice and recognising signs of abuse (see What is child abuse?);
- 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.

3. First aid and medical treatment

First aid, provided by an appropriately trained and qualified person, is part of an organisation's normal duty of care.

Consent needs to be obtained before the activity starts in a proper written health/consent form. It is also worth adding that it is implicit in the Children Act 1989 that a consent has no status in law and a medical practitioner can insist upon actual consent from the parent/guardian. However, especially in an emergency, it may be of comfort to them to have a written consent, but that is the only value of a consent form. An example of the type of wording to use is;

"If it becomes necessary for the above named young person to receive medical treatment and I cannot be contacted to authorise this, I hereby give my general consent to any necessary medical treatment and authorise the adult in charge to sign any document required by the hospital authorities."

If a child receives a knock or bump to the head. This adult in charge must ensure that the parent is informed at the end of the session.

If anyone involved in the activity is injured, it must be recorded in the accident book; and if it requires professional medical treatment (hospital, doctor or dentist), an accident report must be completed and passed to the training principal.

4. Youth Instructors

All adults should remain conscious of the fact that an instructor under 18 years old is a youth member. They must be treated as such, supervised at all times and not given adult responsibilities.

5. Organising and hosting events

When hosting an open junior or youth event at your club, liaise with the relevant class association to ensure that all involved in the organisation of the event are operating to similar policies. It should be made clear to all young competitors and their parents that there is someone responsible for their welfare who can be contacted if they have any concerns.

6. Residential Events

Youth members may camp at the site only as part of an on organised club event and subject to the onsite supervision of suitably DBS checked adults. It is recommended that the adult leader team has previous experience of running youth residential events either at the club, or as part of another youth organisation and can demonstrate an understanding of the following;

1. Planning a residential event
 - Ability to draw up a timetable for the planning of the event.
 - Knowledge of the ratios of adults to young people required.
 - Have an understanding of how to manage a residential event and of the issues that may arise.
2. Ensuring the effective administration of an event
 - Knowledge of the information to send to parents/carers before the event.
 - Knowledge of the information to collect from parents/carers before the event.
 - Ability to create a budget and calculate overall costs and individual fees.
 - Put in place arrangements to contact the parents/carers during the residential experience.
3. Preparing and co-ordinating a programme of activities
 - Ability to identify which resources, including human, material and financial, are needed throughout the event.
 - Ability to tailor the programme to the needs and abilities of the young people attending and the facilities available.
 - Ability to provide a flexible programme with alternative activities for adverse weather conditions.
4. Choosing and preparing the event team
 - Understand the Rules surrounding DBS checks for adults working with young people.
 - Ability to identify the size of the event team needed and the skills they require.
 - Ability to allocate roles to the event team based on their skills and experience.
 - Ability to manage the team and keep them fully briefed and up to date.
5. Choosing, organising and maintaining the right equipment
 - Ability to produce an equipment list appropriate to the event and facilities.
 - Understand the need to check all equipment prior to departure to allow time for replacement or repair.
6. Ensuring the health, happiness and safety of self and others
 - Ability to work within the capabilities and limits of both the adults and the young people in their care.
 - Knowledge of and ability to complete risk assessments.
 - Knowledge of how to control use of medical equipment, medication and first aid equipment.
 - Knowledge of how to find the emergency procedures of the venue.
 - Knowledge of the steps to take in the case of an accident and reporting procedures.
 - Understand the need to maintain personal hygiene and the need for privacy.
 - Ability to deal appropriately with issues such as home sickness and bed wetting.

Arrangements for residential events are subject to prior approved of the club training committee.

7. Away events

It is essential that those accompanying young people to away events or training camps, and the competitors themselves, have a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and the conduct expected of them.

8. Communicating with young people

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 young people to develop some understanding of how they use technology, the risks involved and how to keep them safe.

When promoting the club and encouraging your members to interact online, there are a few issues to bear in mind in relation to children and young people:

- Remember you are in a position of trust as a volunteer.
- Remember that some sites have an age restriction (i.e. Facebook has a minimum age of 13 years)
- Conduct yourself in an appropriate way as you would face to face - be aware of what you say and how you say it.
- Don't engage in one-to-one conversations with young people via chat facilities or instant messaging - this is the same as going into a private room with a young person and closing the door.
- Do not provide personal details about young people on your website or social networking group (this includes school name, email address, ID, etc).
- Always ensure you have parental permission to use any photos of young people and only use their first names on any caption.
- Only use appropriate photos on your site, the sort that you would be happy putting on a public notice board - remember that everyone can view them.
- If you are concerned about the way a young person is attempting to contact you, report it immediately to the club safeguarding officer.
- If you need to email or text young people, always copy the message to another adult from your Group or Unit and if sending e-mails to groups of people use the 'BC' facility to avoid sharing e-mail addresses.
- Don't use your personal social networking accounts to communicate with young people.
- Monitor places where interaction occurs including walls, discussions boards, comments on photos, tagging of pictures and 'Group' or 'Fan Pages'.
- Only set up pages for events, activities or groups for which you are responsible.
- If you sign yourself up to social networking sites you need to be aware that content is speedily updated. Photos can be tagged and posted on your account.
- Use separate profiles and communication routes for email or social networking to keep contact with any young people and your private life separate.
- ALL communications with children under 12 should be done through their parents or carers, not directly.

9. Photography, images and video

Publishing articles, photos and videos in club newsletters, on websites, in local newspapers etc. is an excellent way of recognising young people's achievements and of promoting your organisation and the sport. 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:

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

- A consent form could be included with the event entry form

- Any photographer or member of the press or media attending an event should always wear identification and should be fully briefed in advance on your expectations regarding his/her behaviour and the issues covered by these guidelines.
- Do not allow a photographer to have unsupervised access to young people at the event or to arrange photo sessions outside the event.
- Consent should 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.
- Care must be taken in the storage of and access to images.

When publishing images, make sure they are appropriate and that you do 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 prize winners, without identifying them by name.
- If you are recognising the achievement of an individual sailor and wish to publish their name with their photo, DO NOT publish any other information (e.g. where they live, name of school, other hobbies and interests) that could enable someone to contact, befriend or start to 'groom' the child.
- Ensure that the young people 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 organisation's child protection/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 use of cameras or smart phones/tablets in changing areas should not be permitted in any circumstances. Such use by young people should be regarded as a form of bullying.