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**Child Welfare Policy**

**CS-CP-001**

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Related Documents

| Document | Description |
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| RYA Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines February 2020 | Updated Appendix A1 10.02.20  Minor amendments to flowcharts 1 & 2 |
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Document Reviewers

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Definition

Under the Children's Act 1989, Chesil Sailability for the purposes of it’s Child Safeguarding Policy deems anyone under the age of 18 be considered as a child.

The Groups Commitment:

* 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 Group-organised training, sailing and events are run to the highest possible safety standards.
* Be prepared to review its ways of working to incorporate best practice.
* 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.
* Regularly review safeguarding procedures and practices in the light of experience or to take account of legislative, social or technological changes.

This policy relates to all members and volunteers who work with children in the course of their Group duties. All relevant concerns, allegations, complaints and their outcome should be notified to the Group Welfare Officer.

1. Policy Statement

Chesil Sailability is committed to safeguarding children taking part in its activities from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or bullying. We recognise that the safety, welfare and needs of the child are paramount and that any child, 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.

(Organisation name) takes all reasonable steps to ensure that, through safe recruitment, appropriate operating procedures and training, it offers a safe and fun environment to children taking part in its events and activities.

For the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child. All members of the Club should be aware of the policy.

2. Group Welfare Officer

The Group Welfare Officer is :

Cathie Williams - email : welfareofficer@chesilsailability.org.uk

3. Volunteers

All volunteers whose role brings them into regular contact with young people will be asked to provide references. The Club Welfare Officer and those regularly instructing, coaching or supervising young people will also be asked to apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure, with Barred List check if appropriate.

4. Good Practice

All members of the Group should follow the Group’s good practice guidelines **(CS-CP-002).** Those working with young people should be aware of the guidance on recognising abuse **(see Appendix A1)** and grooming **(see Appendix A2)**

Adults are requested not to enter the showers and changing rooms at times when children are changing before or after junior/youth training or racing. If this is unavoidable it is advised that they are accompanied by another adult.

Members accept that they may be photographed and/or videotaped participating in Chesil Sailability activities and they consent to the taking of such images and to the use, reuse, publication and replication of such images in any media, in conjunction with the members name or not, without compensation and without the member’s approval of such media or any use thereof. Parents and visitors should be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state their purpose for photography/filming. If the Group publishes images of children, 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.

5. Concerns

Anyone who is concerned about a young member’s welfare, either outside the sport or within the Group, should inform the Group Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence. The Group Welfare Officer will follow the attached procedures **(see Flowcharts 1 and 2).**

Any member of the Group failing to comply with the Child Safeguarding policy may be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Disciplinary Policy.

6. 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’.

Appendix A1 – What is child abuse?

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 (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 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 (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 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 eg. 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. Please refer to Chesil Sailability Harassment Policy.

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 (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/Safeguarding 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.

Appendix A2 - 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

[What Parents Need to Know About Sexual Grooming | NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/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.

Flowchart 1

Reporting procedures

Concern about a child outside the sport environment

Concern identified about the child

Report your concern to the Chesil Sailability Welfare Officer or a Trustee who will refer the matter to Children’s Social Care/Police without delay. Make a record of anything the child has said and/or what has been observed, if possible with dates and times.

If the Welfare Officer or a Trustee is not available, refer the matter directly to Children’s Social Care or the Police. Remember delay may place the child at further risk.

Discuss with Children’s Social Care or the Police to agree who will inform the parents/carers.

Complete a Referral form as soon as possible after the incident and copy it to Children’s Social Care/Police within 48 hours.

Send a copy to the RYA Safeguarding Manager for information.

If the child requires urgent medical attention, call an ambulance and inform the doctor that there is a child protection concern

If you are uncertain what to do at any stage, contact the RYA’s Safeguarding Manager on 023 8060 4104

or the NSPCC free 24 hour helpline 0808 800 5000.

Flowchart 2

Reporting procedures

Concern about the behaviour of someone at Chesil Sailability

Concerns identified

If child requires immediate medical attention call ambulance and inform doctor there is a child protection concern

Report incident/concerns to Chesil Sailability Welfare Officer, Trustee or person in charge who will:

* complete a referral form as soon as possible after the incident
* report to the RYA Safeguarding Manager
* where urgent concerns and RYA SM not available, refer immediately to Children’s Social Care\*/Police and copy referral form to them within 48 hours

RYA Case Management Group decides on action to be taken

Alleged minor poor practice –Referred back to Chesil Sailability with advice on process to be followed:

- Complaints procedure

- Disciplinary procedure

- No further action

Serious poor practice or alleged child abuse.

Possible processes:

* Social Care child protection investigation
* Police investigation
* Investigation under disciplinary procedures – including possible temporary suspension

RYA’s investigation pends outcome of Social Care/Police investigation

Possible outcomes:

* No case to answer
* Less serious – referred to complaints procedure
* Chesil Sailability or RYA disciplinary procedure – sanctions
* Civil proceedings
* Criminal proceedings
* Referral to Disclosure and Barring Service

Appeal

RYA Safeguarding Manager

RYA Safeguarding Manager informed of final outcome.

RYA/Chesil Sailability reviews practices

Possible outcomes:

* No case to answer
* Complaint resolved with agreement between parties
* Training/mentoring agreed
* More significant concerns emerge (refer back to RYA Safeguarding Manager)
* Disciplinary sanction