



## **SHEARWATER SAILING CLUB CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT**

As defined in the Children Act 1989, for the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child. The policy also applies to vulnerable adults.

**It is the policy of Shearwater Sailing Club to safeguard children and young people taking part in sailing from physical, sexual or emotional harm. Shearwater Sailing Club will take all reasonable steps to ensure that, through appropriate procedures, children participating in SSC activities do so in a safe environment. We recognise that the safety and welfare of the child is paramount and that all children, whatever their age, gender, disability, culture, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, social status or sexual identity, have a right to protection from abuse.**

Shearwater Sailing Club 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 SSC 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 with respect and celebrate their achievements.
- Carefully select any volunteers for roles specifically relating to the provision of training or events for children.
- Respond swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected or actual child abuse.

This policy relates to all club members and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults in the course of their Shearwater Sailing Club duties. It will be kept under periodic review. All relevant concerns, allegations, complaints and their outcome should be notified to the Shearwater Sailing Club Welfare Officer.



## **Shearwater Sailing Club Child Protection Policy and Procedures**

**1.1** Date approved by committee: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2008

**1.2** Policy Operation date: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2008

**1.3** Policy review date: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2009 and annually thereafter

Updates: 03/07/17 Name of club welfare officer amended (same person)

### **2.1** Purpose of policy:

- To protect children, both on and off the water.
- To assure parents that their children are as safe at Shearwater Sailing Club as they are when taking part in any other sport or leisure activity.
- To raise awareness amongst all members, so that they know what to do if they are concerned about a child, whether the concern relates to the child's welfare at the club or outside the sport.
- To protect 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.
- To protect Shearwater Sailing Club, by showing that as a club we have taken 'all reasonable steps' to provide a safe environment.

### **3.1** Scope of policy:

For the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child. This policy also applies to vulnerable adults. All members of the Club should be aware of the policy.

### **4.1 Club Welfare Officer**

The Club Welfare Officer is: Margaret Pell

Telephone: 01373 462549

Email: mgtpell@hotmail.com

## **5.1 Children to be accompanied at all times**

A parent or other responsible adult must accompany children whilst they are at the club at all times. Children must not be left at the club or on the water, unless arrangements have been made for an appropriate adult to take responsibility for the child's welfare.

## **5.2 Volunteers**

All Club volunteers whose role within the club at any time specifically includes instructing, coaching or supervising young people on behalf of the club will be asked to apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure.

If the volunteer is **currently** a registered volunteer or instructor with West Wiltshire Youth Sailing Association and this check has been carried out by that organisation it will be accepted that the volunteer is a suitable person.

**5.3 Duty Team:** The club relies upon its members to provide a duty team to run racing events as published in the annual fixture list. These events are open to all club members including members and visitors who may be children. The duty team usually comprises an Officer of the day, two assistants and one or more rescue boat drivers. It is not reasonable to undertake Criminal Records Disclosure checks, as this would involve checking practically all club members. However, all duty team and club members should follow the guidelines and good practice advice laid out in this policy.

## **6.1 Good Practice**

All members of the Club should follow the good practice guidelines attached (see *Appendix A*).

Those working with young people should be aware of the guidance on recognising abuse (see *Appendix B*).

**6.2** 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 recommended that another adult accompany them.

**6.3** The Club will seek written consent from the child and their parents/carers before taking photos or video at an event or training session or publishing such images. Parents and spectators should be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state their purpose for photography/filming. If the Club 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 Club Welfare Officer.

## **7.1 Concerns**

Anyone who is concerned about a young member's welfare, either outside the sport or within the Club, should inform the Club Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence. The Club Welfare Officer will follow the procedures published in the current RYA Child Protection Policy and Guidelines.

If the Club Welfare Officer is not available then the Commodore should be informed and he or she will take the appropriate steps.



## **Appendix A**

### **Shearwater Sailing Club Guidelines for Instructors, Coaches, Volunteers and Duty Team Members – Good Practice Guide**

This guide only covers the essential points of good practice when working with children and young people. You should also read the organisation's Child Protection Policy and Procedures which are available for reference at all times.

- 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.

#### **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 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 – What is child abuse?

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 (eg. 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 (eg. 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 (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 over young people.

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

- there is 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 (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 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.