

WSC Safeguarding Policy, Practices and Procedures

17 April 2023

Preamble

This document is the WSC policy. It is supported and implemented also by [other documents](#):

- * Cadet membership application form
- * Cadet volunteer application form
- * WSC volunteer self-disclosure form
- * Cadet procedures document
- * What is child abuse (RYA guidelines appendix A)

Policy Statement

Wivenhoe Sailing Club is committed to safeguarding children taking part in its activities both on and off the water 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.

WSC 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.

The child's experience of the sport is our priority. We will create a safe and welcoming environment, both on and off the water, where children can have fun and develop their skills and confidence. We will treat all children with respect, celebrate their achievements and listen to their views and experiences.

WSC is also committed to protect instructors 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, and has this policy to protect the organisation, by showing that WSC has taken 'all reasonable steps' to provide a safe environment. For the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a 'child', as defined by The Children Act 1989. All members of the Club should be aware of the policy.

Club Welfare Officer

The Club Welfare Officer, responsible for implementing the Club's policy, is

Bruce Anderson mobile: 07710 981329 email: welfare@wivenhoesailingclub.org

Good Practice

All members of the Club should follow these good practice guidelines, and also be aware of the guidance on recognising abuse (see Appendix A)

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.

The Club will seek written consent from parents/carers before taking photos or video of a child 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.

Volunteers

All Club members whose role brings them into regular contact with young people, generally via the Cadet Section, will be asked to complete an application form (to be renewed annually) and a volunteer self-disclosure form.

These people and the Club Welfare Officer must apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure, with Barred List check. Applications will be reviewed by the Cadet leader, and these records will be kept by the Cadet leader and copied to the Commodore.

Concerns

Anyone who is concerned about a young member's or participant's welfare, either outside the sport or within the Club, should inform the Club Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence.

Any member of the Club failing to comply with the Safeguarding policy or any relevant Codes of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action.

Procedures and guidelines

1. Designated Person

The Club Welfare Officer is the "Designated Person" responsible for implementing the Club's policy. Their responsibilities include:

- * Maintaining up-to-date policy and procedures, compatible with the RYA's.*
- * Ensuring that relevant volunteers are aware of and follow the procedures, including those for safe recruitment*
- * Advising the general committee on safeguarding and child protection issues.*
- * Maintaining contact details for local Children's Services and Police.*

If there is a concern, the designated person would:

- * Be the first point of contact for any concerns or allegations, from children or adults, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained in all cases.*
- * Decide on the appropriate action to be taken, in line with the organisation's procedures and in conjunction with the Cadet Leader and Commodore.*
- * Keep the RYA informed as necessary*

Everyone in the organisation should know who the Welfare Officer is and how to contact them. This information is on the club website and on the noticeboard.

2. Recruitment and training of Cadet volunteers

We will undertake the following checks in the recruitment of volunteers:

- * Ascertain the person's suitability from information provided in the volunteer application form and the volunteer self-disclosure form.*
- * Make sure the person will not endanger others through incompetence in whatever roles they have - in the clubhouse, the dinghy park, sailing or in the rescue boat - and provide mentoring and coaching, where needed.*
- * Make sure the volunteer is familiar with this document, with the appendix on 'What is Child Abuse', and with the RYA guidelines.*
- * Perform an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure and Barred List check for all Cadet helpers*

3. Good practice

Culture

It is important to develop a culture within the club 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.

Minimising risk

Avoid situations where abuse could take place, or rumours or accusations could be based

- 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
- Restrict communications with young people via mobile phone, e-mail or social media to group communications about organisational matters. If it is 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 situation 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.

Confidentiality and data storage

All personal information, including Disclosure information, is treated as confidential, stored securely and only shared with those who need to see it in the course of their duties or to protect children, in accordance with the DBS Codes of Conduct and the WSC's Data Privacy Policy.

Safeguarding Training

WSC ensures that all volunteers working with children have undertaken training appropriate to their role. This may be through formal training, an online course, induction and mentoring and/or continuing professional development.

Further guidance

[RYA Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines](#) (RYA website)