

Wivenhoe Sailing Club Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

This document contains both Wivenhoe Sailing Club's safeguarding policy (our commitments and expectations) and the safeguarding procedures to follow if you have a concern. For ease of use, it is split into Part A (Policy) and Part B (Procedures).

Wivenhoe Sailing Club is committed to safeguarding and promoting a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone who takes part in club activities, both on and off the water.

WSC recognises that it has additional safeguarding duties towards children and young people, and towards adults at risk and takes appropriate action whenever there is a concern about a person's welfare or safety.

We aim to ensure that everyone can enjoy sailing and related activities free from abuse, neglect, bullying, harassment or harm.

WSC does not rely on labelling individuals as "adults at risk". Safeguarding action is triggered whenever there is a concern that an adult may be unable to protect themselves from harm, abuse or neglect, or may be at risk due to their circumstances at that time.

Part A – Safeguarding Policy

Policy objectives

- 1 Safeguarding policy statement**
 - 1.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at Wivenhoe Sailing Club (WSC).
 - 1.2 We will treat all participants with respect and will not tolerate abuse, neglect, bullying, harassment or discrimination.
 - 1.3 We will take all reasonable steps to minimise risk through safer recruitment, clear procedures and appropriate training.
 - 1.4 We will respond appropriately and promptly to any safeguarding concern, working with the RYA Safeguarding Team and statutory agencies where needed.
 - 1.5 This policy is adopted by the General Committee reviewed annually (and after any significant incident), including checking that Welfare Officer details, referral contact numbers and website/signage links remain accurate.

2 Purpose and scope

- 2.1 This document sets out WSC's approach to safeguarding, including who it applies to, roles and responsibilities, and what to do if you have a concern.
- 2.2 It applies to all members, volunteers, contractors and visitors taking part in, or supporting, WSC activities.
- 2.3 For this policy, a child is anyone under 18 (Children Act 1989). An adult at risk is an adult who may be unable to safeguard themselves because of their care and support needs (Care Act 2014).
- 2.4 This policy is delivered through: clear roles and accountability; safer recruitment and induction for volunteers; visible safeguarding information and reporting routes; training and briefings; risk assessment and supervision arrangements for activities and events; and prompt recording, reporting and follow-up of concerns.
- 2.5 Safeguarding information, including how to raise a concern and who to contact, is displayed and accessible to members and visitors. This includes (as a minimum): named Welfare Officer and Deputy contact details (poster on the club noticeboard and on the website); a simple "What to do if you are worried" summary (including emergency guidance); and links to the club's safeguarding policies and procedures online.

3 Safer recruitment and volunteering

- 3.1 WSC welcomes new members and volunteers, but no one may volunteer in cadet/youth activity (or any role involving regular responsibility for children/young people or adults at risk) until they have completed the club's safer recruitment and induction steps. These steps include: role clarity; safeguarding induction/briefing; agreeing to the Code of Conduct; and any eligibility-based checks (including DBS where applicable). Occasional/one-off helpers are supervised and are not placed in one-to-one situations.
- 3.2 **Training and briefing expectations:**
 - Welfare Officer / Deputy and officers likely to deputise for them (for example the Commodore, Rear Commodore and Vice Commodore): role-appropriate safeguarding training, completed on appointment and refreshed at least every three years.
 - Cadet/youth leads, regular instructors and volunteers working regularly with children or adults at risk: safeguarding induction plus periodic refresher/briefing.
 - Other relevant officers and volunteers (for example the Secretary and Sailing Secretary): safeguarding awareness appropriate to their role.
 - All members: safeguarding basics signposted (how to raise a concern and who to contact).

Training records will be maintained by the Welfare Officer, with administrative support from the Secretary where needed.

4 Key safeguarding roles and contacts

- 4.1 Club Welfare Officer (CWO): welfare@wivenhoesailingclub.org.
- 4.2 If the CWO is unavailable, report concerns to the Deputy CWO, the Commodore, or another appropriately trained Flag Officer / senior person in charge of the activity or event (for example the Cadet Lead or Event Lead).
- 4.3 The CWO leads on safeguarding at WSC but does not have sole responsibility; all members and volunteers have a duty to act on concerns and report them.
- 4.4 The CWO's role includes: being the club's first point of contact for safeguarding concerns; maintaining up-to-date safeguarding procedures compatible with the RYA's guidance; advising the committee; ensuring relevant volunteers are aware of and follow procedures (including safer recruitment/induction); maintaining local referral contact details; keeping appropriate confidential records; and deciding appropriate action in conjunction with the Commodore / Person in Charge. WSC appoints a Deputy Welfare Officer to ensure cover when the CWO is unavailable.
- 4.5 Where safeguarding concerns are raised, the Club's Safeguarding Policy will be followed and may run alongside (or, where necessary, take priority over) the disciplinary process.

5 Responsibilities

- 5.1 General Committee: overall accountability for safeguarding and ensuring this policy is implemented effectively.
- 5.2 Commodore and officers: ensure safeguarding is embedded in club activities and that concerns are acted on promptly.
- 5.3 Instructors, coaches, cadet/youth leads, the Sailing Secretary and relevant volunteers: follow the club's codes of conduct and procedures; work within safe boundaries; and report concerns immediately.
- 5.4 Parents/Carers: remain responsible for their child unless the child is taking part in an organised WSC activity where supervision has been formally accepted by WSC (e.g., a cadet session).
- 5.5 All members and visitors: behave appropriately, respect others, and support a culture where concerns can be raised without fear of reprisal.

6 Safer recruitment and DBS checks

- 6.1 WSC is run by volunteers. We use safer recruitment for any volunteer role that involves responsibility for, or regular contact with, children or adults at

- risk. This includes a clear role outline, appropriate induction and supervision and DBS checks only where the role is eligible and required.
- 6.2 WSC will only request DBS checks where the role is eligible under DBS rules. Where eligible, the level of check required will be based on the role and duties and may include barred list checks where the role meets the legal definition of regulated activity.
 - 6.3 Where a DBS check is not eligible or not required, WSC may use other safeguards such as annual self-declaration/self-disclosure, membership/role suitability checks, additional supervision, and clear boundaries for the role, in line with RYA guidance and relevant legislation.
 - 6.4 DBS and safeguarding information will be handled confidentially, stored securely, and only shared on a strict need-to-know basis, in line with data protection requirements.
 - 6.5 The Welfare Officer will oversee DBS eligibility decisions (seeking checks only where roles are eligible) and will maintain safeguarding records, with oversight from the Commodore and, where relevant, the Principal/Chief Instructor.
 - 6.6 Safeguarding records are stored securely, with access restricted to the Welfare Officer, Deputy Welfare Officer and, where necessary, the Commodore / Committee safeguarding lead. Where electronic records are used, they must be held in a secure club-controlled location with appropriate shared access and continuity arrangements. Records are kept separate from general club records and are retained in line with data protection requirements and safeguarding best practice. As a default, WSC retains safeguarding concern records for 7 years (or longer where advised by statutory agencies / insurers or where the person was a child at the time and extended retention is appropriate).

7 Good practice and safe working

- 7.1 Always prioritise the welfare of children and adults at risk; maintain professional boundaries and avoid situations that could give rise to concern or allegation.
- 7.2 Avoid being alone with a child or adult at risk where possible; if one-to-one contact is necessary, ensure it is transparent and appropriate (e.g., in view of others).
- 7.3 Adults should avoid entering areas when children are changing; if unavoidable, another adult should be present where possible.
- 7.4 WSC expects all participants to follow the club's Codes of Conduct and related guidance (linked policies).
- 7.5 Where policies are referenced as "linked", WSC ensures they are available to members (published on the website or available on request).

Any referenced policy not currently available will be prioritised for publication or removed from the list until it is in place.

8 Photography, filming and online safety

- 8.1 WSC seeks written consent from parents/carers before taking and using photos or video of children at training sessions and events and provides a simple way to withdraw consent. Parents and spectators may take photos/film for personal use but must do so respectfully and must stop if asked by the Welfare Officer or Person in Charge. No identifying information will be used with images of children other than first names (where appropriate), and any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography/filming must be reported to the Welfare Officer.
- 8.2 WSC will seek appropriate consent for photographing/filming children and will use images respectfully.
- 8.3 Parents and spectators may be asked to identify themselves and state the purpose of photographing/filming; any concerns about inappropriate photography must be reported to the CWO.
- 8.4 Where images of children are used, WSC will avoid unnecessary identifying information and will act promptly if an image is used inappropriately.

Part B – Safeguarding Procedures

9 Raising a safeguarding concern

- 9.1 If you think someone is in immediate danger, call 999 and then inform the CWO as soon as possible.
- 9.2 If there is no immediate danger, report concerns without delay to the CWO (or, if unavailable, to the Commodore/Deputy CWO or senior person in charge).
- 9.3 You do not need proof to report a concern. Do not investigate yourself.
- 9.4 If a child or adult at risk discloses something: listen calmly, reassure them, do not promise confidentiality, and record what was said using their exact words where possible.
- 9.5 If you are concerned that a safeguarding issue has not been taken seriously or handled appropriately, you should escalate it to the Commodore (or another Flag Officer) and/or contact the RYA Safeguarding Team for advice. In an emergency, contact the Police on 999.

10 Relationship with complaints/disciplinary procedure

- 10.1 WSC recognises that some concerns may involve both member conduct and safeguarding. Where a concern involves the safety or welfare of a child or adult at risk (or raises a risk of harm), it will be treated as a safeguarding concern and managed under this Safeguarding Policy first. Where a matter is primarily about behaviour, standards, or breaches of the Code of Conduct without safeguarding risk, it will be managed under the Club's Disciplinary Procedure. In some cases, both procedures may apply; safeguarding action and any referral to statutory agencies will take priority.

11 Responding to concerns and case management

- 11.1 The CWO will make an initial assessment of the concern, seek advice from the RYA Safeguarding Team where appropriate, and decide next steps.
- 11.2 For adults at risk, WSC will consider the person's capacity and wishes/consent when deciding next step but will act and share information without consent where there is a serious risk of harm or a legal duty to do so.
- 11.3 Where a concern meets the threshold for referral, it will be passed promptly to the Police and/or Local Authority Children's/Adult Social Care.
- 11.4 Where the concern relates to the behaviour of an adult (paid or volunteer) who works with, supervises or has regular contact with children through WSC (a "position of trust"), the Welfare Officer (or Commodore if the Welfare (or Deputy Officer is unavailable) will seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay. The LADO provides guidance on how such allegations should be managed, including whether the matter should be referred to the police/children's social care and how the club should proceed.
- 11.5 Lower-level concerns (poor practice or conduct) that do not meet the safeguarding threshold will be managed through WSC's disciplinary processes, with safeguarding input as needed.
- 11.6 Where necessary, WSC will take interim protective measures (e.g., supervision changes or temporary suspension from roles) while a concern is being managed.

12 Recording, confidentiality and data protection

- 12.1 All safeguarding concerns and actions taken will be recorded, signed and dated, and stored securely. Access is restricted to the Welfare Officer, Deputy Welfare Officer and (where necessary) the Commodore/Committee safeguarding lead. Safeguarding records are kept separate from general club records.
- 12.2 Information will be shared only with those who need it to protect Individuals or to fulfil safeguarding duties, including statutory agencies and the RYA Safeguarding Team where relevant.

- 12.3 Records will be retained in line with data protection requirements and safeguarding best practice. As a default, WSC retains safeguarding concern records for 7 years (or longer where advised by statutory agencies/insurers or where the person was a child at the time and extended retention is appropriate).
- 12.4 The Welfare Officer will maintain confidential safeguarding records. Where a concern also becomes a formal complaint under the Disciplinary Procedure, the Honorary Secretary will maintain the disciplinary case record separately. Information will only be shared between officers on a strict need-to-know basis.

13 Training and awareness

- 13.1 WSC will ensure that the CWO, Deputy CWO and others with regular safeguarding responsibilities complete safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
- 13.2 WSC will ensure that officers or volunteers who may need to receive or act on safeguarding concerns have an appropriate level of safeguarding awareness or training for their role. Training should normally be completed on appointment and refreshed at least every three years.
- 13.3 Safeguarding information, including how to raise a concern and who to contact, will be made visible and accessible to members and visitors, including on the website and at the clubhouse. The Welfare Officer will maintain a record of relevant training completed.

14 External groups, events and trips

- 14.1 Where WSC hosts or supports external groups (e.g. schools or youth groups), the organising body remains responsible for its own safeguarding arrangements unless agreed otherwise in writing. WSC will still act on any immediate safeguarding concerns raised on site and will report them in line with this policy.
- 14.2 For WSC-run events, training and away trips, WSC will confirm safeguarding and supervision arrangements in advance, including (as relevant): supervision ratios; named person in charge; transport arrangements; emergency contacts; and medical information.
- 14.3 WSC will complete proportionate risk assessments for events, training and away trips, and will review arrangements if risks or circumstances change.

15 Breaches of this policy and disciplinary action

- 15.1 Any behaviour that breaches this policy, or the club's codes of conduct, must be reported to the CWO, Deputy CWO or a senior club official.
- 15.2 Breaches may be dealt with through WSC's complaints and disciplinary procedures, which may include suspension from duties or membership,

pending investigation.

- 15.3 Where relevant, concerns involving RYA instructors/coaches/officials will be reported to the RYA.

16 Review and approval

- 16.1 This policy will be reviewed by the General Committee annually and updated as necessary in response to changing circumstances, legislation or RYA guidance. As part of that review, the club will check that Welfare Officer arrangements remain in place, safeguarding information remains visible and accurate, and relevant training / refreshers are being maintained.

17 Linked policies

- Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Procedure
- Health & Safety Policy / Risk Assessments (as relevant)
- Data Protection / Privacy (and Social Media)

18 Linked documents (Safeguarding hub)

- Club Welfare Officer poster (role summary + how to raise a concern)
- Safeguarding concern flowchart – Child/Young Person
- Safeguarding concern flowchart – Adult at risk
- Safeguarding concern/incident record form (template)
- Safeguarding induction pack (briefing note + induction checklist + volunteer Code of Conduct sign-off)
- Parent/Carer consent form template (emergency contacts + medical info/consent + photography/media consent + collection/sign-in/out permissions)
- Safeguarding training expectations by role (one-page matrix)
- WSC Cadet Operating Procedures (2026)
- Cadet Volunteer Application Form (2026)
- WSC Volunteer Self-Disclosure Form

19 Key contacts

Key external contacts (UK)

- Emergency: 999
- Police (non-emergency): 101
- RYA Safeguarding Team: safeguarding@rya.org.uk; 02380 012796
- Local Authority Children's Social Care (Essex): 0345 603 7627
- Local Authority Adult Social Care (Essex): 0345 603 7630 (out of hours: 0345 606 1212)
- LADO (Essex): lado@essex.gov.uk; 3330 139 797
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Julie-Anne White

Commodore

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Next policy review date: 23rd March 2027