

# SEAFARERS SAILING CLUB

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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

All children whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse.

All suspicions and allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately

### **Child Welfare Officer**

The Club's Child Welfare Officer is Vivian Rance (01329 662273, viv.rance@tiscali.co.uk)

### **Volunteers**

All Club volunteers whose role brings them into contact with young people will be asked to provide references or to complete a self-disclosure form (Annex A).

The Club Child Welfare Officer and anyone who has been a Club member for less than two years and wishes to become involved in instructing, coaching or supervising young people will also be asked to apply for a Criminal Records Disclosure. The Club's policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is given at Annex B. The Club's policy on the storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of CRB Disclosures and Disclosure Information is given at Annex C.

### **Good Practice**

All members of the Club should follow the good practice guidelines that appear at Annex D. Those working with young people should be aware of the guidance on recognising abuse given at Annex E.

Adults are to avoid entering the showers and changing rooms when children are changing unless accompanied by another adult.

Any photography of Club events and activities shall be in accordance with the Club's policy as published at Annex F.

### **Concerns**

Anyone who is concerned about a young member's welfare, either outside the sport or within the Club, should inform the Club Child Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence. The Club Welfare Officer will follow the procedures illustrated by Flowcharts 1 and 2 (Annex G).

Any member of the Club failing to comply with the Child Protection policy may be subject to disciplinary action/expulsion under Club Rule 23 (Conduct of Members.)

Issue 1  
15<sup>th</sup> November 2008

**Self-disclosure Form**

(Template 3 of RYA’s Child Protection Policy and Guidelines updated April 2007)

The Seafarers Sailing Club is committed to safeguarding children from physical, sexual and emotional harm. As part of our Child Protection policy, we require applicants for posts involving contact with children to complete this self-disclosure form. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

**Name** .....

- 1. Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offences?** YES  NO   
**If yes, please supply details of any criminal convictions.**

Note: You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 1986 you should declare all convictions including ‘spent’ convictions, cautions, warnings and reprimands.

- 2. Are you a person known to any Children and Families Social Care Department as being an actual or potential risk to children?** YES  NO   
**If yes, please supply details.**

- 3. Have you ever had any disciplinary sanction relating to child abuse?** YES  NO   
**If yes, please supply details.**

Declaration I declare that to the best of my knowledge the information given above is correct and understand that any misleading statements or deliberate omission may be sufficient grounds for cancelling my appointment. I understand that I may be asked to apply for a Criminal Records Disclosure and consent to do so if required. I understand that the information contained in this form and in the Disclosure may be disclosed, where strictly necessary, to regulatory bodies and/or third parties who have an interest in child protection issues.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

## **Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders** (Based upon RYA's Model Policy Statement)

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the Seafarers Sailing Club undertakes to comply with the CRB Code of Practice and to treat all applicants fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

The Seafarers Sailing Club is committed to the principle of equality of opportunity and aims to ensure that all present and potential participants, members, instructors, coaches, competitors, officials, volunteers and employees are treated fairly and on an equal basis, irrespective of their gender, age, disability, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, social status, sexual orientation or offending background.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates. We make all appointment decisions based on candidates' skills, qualifications and experience.

A thorough risk assessment has indicated that it is proportionate and relevant to request a Disclosure for members wishing to fill the following positions only :

- a) Child Welfare Officer
- b) instructing, coaching or supervising young people; for those that have not been a Club member for at least two years

Applicants for these positions will be informed at the earliest opportunity that a Disclosure may be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position. The Seafarers Sailing Club will ask questions about your entire criminal record. Applicants will also be encouraged to complete a self-declaration form giving details of their criminal record, which will only be seen by those involved in the recruitment process.

We will ensure that those who are involved in the recruitment process have access, prior to discussing the position with you, to appropriate guidance on the relevance of offences and on the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, eg. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

We undertake to discuss any offence or other matter revealed in a Disclosure, that might be relevant to the position, with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

This written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all applicants who are asked to apply for a Disclosure. We make every subject of a CRB Disclosure aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

## **Policy on the Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of CRB Disclosures and Disclosure Information**

(Based upon RYA's Model Policy Statement)

### **General Principles**

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the Seafarers Sailing Club undertakes to comply with the CRB Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. It also complies with its obligations under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information. This written policy is available to those who wish to see it on request.

### **Storage and Access**

Disclosure information is never kept on an applicant's personal file and is always kept separately and securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

### **Handling**

In accordance with Section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information have been revealed and we recognise that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

### **Usage**

Disclosure information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

### **Retention**

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

### **Disposal**

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately suitably destroyed by secure means, ie by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle. We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

## Good Practice Guidelines

(Template 4 of RYA's Child Protection Policy and Guidelines updated April 2007)

This guide only covers the essential points of good practice when working with children and young people.

- 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 that 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.

## Recognising Child Abuse

(Appendix A to RYA's Child Protection Policy and Guidelines updated April 2007)

### 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 that 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 that 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 the Club's Child 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.

## Policy on Photography

Photographs of members are published in the website, the newsletter etc to record events and activities and to promote the Club. To minimise the risk of anyone using images of young members ie those under the age of 18 years, in an inappropriate way, the following will apply.

### Taking of Photographs

- Photographs should not be taken of the children of members that have withheld consent
- When taking photographs, ensure that any young people “in shot” are not getting changed or otherwise inappropriately posing and are suitably dressed
- Members taking photographs of club activities should be prepared to identify themselves
- Concerns of inappropriate photography should be reported to a Committee member

### Publication of Photographs

- Do not publish a picture showing the child of a member that has withheld consent
- Ensure that the young people pictured are suitably dressed and posed
- Do not name any young people that appear in pictures except when recognising individual achievement and you have the permission of the parent/carer
- If in doubt about the appropriateness of publishing a photograph of a young person, consult the Club’s Child protection Officer

### Consent

The consent of parents/carers will be sought by the inclusion of the following within the joining and membership renewal forms :

#### **Consent to Photography -**

*Photographs are often taken of people taking part in sailing or other club events. Photographs, video or other images taken may appear on the club web site or in other publicity material. The Seafarers Sailing Club recognises the need to ensure the safety and welfare of young people taking part in these events. The club is therefore seeking the consent of all parents/carers with children under the age of 18 who may at any time be present at a club event. Please complete and sign the form below.*

*The Seafarers Sailing Club will take all steps to ensure that images are used solely for the purposes for which they are intended. If you become aware that images are being used inappropriately please inform the Club’s Child Protection Officer immediately.*

*I **do/do not** [delete as appropriate] consent to the Seafarers Sailing Club photographing my child/children*

*Signed .....*

*Date .....*

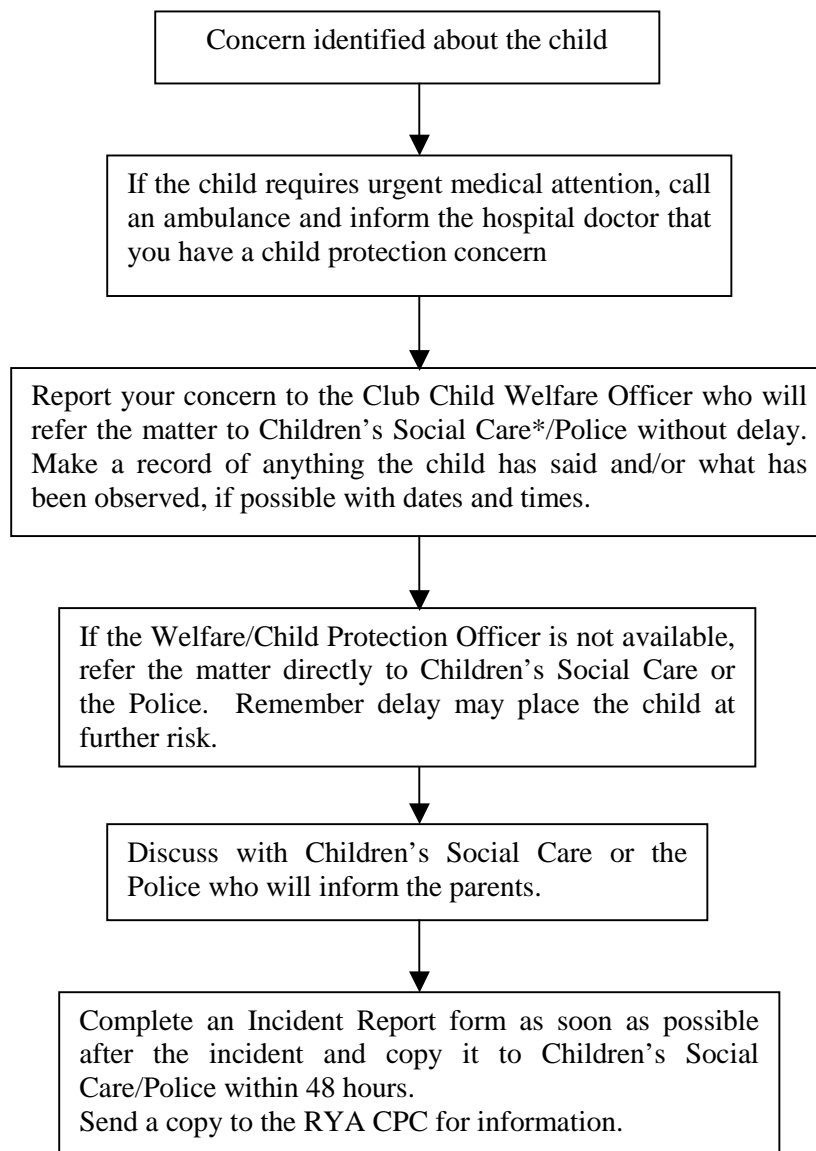
## Procedures

It is essential to have clear and agreed procedures to follow. These include:

- procedures to be followed by anyone concerned about a child's welfare, either outside the sport or within your organisation (see flowcharts below)
- a disciplinary procedure setting out how an allegation of misconduct will be dealt with (see Club Rule 23).

### Flowchart 1

What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused outside the sport's environment (but the concern is identified through the child's involvement in the sport) :

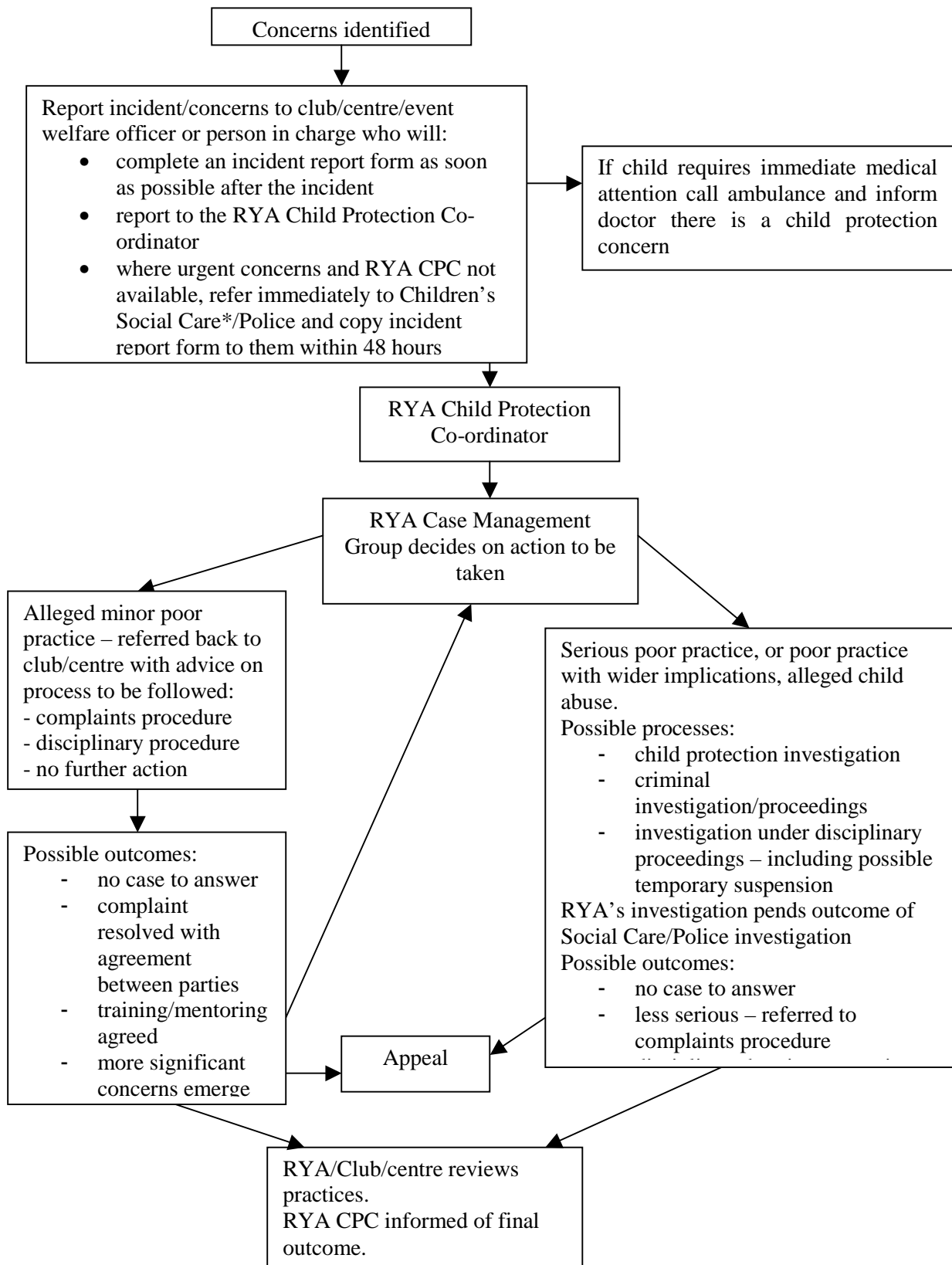


If you are uncertain what to do at any stage, contact the RYA's Child Protection Co-ordinator on 023 8060 4104 or the NSPCC free 24 hour helpline 0808 800 5000.

\* Details available from RYA Child Protection Co-ordinator

## Flowchart 2

What to do if you are concerned about the behaviour of any member, volunteer, staff, coach or official working for the RYA or an RYA affiliated/recognised organisation



\* Details available from RYA Child Protection Co-ordinator