



UK RSX Class Association

# **Child Protection Policy**

Updated July 2017

## **1.Introduction**

### **Policy Statement**

The UK RSX Class Association ('the Class') is committed to safeguarding, from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or bullying, children taking part in its activities. We recognise that the safety, welfare and needs of the child are paramount and that all children, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual or gender identity or social status, have a right to protection from discrimination and abuse.

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

### **Class Welfare Officer**

The Class Welfare Officer is: Mike Croft

[mike@tasmanhouse.co.uk](mailto:mike@tasmanhouse.co.uk)

07711 832232

### **Concerns**

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

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

## **Officers, coaches and volunteers**

### **Officers of the Class**

- Should all be familiar with the Safeguarding policy and procedures contained in this document
- Should complete the Self disclosure form and or have a DBS check carried out if their role involves regularly supervising children and return to the Class welfare officer

### **Coaches**

- All coaches should all be familiar with the Good practice guide and Class Code of Conduct contained in this document
- Should complete the Self disclosure form and return to the Class welfare officer
- Regular coaches will be DBS checked (this is automatic for coaches contracted by the RYA)

### **Volunteers**

- Those with close involvement with children (e.g shore parent, rib support crew etc) should have read Good practice guide and Class Code of Conduct contained in this document (laminated sheets with these on will be available at all events)
- In addition, House parents should as a minimum complete the self disclosure form. It would be preferable for them to have a DBS check also but is not a requirement

**It is a criminal offence under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006** for a Barred individual to work in Regulated Activity/Regulated Work, for an organisation to knowingly allow someone who has been Barred to work in Regulated Activity/Regulated Work, and for an organisation to fail to make a referral to the DBS/Disclosure Scotland if they have dismissed someone from Regulated Activity/Regulated Work for harming or posing a risk of harm to a vulnerable person.

### **Confidentiality and data storage**

All personal information should be 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. When data is no longer relevant it should be destroyed securely, eg. by shredding

### **3. Good practice guidelines**

For Officers, coaches, parents and volunteers

#### **Culture**

It is important to develop a culture within the Class 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**

Plan the work of the organisation and promote good practice to minimise situations where adults are working unobserved or could take advantage of their position of trust. Good practice protects everyone – children, volunteers and staff.

- 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's 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.

## **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'.

## **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 <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/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.

## **Bullying**

If a child alleges bullying or shows signs of being bullied, this must be investigated. For a definition of bullying, see Appendix A

Children and young people could be asked to sign up to the Club Code of Conduct

## **Managing challenging behaviour**

Guidance for instructors and coaches on handling young people who display challenging behaviour is available as a download from the RYA website [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding) , under RYA Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidelines.

## **Responsibilities of staff and volunteers**

The Class will ensure that staff or volunteers are given clear roles and responsibilities, are aware of your organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures have read the Good practice guide (Appendix 1) and Code of Conduct (appendix 2)

RYA Coaches and Instructors are expected to comply with the RYA Codes and Conduct

### **Parental responsibility and class liability**

Parents play an essential part in their children's participation, but occasionally their desire to see their child achieve success can put the child under too much pressure or give rise to friction between families or interference in coaching. The class association has adopted a Code of Conduct (see appendix 2) that can be signed up to by everyone involved, whether they are participants, parents, staff or volunteers, so that everyone is aware of their responsibilities towards each other and appropriate action can be taken if anyone's behaviour fails to meet the expectations set out in the Code.

Although the Class have a duty of care to their members, and particularly to young people who cannot take full responsibility for their own safety, parents must be responsible for their children's welfare and behaviour, or designate another adult to take that responsibility, outside formal Class organised activities.

When children are attending an organised training or coaching session or activity, the organisers have a duty of care for their safety and welfare at all times. If the class requires a parent (or designated responsible adult) to be on site, it must be made clear at what point responsibility transfers from the instructor, coach or organiser to the parent.

### **Changing rooms and showers**

Shower areas should, where possible, be designed to allow both adults and children to shower and dress in reasonable privacy. As a minimum there should be separate male and female changing rooms and, if relevant, unisex disabled changing. If there is an opportunity to redevelop or refurbish changing facilities, clubs/centres should endeavour to provide some family changing areas similar to those provided at public swimming pools.

It is preferable for adults to stay away from the changing rooms while there are children there. If this is unavoidable because adults are sailing at the same times, or the site is open to the public, it is better if one adult is not alone. Parents should be made aware that adult club members and/or members of the public may be in the changing rooms.

Bullying can be an issue in changing rooms and showers (see Bullying on page 14).

If it is essential, in an emergency situation, for a male to enter a female changing area or vice versa, it is advised that they are accompanied by another adult of the opposite sex.

### **First aid and medical treatment**

First aid, provided by an appropriately trained and qualified person, is part of an organisation's normal duty of care. Obtain consent if medication or medical treatment is required in the absence of the parent/carer.

## Away events

It is essential that those accompanying young people to away events or training camps, and the competitors themselves, have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the conduct expected of them.

The RYA Racing Department has Sailor Supervision Guidelines and other detailed policies for the RYA junior and youth squad programmes. These are available on the RYA website, see Racing, Youth and Junior, Information, Policies, or click on [www.rya.org.uk/racing/youthjunior/information/Pages/Policies.aspx](http://www.rya.org.uk/racing/youthjunior/information/Pages/Policies.aspx). They may be a useful reference for events organised by bodies other than the RYA but should not be taken as prescriptive.

## Communicating with young people

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The world of the internet, social media and apps is constantly and rapidly evolving and it is hard to keep up to date, but it is important for parents and for anyone working with young people to develop some understanding of how they use technology, the risks involved and how to keep them safe. Suggested sources of information, mainly intended for parents but useful for anyone, are: [www.nspcc.org.uk/shareaware](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/shareaware)  
[www.net-aware.org.uk](http://www.net-aware.org.uk)      [www.internetmatters.org](http://www.internetmatters.org)      [www.getsafeonline.org](http://www.getsafeonline.org)

## Class websites and social media

When promoting your club and encouraging your members to interact online, there are a few issues to bear in mind in relation to children and young people:

- follow the RYA guidance on the use of images of children (see Photography section below)
- ensure that the content and language on your site or page, including contributions to blogs, forums etc, is not inappropriate for younger visitors and does not link directly to unsuitable material on other sites
- provide a clear process for parents and others to report inappropriate content or online bullying and to request that content is removed
- have a robust procedure for handling and assessing such a report or request and acting promptly to remove the offending content.

## Coaches and Instructors

When working with children and young people you are advised to:

- where possible have a business phone and a personal phone
- only contact sailors on your business phone (or using your organisation's text system)
- avoid using over-familiar language and try to copy in the child's parent/carer
- only communicate regarding organisational matters, not for social or personal contact.

When using social media, it is recommended that you:

- have a personal and a professional page for your social media
- do not allow young sailors to follow or be friends with your personal account
- set your privacy settings as high as possible on your personal account

- challenge the way that young sailors post or comment to you or others on social media if it is inappropriate
- educate young sailors about the boundaries between them and their Coach or Instructor.

Coaches on the RYA's Youth and Junior squad programmes are expected to comply with the RYA Youth Racing Communications Policy.

### **Parents**

Organisations are responsible for the content published on their sites, but parents must accept responsibility for their children's access to and use of computers, tablets and smartphones. See the links above for guidance.

A parent should not communicate directly with someone else's child, either by text, phone, social media or face to face, without either copying the child's parent in or having the parent or another responsible adult present. This is for their own protection as much as the child's.

### **Children and young people**

Unfortunately online communication and texting can often be used as a means of bullying. 'Cyberbullying' should be treated in the same way as any other form of bullying. [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) provides guidance for children and young people in different age groups.

### **Photography, images and video**

Publishing articles, photos and videos in class newsletters, on websites, in local newspapers etc is an excellent way of recognising young people's achievements and of promoting your organisation and the sport as a whole. However it is important to minimise the risk of anyone using images of children in an inappropriate way. Digital technology makes it easy to take, store, send, manipulate and publish images.

There are two key principles to bear in mind:

#### **Before taking photos or video, obtain written consent from the child and their parents/carers for their images to be taken and used**

- A consent section is included with the My Club Admin entry form
- Any photographer or member of the press or media attending an event should wear identification at all times and should be fully briefed in advance on your expectations regarding his/her behaviour and the issues covered by these guidelines.
- Do not allow a photographer to have unsupervised access to young people at the event or to arrange photo sessions outside the event.
- Consent should also be obtained for the use of video as a coaching aid. This is done when entering for training on the My Club Admin website. Any other use by a coach will be regarded as a breach of the RYA's Code of Conduct.
- Care must be taken in the storage of and access to images.



**When publishing images, make sure they are appropriate and that you do not include any information that might enable someone to contact the child**

- It is preferable to use a general shot showing participants on the water, or a group shot of the prizewinners, without identifying them by name.
- If you are recognising the achievement of an individual sailor and wish to publish their name with their photo, DO NOT publish any other information (eg. where they live, name of school, other hobbies and interests) that could enable someone to contact, befriend or start to 'groom' the child.
- Ensure that the young people pictured are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.

Most sailing activity takes place in areas that are open to the public and it is therefore not possible to control all photography, but any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography, or about the inappropriate use of images, should be reported to the organisation's child protection/welfare officer and treated in the same way as any other child protection concern. Parents and spectators should be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state their purpose for photography/filming.

The use of cameras or smart phones/tablets in changing areas should not be permitted in any circumstances. Such use by young people should be regarded as a form of bullying.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Handout for Instructors, Coaches and Volunteers – 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
- 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's 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 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 2

### UK RSX Class Association Code of Conduct

It is the policy of the UK RSX class association that all participants, coaches, instructors, officials, parents and volunteers show respect and understanding for each other, treat everyone equally within the context of the sport and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the club/class. The aim is for all participants to enjoy their sport and to improve performance.

**Abusive language, swearing, intimidation, aggressive behaviour or lack of respect for others and their property will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action.**

#### **Participants - young sailors, windsurfers and powerboaters**

- Listen to and accept what you are asked to do to improve your performance and keep you safe
- Respect other participants, coaches, instructors, officials and volunteers
- Abide by the rules and play fairly
- Do your best at all times
- Never bully others either in person, by phone, by text or online
- Take care of all property belonging to other participants, the club/class or its members
- As a member of the UK RSX Class you are an Ambassador for your sport, and potentially for your country and your behaviour should therefore be appropriate
- Particularly, a high standard of behaviour is expected at residential camps where house parents are in charge rather than your own parents. House parents have volunteered and given up their time to supervise and should be shown appropriate respect
- Anyone not following the instructions of house parents will be excluded from the camp
- Not use recreational drugs and/or smoke or drink alcohol during Class activities activities (including events, training, weekends, camps)
  - Youth sailors must abide by a curfew time of 10.30pm and a lights out time of 11pm, at the latest (at the discretion of the house parent).
  - Not leave their room (except for the bathroom) after the lights out time unless there is a problem. If there is a problem, the House Parent should be contacted immediately. Normally, sailors should meet up in the communal meetings areas and TV rooms rather than socialise in their own bedrooms.

#### **Parents**

- Support your child's involvement and help them enjoy their sport

- Help your child to recognise good performance, not just results
- Never force your child to take part in sport
- Never punish or belittle a child for losing or making mistakes
- Encourage and guide your child to accept responsibility for their own conduct and performance
- Respect and support the coach
- Accept officials' judgements and recognise good performance by all participants
- Use established procedures where there is a genuine concern or dispute
- Inform the club or event organisers of relevant medical information
- Ensure that your child wears suitable clothing and has appropriate food and drink
- Provide contact details and be available when required
- Take responsibility for your child's safety and conduct in and around the clubhouse/event venue

### **Coaches, Instructors, Officials and Volunteers**

- Consider the welfare and safety of participants before the development of performance
- Encourage participants to value their performance and not just results
- Promote fair play and never condone cheating
- Ensure that all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part
- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect
- Work in an open environment
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people
- Be an excellent role model and display consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance
- Do not drink alcohol or smoke when working directly with young people
- Communicate clearly with parents and participants
- Be aware of any relevant medical information
- Follow RYA and club/class guidelines and policies
- Holders of RYA Instructor and Coach qualifications must also comply with the RYA Code of Conduct
- Holders of RYA Race Official appointments must also comply with the RYA Race Officials Code of Conduct.

If you are concerned that someone is not following the Code of Conduct, you should inform your Class Welfare Officer (Mike Croft 07711 832232 [mike@tasmanhouse.co.uk](mailto:mike@tasmanhouse.co.uk)) or the person in charge of the activity.