



# Bradford & Bingley canoe club



## Welfare Policy

### Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

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The Welfare Officer is **Jason Duckmanton**

and the Designated Person for child protection is **Wendy Robinson**

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## **Policy Statement**

Every person who participates in Club activities should be able to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment where they are safe from neglect, emotional, physical and sexual abuse. The Club and its members have a duty of care towards all participants in its compass.

This document gives clear messages. Should a member encounter an incident not detailed in here, they should refer to the Principles and act according to them using common sense and fairness.

### **Bradford & Bingley Canoe Club recognises that it has a responsibility to:**

- Safeguard and promote the interests and well being of people with whom it is working
- Take all reasonable practical steps to protect them from harm, discrimination or degrading treatment
- Respect their rights and wishes
- Offer safeguards to the people with whom the Club works
- Offer safeguards to members of the Club who report concerns or are regarded as perpetrators

## **Principles**

The child's safety and welfare is paramount.

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 abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

Vulnerable adults should have similar protections and any adult can be vulnerable at certain times.

Privacy is respected and relevant information about individuals shared with people who need to know, in consultation with that individual.

## **Procedures**

### **Actions to take if there has been a disclosure by the child**

1. Tell the child he/she was right to tell and that he/she is not to blame.
2. Take what the child says seriously and calmly.
3. Ensure the safety of the child.
4. Keep questions to the minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Do not use questions that suggest a particular answer.
5. Reassure the child and be clear that you will share information with people who need to know in order to help them. Explain who these might be and listen to concerns.
6. The Club Welfare Officer and the Chairman should be informed as soon as possible. If they are not available and the case requires urgent action, contact the BCU Child Protection Officer via the BCU Office Nottingham. They will ensure correct procedures are carried out and that you are given guidance.

### **Recording of information, suspicions or concerns**

Information passed to Social Services or the Police must be as helpful as possible and may be used in any subsequent legal action. Do not use leading questions. The report should contain the following:

- The child's name address and date of birth.
- The name/s of the child's parent/carer.
- The nature of the allegation.
- A description of any visible injuries.
- The child's account, in their own words if possible, of what has happened.
- Any relevant personal observations.
- Times, locations, dates or other relevant information.
- A clear distinction between fact, opinion and hearsay.
- Your knowledge of and relationship to the child.

Keep a record of the name and designation of the member of Social Services or Police Officer to whom concerns were passed with time and date of the call. Keep securely.

### **Actions to take if there is abuse between peers**

1. take immediate proportionate preventative action, which might include asking a parent to remove a child from the site temporarily.
2. the Welfare Officer and the Designated Person should be informed as soon as possible.

## **Actions to be taken by the BBCC Welfare Officer and Designated Person on receiving a report of suspected abuse**

1. inform all concerned, including the person whom the allegation has been made, if safe to do so;
2. take immediate preventative action, which might include suspending a member until the outcome of the fact-finding and a decision as to further action or informing Police;
3. information gather from all concerned, taking copies of statements already written, and obtaining statements from others concerned;
4. inform the subject of the allegation of all support mechanisms, detailed below
5. seek advice from BCU Child Protection Officer or NSPCC
6. on information gathering and a decision as to further action needed (if any) inform all parties.
7. Further action may be to advise the person concerned as to future conduct, inform Police, limit activities at the Club or suspend from the Club.

## **All Parties will be Supported**

In the event of an allegation of child abuse being made against a member of British Canoeing, then a Senior Officer of the British Canoeing must be informed.

As an adult, if you have allegations made against you, you should contact the BC Support Officer at Canoe England and a Club Committee member will also be appointed to support you.

As a child, if an allegation is made against you, a Committee member will support you and your parent.

The Club and the BC will support anyone who in good faith reports concern about child abuse.

## **Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers**

- All adults spending a significant amount of time with U18s who are not their own children will have a DBS check (see BC's current policy on who can have a check).

## **Training**

Bradford & Bingley Canoe Club recognises that any procedure is only as effective as the ability and skill of those who operate it.

The Club is committed to providing volunteers with the necessary knowledge, values and skills to work together to safeguard children. Training will encompass, as a minimum knowledge

- to recognise a child in need
- to act appropriately to safeguard children
- to appreciate their own role and that of others in the larger process of Safeguarding.

This document is to be considered fundamental membership information. There is literature available on the BCUweb-site about Safeguarding; many members will have training materials available to them in respect of their own professions and BC / UKCC Safeguarding courses are available. Members will be encouraged to develop their knowledge and skills using resources available.

Amended June 2007, April 2010, November 2011, March 2018

## APPENDIX 1

### What is Child abuse?

A child, for the purposes of this document, is a person under 18 years of age. Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed by adults or by their peers. Often these are people they know and trust. It refers to the damage done to a child's physical and emotional health. Children can be abused within or outside their family, at school, during sporting or recreational activities.

Abuse is also experienced by adults who may be vulnerable and require protection.

### Recognition of Abuse

It must be recognised that the presence of one or more of the indicators of abuse is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. All children will suffer cuts, bruising and grazes from time to time, and their behaviour may sometimes give cause for concern. There may be reasons for these factors other than abuse. If, however you are concerned about the welfare of a child **you must act**.

Indications that a child may be being abused include:

- Injuries such as bruising cuts or burns, particularly on parts of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- Any injury for which the explanation seems dubious
- The child describing what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- Someone else- a child or adult, expressing concern about the welfare of another child
- Unexplained changes in behaviour - e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or sudden outbursts of temper, lowered performance in training
- Sexual awareness inappropriate for age
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour in games
- Mistrust of others, particularly those with whom a close relationship would be expected
- Difficulty in making friends
- Prevention from socialising with other children
- Variations in eating patterns eg Loss of weight for no reason

The Welfare Officer and Designated Person keep records so that patterns of incidents or behaviour can be identified. It is not the responsibility of Club Members to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to **report any concern**.

## **The five main forms of abuse**

**Physical Abuse** includes situations where people:

- Physically hurt or injure children (e.g. by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning)
- Give children alcohol, cigarettes, inappropriate drugs or poison.
- Use excessive and inappropriate training methods. This could be when the nature and intensity of training disregards the capacity of the child's immature and growing body. Or involves them in activities for too long, where the weather and/or water temperature causes pain, physical damage or hypothermia.

**Sexual Abuse** includes situations in which adults/peers use children of both sexes to meet their own sexual needs. It could range from sexually suggestive comments to full intercourse and includes the use of pornographic material.

**Emotional Abuse** includes situations in which:

- There is a persistent lack of love, affection or attention shown to the child
- A child's point of view is relevant but not sought
- Children are shouted at or taunted
- Children are subject to pressure in order to perform to unreasonable expectations

**Neglect** includes situations in which:

- A child's basic physical needs, i.e. food and warm clothing, are not met
- Children are consistently left alone and unsupervised
- In a sports situation the coach fails to ensure that a child is safe or they are exposed to undue cold

**Bullying** can take many forms and is usually repeated over a period of time. All ages of people can be involved in bullying. Bullying behaviour may include:

- Sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing
- Tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Unwanted physical contact or abusive or offensive comments of a sexual nature

## **APPENDIX 2: Good Practice in the Care of Children**

**We can reduce situations for the abuse of children and protect volunteers and staff** by promoting good practice. The following are some specific examples of care which should be applied to a canoeing context:

- A parent should always accompany children on Club activities
- Be publicly open when working with children particularly when checking and adjusting gear
- Avoid situations where a teacher/coach and individual canoeists are completely unobserved
- Where any form of manual support is required (e.g. as in teaching rolling) this should be provided openly. The consent of parents for manual support when coaching should be obtained
- Where possible, parents should take responsibility for their children in changing rooms
- Encourage an open environment e.g. no secrets

### **It does not make sense to:**

- Spend time alone with children away from others.
- Take children alone in a car on journeys, however short.

Where **cases** arise where it is unavoidable that these things happen, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation, or the child's parents.

### **Never ever:**

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Share a room with a child.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching in any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child even in fun.
- Let allegations a child makes go unreported, unrecorded, or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.
- Have children stay at your home with you unsupervised.