



## **York City Rowing Club**

### **Safeguarding and Protecting Children and Adults at Risk Policy**

#### **Policy statement**

York City Rowing Club is committed to making the welfare of Children and Adults at Risk paramount.

- I. This means that the need to ensure that Children and Adults at Risk are protected is a primary consideration and may override the rights and needs of those adults working with them
- II. enabling every member of the club whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity to participate in rowing in a fun and safe environment
- III. taking all reasonable steps to protect Children and Adults at Risk from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- IV. taking seriously all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse and responding swiftly and appropriately to them in accordance with current procedures
- V. accepting responsibility for the welfare of the Children in their care in accordance with all British Rowing's policies and procedures, and to incorporate these in their constitutions and rules
- VI. recognising that Children and families from minority group backgrounds may face additional barriers to accessing help and reporting concerns in respect of safeguarding issues.

#### **Scope of this policy**

This document sets out the procedures we follow to protect Children and Adults at Risk from harm and abuse. The policies apply to all rowers, coaches, volunteers, parents and anyone involved in rowing, whether or not they are British Rowing members. All these people have a Duty of Care to safeguard the welfare of Children and adults at risk and prevent their abuse.

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from Abuse, whether intentional or accidental. It is not the responsibility of an individual in rowing to make judgements about whether or not Abuse is taking place, but everyone has a responsibility to identify poor practice and possible abuse and to act if they have concerns.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- YCRC Safeguarding Code of Conduct which details the expected behaviour of rowers, parents and coaches in relation to safeguarding.
- YCRC Anti Bullying Policy
- YCRC Form for Recording and Reporting concerns

## **Recruitment and training of coaches and Volunteers**

All reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from having contact with juniors or Adults at Risk. All new coaches and volunteers will complete an application form and give two referees. They will be expected to read and accept the Club's safeguarding policy. Personal qualities, attitude and aptitude to working with young people, relevant experience and coaching qualifications are all valued.

All new persons who will have Significant Access to Children, or who hold a Position of Trust with the Children with whom they come into contact, must first be vetted to establish whether they have any criminal convictions or other past behaviour that suggests they are unsuitable to work with Children, or may present a risk to Children.

## **Disclosure and Barring**

The following roles require a Disclosure and Barring Check:

- Club Welfare Officer (CWO)
- Junior co-ordinator
- Lead coaches supervising other volunteers or coaches with access to Children
- Trailer drivers who spend time away with Children at regattas
- All coaches involved with juniors or Adults at Risk for one day per week or more will be DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked.
- Coaches who will be training Children or Junior Rowers unsupervised
- DBS checking will be updated every three years.
- Existing volunteers who change their role

]

## **The Roles of Coaches and Safeguarding.**

### **Role Description: Lead Coach**

The Lead Coach runs and organises a particular coaching session. They are responsible for making a risk assessment in advance of each session, decide on the activities and allocate the Helpers and Assistant Coaches according to their skills and experience.

All Lead Coaches are required to attend the British Rowing Safeguarding and Protection of Children and Adults at Risk Workshop and have DBS checking for YCRC.

Any new Lead Coach will be required to :

- provide a written Application Form Including declaration of prior abuse convictions
- provide 2 written References independently verified

### **Role Description: Assistant Coach**

Assistant coaches coach children in locations not directly supervised by Lead Coaches i.e. the boathouse gym, the tow path or coaching launch.

Assistant Coaches who contribute :

- once a week or more
- or who have intensive contact with children for four days in a month or
- or overnight or
- or operate a coaching launch on their own.

.....will require DBS checking

Where DBS checking has not been required Lead coaches ensure the coaches coach a variety of children, thus avoiding continuous contact with the same junior.

Where the contribution of coaches increases to one of the above the Junior Coordinator will inform the CWO who will arrange a DBS check.

**Role Description: Helper**

Helpers are under the supervision of a Lead Coach ie within sight and hearing. They help children boat and land and assist juniors with steering and turning from the towpath in front of the boathouse.

Where a helpers contribution progresses to :

- once a week or more
- or has intensive contact with children for four days in a month or overnight or
- or coach juniors out of earshot or sight

.....they are considered to be a coach and thus require DBS checking.

When the contribution of coaches increases the Junior Coordinator will inform the CWO who will arrange a DBS check.

All new Helpers will be required to submit an Application Form including declaration of prior abuse convictions and have their identity verified.

**Safeguarding Training and awareness**

Coaches and volunteers will be provided with formal training and support in relation to their individual roles. The CWO will maintain a written record of training and relevant qualifications of those working with Children and Adults at Risk within the club.

All club members and volunteers will have access to this and supporting policy documents through the YCRC website.

The Junior Coordinators and Lead Coaches, Club Welfare Officer, Chairperson, and volunteers involved with transporting children or accompanying them on residential visits will all have completed the British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Children (SPC) Workshop.

Coaches and Helpers will be provided with a basic guide covering key areas of safeguarding.

**Safeguarding in and around the Clubhouse****Changing rooms**

- Where practical, Children will be supervised in changing rooms by two adults who are DBS checked.
- Where practical adult coaches or members will not shower or change at the same time as children
- If a Child is uncomfortable showering or changing in public no pressure will be put on them to do so, they will be encouraged to change and shower at home.
- Children with disabilities or Adults at Risk and their carers will be involved in deciding how best they can be assisted. The individual's consent to the assistance that is offered will be sought.
- Discussion with children will take place in the gym or outside and not in the changing rooms
- Taking pictures of Juniors and Adults at risk in the changing rooms is not permitted.

**Photography and Social Networking**

See separate policy statement.

## **Health and First Aid**

- Written parental consent will be obtained to act in loco parentis for the administration of emergency First Aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- A record of medical conditions, existing injuries and relevant medicines being taken together with reactions to medicines and plasters will be kept for each junior.
- A record will be kept of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given
- If possible an emergency First Aid coach will be available at each training session.

## **Coaching ratios**

A Risk Assessment is made at the beginning of each training session for each group of Children attending. This is reviewed at the end of each training session.

In line with the national guidance, the level of supervision takes account of the:

- age and ability of the Children
- type of training session being undertaken (on land or water)
- Children's growing independence
- the weather, river conditions and conditions underfoot.

Wherever possible, 2 coaches work in the same area so that in case of accident there is always someone available to supervise the remaining Children. Coaches working with Children are not expected to work in isolation.

## **Organising trips away for Junior Rowers**

When planning residential trips for Junior Rowers the club will use the advice and checklists given in British Rowing's 'Planning Residential Trips for Children' Guidance, Training Camp Checklist and consent forms (WG 4.1, 4.2,)

The main factors to consider are:

### **Communication with Parents**

For a short day trip this may amount merely to details of transport, pick up and return points and times, competition or venue details, team leader or coach contact details, emergency contact details for Parents, costs, dietary requirements (if relevant) and any other special requirements or medical details. Strict instructions will be given to Parents regarding the drop off and return locations and times.

### **Transport**

The following points are taken into consideration: vehicle type (public transport, minibus, coach or private car), any special requirements for Rowers with disabilities, length of journey, competence of driver, journey time, distance, stopping points, supervision during journey and legislation regarding seat belts.

### **Supervision**

The staff or volunteers organising the trip will have the Duty of Care to act in loco parentis for the duration of the trip. Volunteers caring for the Juniors will be appropriately briefed in safety and safeguarding and they will have relevant information regarding any special needs or requirements of any Rower. Anyone working in a supervisory role will be appropriately vetted to ensure their suitability to work with Children in line with British Rowing's Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy and current legislation.

## Emergency Procedures

The team leader or coach will know how to contact emergency services and have access to at least a basic First Aid box. Those in charge of Children have a duty to ensure that they are kept safe and healthy and will not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life saving action in an extreme situation.

Any on-water accident will follow the guidelines given in 'RowSafe: a Guide to Good Practice'. All adults working with the group should be briefed on the reporting procedure should an emergency occur.

## Insurance

All Registered Individual members of British Rowing are covered for public liability and personal accident cover during rowing activities under British Rowing's policy. Passengers travelling by motor vehicle should be covered by law by the insurances required under the Road Traffic Act (1988). When using private vehicles it may be necessary to check with the insurance company for any restrictions. Consideration should be given to accident, breakdown and recovery cover.

## Types of Abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a Child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that without appropriate intervention, they may continue to have a very negative impact upon an individual into adulthood.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a Child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the Child's health or development. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a Child's basic emotional needs.

In a rowing situation this could include:

- a coach not keeping Children safe by exposing them to undue cold, heat or the unnecessary risk of injury e.g. allowing Rowers under their supervision to train or race inappropriately clothed for the prevailing conditions
- a Parent consistently leaving a Child without adequate provisions e.g. food, water, clothing, sun protection.

**Physical Abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a Child. Physical harm may also be caused when a Parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or induces illness in a Child.

In a rowing situation this could include:

- a coach disregarding the individual requirements of each Child's growing body or needs when setting a training programme e.g. allowing 14 year olds to undertake hour-long, continuous ergos.

**Sexual Abuse** involves forcing or enticing a Child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the Child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. It may also include non-contact activities such as involving Children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging Children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

In a rowing situation indicators could include:

- a coach engaging in unnecessary and inappropriate physical contact e.g. massaging the shoulders of the Rowers suggestively
- a coach making suggestive comments to their Rowers
- an inappropriately close relationship developing between a Rower and a coach

- an individual spending an unnecessary amount of time in the changing area when Children are present.

**Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a Child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the Child's emotional development. It may involve making the Child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on Children. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing Children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of Children. Some level of emotional Abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a Child, although it may occur alone.

In a rowing situation this could include:

- a Parent or coach subjecting a Rower to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying or racism
- a Parent or coach putting a Rower under unrealistic pressure in order to perform to high expectations.

### **Indicators of abuse**

Even for those experienced in working with Child Abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where Abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is not the responsibility of those working in rowing to decide that Child Abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

- Indications that a Child is being abused may include one or more of the following:
- 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 or an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- the Child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her, someone else, a Child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of a Child
- unexplained changes in a Child's behaviour, e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, displaying sudden outbursts of temper or behaviour changing over time
- inappropriate sexual awareness
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends
- being prevented from socialising with other Children
- displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- losing weight for no apparent reason
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

**Bullying** see anti bullying policy

## **Advice and support for individuals receiving a concern or allegation**

Although most cases of Child Abuse take place within the family setting, Abuse can and does occur in rowing.

- It is essential that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken.
- It is not your responsibility to decide if Child Abuse is taking place.
- It is your responsibility to report your concerns to the Club Welfare Officer or the appropriate agencies (listed below).
- Not acting is not an option.

If you are not sure and want to discuss something please contact the Club Welfare Officer, Lead Safeguarding Officer at British Rowing or the NSPCC for advice.

### **Receiving evidence of possible Abuse**

You may have concerns about Abuse/poor practice because:

- you see it happening
- you recognise signs
- someone reports it to you
- a Child approaches you directly.

If a Child says or indicates that they are being abused, or you have concerns about their welfare you should:

- react calmly so as not to frighten them
- tell them they are not to blame and that it was right to speak up
- take what they say seriously
- recognise that there may be inherent difficulties in interpreting what is said by someone who has a speech disability and/or differences in language
- keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said, Avoid asking leading questions such as 'Was it X who did this?' Rather say, 'Is there anything else you want to tell me?'
- reassure them, but do not promise to keep the matter secret – explain that to resolve the problem it will be necessary to inform other people as appropriate

the safety of the Child is paramount - if the Child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a Child Protection issue

- record all information
- report to the CWO.

Confidentiality is essential and therefore when seeking support or guidance from a recommended source as detailed below you will be expected to keep the personal details (names of individuals concerned, location etc) confidential. The following contact details provide a variety of potential support mechanisms for you to approach.

Local Police Child Protection Team or in an emergency dial 999.

Local Authority Children's Social Care Services (formerly known as Social Services).

**NSPCC Helpline - 0808 800 5000** - 24 hour free and confidential telephone Helpline that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of ill treatment or abuse.

**Careline 0208 541 1177** - Confidential crisis telephone counselling service for children, young people and adults]

**The Samaritans - 08457 90 90 90** - Nationwide, non-religious, non-political 24 hour confidential support.  
[www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)

**Victim Support - 0845 3030 900** - Local Victim Support services provide emotional support, information and practical help for victims and witnesses.

**Self Help** - [www.self-help.org.uk](http://www.self-help.org.uk) - The UK's free online specialised child protection resources. A general list of 1,000 self-help organisations in the UK.

**Child Line** - . **0800 1111** - 24 hour free and confidential telephone Helpline for children

It is not appropriate to share sensitive and confidential information with other people, e.g: your club committee, or members of your club.

### **Recording and Reporting Safeguarding Concerns**

Concerns should be reported by following instructions on "YCRC Recording and Reporting Safeguarding Concerns" available on the YCRC website.

Referrals will normally be made to the club CWO but can be made directly to the Police or Social Services in an emergency.

The CWO will attempt to resolve the matter but if this is not possible advice will be taken from British Rowing and supporting agencies. For issues with wider implications the issue will be discussed by the YCRC Safeguarding Case Management Group.

If the CWO is unavailable or is implicated, talk directly to a senior club officer or go directly to British Rowing's Lead Safeguarding Officer for advice.

Referrals to the CWO will be shared with the British Rowing Lead Safeguarding Officer 020 8237 6700 where proved.

### **Storage of Confidential Information**

Any information relating to Child Protection will be held under secure conditions and made available on a need-to-know basis. Confidential material will normally be destroyed 6 months after the conclusion of the issue.

### **Involving Parents or carers**

YCRC is committed to working in partnership with Parents. In most situations Parents will be asked to clarify any initial concerns e.g. if a Child seems withdrawn, they may have experienced a recent bereavement.

Where a Parent or carer may be responsible for the Abuse or may not be able to respond to the situation appropriately they will not be involved, as it may place the Child at greater risk.

The British Rowing LSO will be informed of all allegations of Abuse and persistent poor practice as soon as possible in order to decide if/what further action should be taken by the club or British Rowing and whether further action, advice or investigation is needed by/from the Police, Children's Social Care Services or the NSPCC.

Passing on this information is important because the matter may be just one of a series of other instances which together cause concern.

Any letters to the LSO regarding referrals should be marked 'private and confidential' and sent to: British Rowing, 6 Lower Mall, London, W6 9DJ. Alternatively the LSO can be contacted on 0208 237 6700.

## **Club Welfare Officer (CWO)**

### **CWO Responsibilities**

The CWO is responsible for acting as a source of advice on Child Protection matters and for co-ordinating action within the club on receipt of any concerns or referrals. They are expected keep up to date with the appropriate level of training. They are a member of the club's committee and, ideally, will hold individual British Rowing membership.

### **CWO Role**

- To provide information and advice on Child Protection within the club.
- To ensure that the club adopts and follows the British Rowing Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy and procedures and promote awareness of the policy within the club.
- To be an evidence checker, verifying the identity of individuals completing Criminal Records Check application forms.
- To keep records of all those who have been vetted within the club to ensure that where relevant Criminal Records Checks are updated on at least a three yearly basis and that all those working in Regulated Activities are compliant with current government guidance.
- To receive information from club staff, volunteers, young people or Parents and carers who have Child Protection concerns and record it.
- To assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
- To make a formal referral to a statutory Child Protection Agency if appropriate and report any illegal matters to the police.
- To report any referrals or concerns to the British Rowing LSO as soon as possible in line with British Rowing procedures.
- To ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing to British Rowing, under confidential cover, using WG 1.2.
- To advise the club officers regarding the appropriate levels of safeguarding training and/or guidance for all adults working with Children in the club.
- To promote a Child-centred approach within the club, e.g. maintain the Junior section notice board and promote good practice.
- To advise the club of further safeguarding training opportunities.
- To maintain a written record of training and relevant qualifications of those working in the club.

### **Codes of Conduct**

The codes of conduct in relation to Safeguarding for Juniors, parents and coaches is detailed in "YCRC Safeguarding Codes of Conduct" available on the YCRC website.

### **Complaints & Disciplinary Procedures**

YCRC will apply its own Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures and will comply with British Rowing Complaints & Disciplinary Procedures in all respects.

January 2018