

## **KSSA Safeguarding Procedures**

Adopted June 2019

Reviewed June 2024

Due to be reviewed: June 2025

### **KSSA Welfare Officers**

The KSSA Welfare Officer: Sarah Dawkins: Team [safeguarding@KSSA.co.uk](mailto:safeguarding@KSSA.co.uk)

Deputy Welfare Officer: Jenny Johnson: [Commodore@KSSA.co.uk](mailto:Commodore@KSSA.co.uk)

The key elements of the Welfare Officer's role are:

- Maintaining up-to-date policy and procedures, compatible with the RYA's.
- Ensuring that relevant staff and/or volunteers are aware of and follow the procedures, including implementing safe recruitment procedures.
- Advising the management committee on safeguarding and child protection issues.
- Maintaining contact details for local Children's Services and Police.

If there is a concern, the designated person will:

- Be the first point of contact for any concerns or allegations, from children or adults, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained in all cases.
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken, in line with the organisation's procedures and in conjunction with the Commodore
- Keep the RYA informed as necessary (*see RYA flowcharts 1 & 2*).

Everyone in the organisation should know who the Welfare Officer is and how to contact them. We have made this information available via the Website and have a poster at the registration desk at events with clear contact details.

The RYA's Safeguarding and Equality Manager is Katie Loucaides, tel. 023 8060 4104, e-mail [safeguarding@rya.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rya.org.uk) or [katie.loucaides@rya.org.uk](mailto:katie.loucaides@rya.org.uk)

Deputy Safeguarding Officer Andrea Gates, tel. 02380 604144, email [andrea.gates@rya.org.uk](mailto:andrea.gates@rya.org.uk)

## **Recruitment and training**

**KSSA** requires all Committee members, volunteers and coaches recruited to posts/activities involving regular contact with children ('regular' to be decided by the Commodore) to provide, or have, an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure, with Barred List check.

All volunteers and coaches are also required to familiarise themselves with the content of the KSSA policy and procedure documents, and to undertake appropriate CPD including, in the case of those who are involved in activities that involve regular contact with children during sailing training and supervision to have undertaken the RYA Safe and Fun course. A log of training with dates the training is completed must be held by the KSSA Welfare Officer.

All Instructors and Racing Coaches must also sign up to the RYA Codes of Conduct (see Appendices B and C).

**Safeguarding Training** must ensure that participants are enabled to:

- Protect themselves, the young people they are working with and the club by understanding and following good practice and promoting a positive relationship with children
- Explore values and feelings in relation to child abuse, and recognise their potential impact on responses to issues that are come across
- Understand what is meant by neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse
- Recognise the signs and symptoms that might indicate that a young person is being bullied, mistreated or abused, whether it's happening at the club, at home or elsewhere
- Feel more confident in knowing what to do or who to contact in the case of concern about a young person's welfare or about the conduct of another adult.

## **Good practice guidelines**

### **Culture**

At the KSSA we strive to foster a culture 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**

To that end, we 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.

We have clear good practice guidelines, and a KSSA Club Code of Conduct that are shared with all KSSA members. All KSSA members are required to sign to say that they will follow the advice in the KSSA Code of Conduct for Parents, Volunteers and Coaches. A log of signatures and dates must be held by the KSSA Membership Secretary.

### **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. The KSSA has adopted the RYA Anti-bullying policy (See RYA Anti-bullying policy).

Resources and advice for young people can be found on [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) and [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Children and young people involved in KSSA activities are asked to sign up to the KSSA Code of Conduct for Sailors, and read the anti-bullying policy as part of the introduction session.

### **Parental responsibility**

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.

Prior to undertaking any group club activities, everyone involved, whether they are participants, parents, staff or volunteers, must sign the KSSA's Code of Conduct 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 clubs 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 club-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. The KSSA requires a parent (or designated responsible adult) to be on site, and it is the responsibility of the organiser to clarify at what point responsibility transfers from the instructor, coach or organiser from/to the parent.

### **Changing rooms and showers**

It is preferable for adults to stay away from the changing rooms while being used by children. 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.

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; this should be via the event registration form.

### **Organising and hosting events**

When organising an event at a host club the KSSA organiser must liaise with the host club to ensure that all involved in the organisation of the event are operating to similar policies. The names of the welfare officers should be made clear to all young competitors and their parents.

### **Events**

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

### **Club websites and social media**

When promoting the KSSA and encouraging members to interact online, the KSSA will:

- follow the RYA guidance on the use of images of children
- ensure that the content and language on the 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
- ensure that any requests are followed up by the Welfare Officer and Commodore with reference to the KSSA's policies and procedures.

### **Coaches and Instructors**

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

- only contact sailors via official KSSA channels (or using your organisation's email and facebook 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.

### **Children and young people**

Children and young people use modern technology as a matter of course, but they don't always understand the risks involved and their parents are not always fully aware of their children's risky behaviour. 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) and [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) provide guidance and support for children and young people in different age groups, as well as for parents and carers, on matters such as online bullying, sharing images and 'sexting'.

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

Publishing articles, photos and videos on the KSSA website, RYA website in sailing press or 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's parents/carers for their images to be taken and used**

- 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. 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.

## **Handling concerns, reports or allegations**

**This section is primarily for the organisation's designated Welfare Officer, but everyone should be aware of the procedures to follow if there are concerns (see RYA flowcharts 1 & 2).**

A complaint, concern or allegation may come from a number of sources: the child, their parents, someone else within your organisation. It may involve the behaviour of one of your volunteers or employees, or something that has happened to the child outside the sport, perhaps at home or at school. Children may confide in adults they trust, in a place where they feel at ease.

An allegation may range from mild verbal bullying to physical or sexual abuse. If you are concerned that a child may be being abused, it is NOT your responsibility to investigate further BUT it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and report them to the appropriate statutory authorities. For guidance on recognising abuse, see Appendix A.

### **Handling an allegation from a child**

#### **Always:**

- stay calm – ensure that the child is safe and feels safe
- show and tell the child that you are taking what he/she says seriously
- reassure the child and stress that he/she is not to blame
- be careful about physical contact, it may not be what the child wants
- be honest, explain that you will have to tell someone else to help stop the alleged abuse
- make a record of what the child has said as soon as possible after the event, using the child's own words
- follow your organisation's child protection procedures.

#### **Never:**

- rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- make promises you cannot keep (eg. you won't tell anyone)
- ask leading questions (see 'Recording and handling information' below)
- take sole responsibility – consult someone else (ideally the designated Child Protection/Welfare Officer or the person in charge or someone you can trust) so that you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself.

You may be upset about what the child has said or you may worry about the consequences of your actions. Sometimes people worry about children being removed from their families as a result of abuse, but in reality this rarely happens. However, one thing is certain – you cannot ignore it.

### **Recording and handling information**

If you suspect that a child may have been the subject of any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, the allegation must be referred as soon as possible, ideally via the Club Welfare Officer, to Children's Social Care or the Police who have trained experts to handle such cases. Do not start asking leading questions which may jeopardise any formal investigation.

A leading question is where you suggest an answer or provide options that only need a 'yes' or 'no' answer, instead of allowing the child to explain things in their own words. An example would be asking 'did X hit you?' instead of 'how did you get that bruise?'. Use open questions such as 'what happened next?'. Only ask questions to confirm that you need to refer the matter to someone else. Listen to and keep a record of anything the child tells you or that you have observed and pass the information on to the statutory authorities (see Document 7 for Referral Form).

**All information must be treated as confidential and only shared with those who need to know.** If the allegation or suspicion concerns someone within your club or centre, only the child's parents/carers, the Commodore, the Welfare Officer (unless they are the subject of the allegation), the relevant authorities and the RYA Safeguarding and Equality Manager should be informed. If the alleged abuse took place outside the sport, the Police or Children's Social Care will decide who else needs to be informed, including the child's parents/carers. It should not be discussed by anyone within the organisation other than the person who received or initiated the allegation and, if different, the person in charge.

Confidential information must be processed, stored and destroyed in accordance with your organisation's Data Privacy Policy and Data Protection legislation.

### **Procedures**

The following procedures are clearly stated:

- procedures to be followed by anyone concerned about a child's welfare, either outside the sport or within your organisation (*see RYA flowcharts 1 & 2*)
- the disciplinary procedure (which may be included in a staff handbook or contract, depending on the nature of the organisation) setting out the process to be followed if an allegation or complaint is made about an employee
- a procedure for handling a complaint about a member

### **Statutory Authorities**

If your club or centre is contacted by the Police or Children's Services concerning information received or a complaint made by or about a member, volunteer or employee, you are advised to contact the RYA Safeguarding and Equality Manager as soon as possible for guidance and support. Co-operate fully with official requests for factual information, but do not express any personal opinions on the person's conduct.

### **Handling the media**

If there is an incident at your premises which attracts media interest, or if you are contacted by the media with an allegation concerning one of your members or employees, do not give any response until you have had an opportunity to check the facts and seek advice. You may wish to contact the RYA's Communications department on 023 8060 4215 for professional advice on handling the media.

### **Insurance**

If there is a serious allegation involving harm caused to a child either at your premises or as a result of taking part in your activities, the person in charge should consider notifying your insurers in case there is a subsequent claim against the organisation.

### **Historical allegations**

If someone raises a child protection concern relating to incidents that took place some time ago, follow the same procedure as you would for a new concern, even if the person about whom the allegation is being made is no longer active within your organisation. If the concern appears to relate to a criminal offence, encourage the individual to contact the Police on 101.

### **Reference to the Disclosure and Barring Service or Disclosure Scotland**

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) maintains the lists of people barred from working with children or with vulnerable adults in England and Wales and in Northern Ireland. Disclosure Scotland fulfils this function in Scotland. If your organisation permanently dismisses or removes someone from a role involving Regulated Activity/Work, or would have dismissed them if they had not resigned, because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult or placed them at risk of harm, you have a duty to refer them to the DBS or Disclosure Scotland, as appropriate. *It is a criminal offence not to make such a referral.* For guidance on the grounds and process for making a referral, contact the RYA Safeguarding and Equality Manager.