



# **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines**

Shoresports Safeguarding and  
Child Protection Policy and Guidelines  
is an adapted from the RYA template  
for training centres and schools.  
Last updated Feb 2020  
By Nick May

## **Policy Statement**

This policy refers to anyone under the age of 18, defined as a child by the Children Act 1989 . The policy applies to all Shoresports employees and volunteers.

Shoresports is committed to safeguarding children taking part in its activities from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or bullying. We recognise that the safety, welfare and needs of the child are paramount and that any child, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual or gender identity or social status, has a right to protection from discrimination and abuse.

Shoresports takes all reasonable steps to ensure that, through safe recruitment, appropriate operating procedures and training, it offers a safe and fun environment to children taking part in Shoresports events and activities.

The child's experience of the sport is our priority. We will create a safe and welcoming environment, both on and off the water, where children can have fun and develop their skills and confidence. We will treat all children with respect, celebrate their achievements and listen to their views and experiences.

Shoresports:

- Recognises that safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone, not just those working directly with them.
- Carefully recruits and selects all employees and volunteers in roles involving close contact with children and provides them with appropriate information or training.
- Responds swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected abuse, referring to external agencies as necessary.
- Regularly reviews safeguarding procedures and practices in the light of experience or to take account of legislative, social or technological changes.
- Communicates changes and shares good practice with training centres, clubs and class associations.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

## **PART 1 – Policy and Guidance**

Shoresports is committed to safeguarding children taking part in its activities from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or bullying. We recognise that the safety, welfare and needs of the child are paramount and that any child, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual or gender identity or social status, has a right to protection from discrimination and abuse.

Shoresports takes all reasonable steps to ensure that, through safe recruitment, appropriate operating procedures and training, it offers a safe and fun environment to children taking part in its events and activities.

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

Shoresports Named Welfare Officer: Nick May

### **Staff and Volunteers**

All Club staff and volunteers whose role brings them into regular contact with young people will be asked to provide references. The Club Welfare Officer and those regularly instructing, coaching or supervising young people will also be asked to apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure.

### **Good Practice**

Shoresports will seek written consent from parents/carers before taking photos or video of a child at an event or training session or publishing such images. Parents and spectators should be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state their purpose for photography/filming. If the Club publishes images of children, no identifying information other than names will be included. Any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography or the inappropriate use of images should be reported to the Club Welfare Officer.

### **Concerns**

Anyone who is concerned about a young member's or participant's welfare, either outside the sport or within Shoresports, should inform the Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence. The Welfare Officer will follow the attached procedures (see RYA Flowcharts 1 and 2).

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

## **PART 2 – PROCEDURES**

Shoresports aims to develop a culture within our organisation 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.

To minimise risk and promote good practice we discourage situations where adults are working unobserved or could take advantage of their position of trust. Good practice protects everyone – children, volunteers and staff.

The role of the designated Welfare Officer should include:

- 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.
- Maintaining contact details for local Children's Services and Police.

If there is a concern, the Welfare Officer is to:

- 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 person in charge (Commodore, Principal etc).

Everyone in the organisation should know who the Welfare Officer is and how to contact them.

For advice Shoresports can go to the RYA Safeguarding and Equality Manager, tel. 023 8060 4104, RYA Safeguarding Officer, tel. 023 8060 4226, e-mail [safeguarding@rya.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rya.org.uk)

### **These common sense guidelines should be available to everyone within your organisation:**

- 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.

### **Unlikely Scenarios**

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

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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'.

### **Recruitment and training**

If a good recruitment policy is adopted, and safeguarding is covered in the organisation's risk assessment and operating procedures, the opportunity for an individual with poor intent towards children to gain access to the organisation or to abuse a position of trust should be minimised.

All applications, whether for paid or voluntary work, should be subject to an appropriate level of scrutiny. The level of checking you carry out should be proportionate to the role and the level of risk involved and in line with relevant statutory requirements. The risk is higher if the person will be in regular contact with the same child or children, in sole charge of children with no parents or other adults present, and/or in a role involving authority and trust, such as an instructor or coach.

All new staff over the age of 18 are to have their background checked and agree to the following:

To sign a self-declaration

To have a current DBS check - which is a requirement for any RYA instructors

To agree to their competency being observed and monitored

Safeguarding training is now a requirement from the RYA and BC for their instructor courses. Shoresports is aware that 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 Disclosure and Barring Service/Disclosure Scotland if they have dismissed someone from Regulated Activity/Regulated Work for harming a child or vulnerable adult or placing them at risk of harm, or would have dismissed them if they had not resigned.

Shoresports aims to help staff to operate safely in their roles by:

- providing the applicant with a clear job or role description so that they understand what the work involves
- draw up a 'person specification' listing the key qualifications and skills. Showing what activities each member of staff is competent in running.
- check that relevant staff hold an appropriate and valid RYA instructor certificate, coach qualification or powerboat/safety boat certificate if required
- provide an induction, training, mentoring or supervision to cover any areas where they may lack experience or confidence and familiarise them with your organisation's operating procedures.

If the role involves contact with children, you should at least:

- ask them to provide information about their past career or relevant experience
- ask their reasons for leaving earlier posts, or moving area, and make sure there are no unexplained gaps in their career history
- explore their experience of and attitude towards working with children

- take up references, at least one of which should be from someone who has first-hand knowledge of their previous work with children, and make the nature of the work clear to the referees.

### **PART 3 Other Helpful Information - From the RYA**

#### **Criminal Records Disclosures (DBS/AccessNI) and Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme**

Organisations affiliated to or recognised by the RYA can access the DBS. Access NI or PVG processes through the RYA which is a registered Umbrella/ Intermediary Body. The procedure varies according to the home country and legal jurisdiction in which your organisation is located (see below). The service is free for volunteers. A fee is payable to the DBS/AccessNI/ Disclosure Scotland in the case of paid staff. Information is available from the RYA website [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding) or contact [disclosure@rya.org.uk](mailto:disclosure@rya.org.uk)

DBS checks, Access NI checks and the PVG Scheme should only be used in conjunction with the other checks listed above and not relied on in isolation. A clear Disclosure is not a guarantee that the applicant has never done anything wrong, it only shows whether or not they have been caught.

#### **Legal Notes**

Although it is not a legal requirement for voluntary sports clubs or private employers to ask their staff or volunteers to apply for Disclosures, it is an offence to allow someone to undertake regulated activity/work if they have been barred from working with the relevant vulnerable group.

There is a risk that determined known offenders who are no longer able to work undetected in the statutory sector may move into the voluntary and sports sectors. If groups from local schools come to your site, a school may request that you check your instructors or volunteers so that they are subject to the same level of scrutiny as the children's teachers.

An individual is only eligible to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure, which will disclose their 'spent' as well as their 'unspent' record, if they will be in a position listed under the exceptions to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, ie. one that involves regularly teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising persons under 18. They can only be required to apply for the additional Barred List check if they will be undertaking 'regulated activity' with children or vulnerable adults as defined under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

All personal information, including Disclosure 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, in accordance with the DBS/PVG/AccessNI Codes of Conduct and your organisation's Data Privacy Policy.

## **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 receive 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. Safeguarding and child protection procedures should include an Anti-Bullying policy. The RYA's Anti-bullying policy is available on the website under Racing & Performance, British Youth Sailing, Information, Policy Guidance or click on this link: Youth and Junior Racing Policies.

The Child Protection in Sport Unit also publishes a sample Anti-bullying policy and guidance, see <https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/anti-bullying/> 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 could be asked to sign up to the Club Code of Conduct or to agree their own Code as a group.

## **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

Make sure your staff or volunteers are given clear roles and responsibilities, are aware of your organisation's safeguarding policy and procedures and are issued with guidelines on:

- following good practice (see Good Practice Guidelines above and Sample Document 4) and
- recognising signs of abuse (see Appendix A).

RYA Coaches and Instructors are expected to comply with the RYA Codes and Conduct (see Appendices B and C).

## **Parental responsibility and 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. Clubs and class associations may wish to consider adopting a Code of Conduct (see Sample Document 5) 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 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. If the club/class/centre 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.

For information on a Club's legal liability and duty of care, go to the Club Zone of the RYA website [www.rya.org.uk/the-club-zone](http://www.rya.org.uk/the-club-zone) (you'll need your club's or class association's login, please contact [membership@rya.org.uk](mailto:membership@rya.org.uk) if you don't know it) and select Club Management, Health & Safety, Organising and Managing Events to find a link to our 'Race, Training and Event Management' guide.

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 (see Sample Document 6).

### **Organising and hosting events**

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When hosting an open junior or youth event at your club, liaise with the relevant class association to ensure that all involved in the organisation of the event are operating to similar policies. It should be made clear to all young competitors and their parents that there is someone responsible for their welfare who can be contacted if they have any concerns.

A poster for you to display at your event, giving the contact details of the event welfare officer, can be downloaded from [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding) or contact the RYA Safeguarding Officer, e-mail [safeguarding@rya.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rya.org.uk) , tel. 023 8060 4226.

The Child Protection in Sport Unit also publishes a comprehensive guide 'Safe Sports Events' <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/tools/safe-sport-events-activities-and-competitions/> .

## Communication and Images

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.saferinternet.org.uk](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk)

### Parents

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

### Club 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.

To view a series of webinars for clubs on using social media, go to the Club Zone of the RYA website [www.rya.org.uk](http://www.rya.org.uk) (you'll need your club's or class association's login, please contact [membership@rya.org.uk](mailto:membership@rya.org.uk) if you don't know it) and select Club Marketing, Social Media.

For more information, see the RYA's separate guidance 'Club Guide to Social Media Use with Children and Young People', [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding), RYA Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidance.

### 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'.

## 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 working with the RYA's Youth and Junior squads are expected to comply with the RYA British Youth Sailing Communication Policy.

## Photography, images and video

Publishing articles, photos and videos in club 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's parents/carers for their images to be taken and used

- A consent form could be included with the event entry form (see Sample Document 6 for sample consent 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. 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. An image is personal data and should be treated in accordance with your organisation's Data Privacy Policy.

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 recording of images or video using any type of camera or photographic equipment, including cameras on smartphones and tablets and action cameras used on the water, should not be permitted in showers or changing areas in any circumstances.

## Procedures

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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 (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.

## Useful Contacts

NSPCC 24 hour free helpline

For advice on any aspect of children's welfare

0808 800 5000

E-mail: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

Website: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Children 1st (Scotland) free helpline  
08000 28 22 33  
E-mail: [parentlinescotland@children1st.org.uk](mailto:parentlinescotland@children1st.org.uk)  
Text: 07860 022844  
Website: [www.children1st.org.uk](http://www.children1st.org.uk)

Childline 24 hour free helpline  
0800 1111  
Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

MIND – mental health charity  
Tel: 0300 123 3393  
Text: 86463  
E-mail: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)  
Website: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

#### Social Care Services

Your local phone book or the website for your County Council or unitary local authority will list numbers for the Children and Families Services, generally with separate numbers for Children's Social Care and for the Emergency Duty Team (out of hours service).

Royal Yachting Association  
Safeguarding and Equality Manager  
RYA House, Ensign Way  
Hamble  
Southampton  
SO31 4YA  
Tel: 023 8060 4104  
E-mail: [safeguarding@rya.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@rya.org.uk)  
Website: [www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/safeguarding)

Self-declaration form

Can be adapted for roles involving working with vulnerable adults

Private and Confidential

Self-declaration form for roles involving contact with children

(Organisation name) ..... is committed to safeguarding children from physical, sexual and emotional harm. As part of our Safeguarding policy, we require applicants for posts involving contact with children to complete this self-declaration form.

If your role will involve regular or frequent contact with or responsibility for children you may also be required to provide a valid Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure, with Barred List check if relevant (Scotland: to be a member of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme). 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.

All information will be treated as confidential and managed in accordance with our Data Privacy Policy and current data protection legislation and guidance.

Name .....

1. Have you ever been known to any Children's Services Department as being an actual or potential risk to children?

YES / NO

If yes, please supply details.

2. Have you ever been the subject of any disciplinary investigation and/or sanction by any organisation due to concerns about your behaviour towards children?

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 disciplinary action and/or the withdrawal of my appointment.

If required I agree to provide a valid Criminal Records Disclosure (Scotland: PVG Scheme Membership certificate).

I agree to inform the organisation within 24 hours if I am subsequently investigated by any agency or organisation in relation to concerns about my behaviour towards children or young people.

I understand that the information contained in this form and in the Disclosure, or supplied by third parties, may be shared with other persons or organisations in circumstances where this is considered necessary to safeguard children.

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

Note: if the applicant is aged under 18, this form should be counter-signed by a parent or guardian

Sample Document 4 – Good Practice Guide  
Revised Dec 2016  
Good Practice Guide  
for Instructors, Coaches and Volunteers

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 A – What is child abuse?  
Revised Jan 2019

(Based on the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (including via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse may involve adults or other children inflicting physical harm:

- hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating
- giving children alcohol or inappropriate drugs
- a parent or carer fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately inducing, illness in a child
- 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.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- imposing expectations which are beyond the child's age or developmental capability
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
- allowing a child to see or hear the ill-treatment of another person
- serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- the exploitation or corruption of children
- 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.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child.

Sexual abuse. Sexual abuse involves an individual (male or female, or another child) forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, to gratify their own sexual needs. The activities may involve:

- physical contact (eg. kissing, touching, masturbation, rape or oral sex)
- involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images
- encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or watch sexual activities
- grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)
- 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 and position of trust over young people.

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. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- respond to a child's basic emotional needs
- neglect in a sport situation might occur if an instructor or coach fails to ensure that children are safe, or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs and wants (eg. attention, money or material possessions, alcohol or drugs), and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation can also occur online without involving physical contact.

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable - including the young - by seeking to: sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination eg. towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society.

Bullying (not included in 'Working Together' but probably more common in a sport situation than some of the other forms of abuse described above)

Bullying (including online bullying, for example via text or social media) 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 is often 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 or physically small, being gay or lesbian, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

Bullying can include:

- physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc
- name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation or the continual ignoring of individuals
- posting of derogatory or abusive comments, videos or images on social network sites
- racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sectarianism
- sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour
- unwanted physical contact.

The acronym STOP – Several Times On Purpose - can help you to identify bullying behaviour.

### 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 which 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 which 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 your organisation's designated Welfare/Safeguarding 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.