



Bradford & Bingley canoe club



Safeguarding Children

Child Protection Policy and Procedures

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The designated person for child protection is

Wendy Robinson

Policy Statement

Every child or young person who participates in canoeing should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of all individuals involved with Bradford & Bingley Canoe Club. It is determined to meet its obligation to ensure that in providing canoeing opportunities it does so to the highest possible standard of care.

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

- Safeguard and promote the interests and well being of children 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 children with whom Bradford & Bingley Canoe Club works and to coaches and volunteers within the club
- Help to maintain the standards of practice, which are associated with Bradford & Bingley Canoe Club and the British Canoe Union.

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 the provision of support, appropriate training and adequate supervision of all concerned so that together with parents/carers and other organisations it can ensure that the needs and welfare of children remains paramount.

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.

Anyone under the age of 18 years should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document.

What is Child abuse?

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and sometimes by their peers. Often these are people they know and trust. It refers to the damage done to a child's physical, emotional or mental health. Children can be abused within or outside their family, at school, during sporting or recreational activities.

Definitions of abuse (Appendix 1)

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 well be reasons for these factors other than abuse. If, however you are concerned about the welfare of a child **YOU MUST ACT!** Don't assume that somebody else will.

Indications that a child may be being abused include.

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising cuts or burns, particularly if situated on parts of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- Any injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- 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.
- Sexual awareness inappropriate for age
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour in games
- Mistrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would be expected
- Difficulty in making friends
- Prevention from socialising with other children
- Variations in eating patterns 1 Loss of weight for no reason

It is not the responsibility of those working in canoeing to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to **act on any concerns**.

Procedures

The following actions should be taken by anyone who has concerns about the welfare of a child if there are suspicions or concerns.

Non-action is not an option in Child Protection

Actions to take if there has been a disclosure

- React calmly so as not to frighten the child
- Tell the child he/she was right to tell and that he/she is not to blame.
- Take what the child says seriously.
- Ensure the safety of the child.
- Keep questions to the minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Reassure the child but do not make promises of confidentiality or outcome which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.

- The designated Child Protection Person and the Chairman within Bradford & Bingley Canoe Club should be informed as soon as possible. If this is not possible contact the BCU Child protection Officer via the BCU Office Nottingham, they will ensure
- (a) Parents/carers are contacted to help clarify initial concerns, except in circumstances where the child might be placed at greater risk or sexual abuse is disclosed.
- (b) Contact the Social Services Duty Officer if a child protection issue is suspected.
- (c) If in doubt consult with Social Services or the NSPCC Freephone Helpline: 0800 800 500.
- (d) They make a full record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible.
- (e) They will inform the person in charge (Unless the allegations are about him/her)

Bradford & Bingley Canoe Club and the British Canoe Union will support anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

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. Therefore it must be as detailed as possible. The report should contain the following information:

- 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 its 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.

Whenever possible referrals to Social Services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours

Keep a record of the name and designation of the member of Social Services or Police Officer to whom concerns were passed and record the time and date of the call, in case of follow up. Keep in a secure place

Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff and Volunteers

(This includes anyone working with children in a paid or voluntary capacity)

When the person in charge is informed of the situation but is unsure whether the situation is of abuse then a consultation should take place with Social Services or the NSPCC and the recommendations made should be followed through. It is vital that any concerns for the welfare of the child arising from abuse or harassment by a member of staff or volunteer should be reported immediately.

If it is found that after a Social Service or Police investigation that the allegation is about poor practice then the person in charge has to deal with it. If the allegation is about the person in charge or where the matter has been handled inadequately then a referral has to be made to a Senior Officer of the British Canoe Union.

In the event of an allegation of child abuse is made against a member of the British Canoe Union, or a person acting on their behalf, whether paid or voluntary then a Senior Officer of the British Canoe Union must be informed.

If as a coach you have had allegations made against you and you wish to discuss the matter with an impartial advisor you could contact the BCU's Coach Advisor via the BCU Office Nottingham.

Recruitment, Selection and Training of Staff and Volunteers

- The Bradford & Bingley Canoe Club is committed to safeguarding the well being of its members, to achieve this, the following policy will be adhered to.
- All club coaches, helpers and officials should read and adhere to the BCU guidelines in relation to Child protection and Harassment and ethics
- Bradford & Bingley Canoe Club will undertake a screening procedure for any adult working with young people. This will involve completing the BCU Personal Declaration Form.
- Confidentiality of information obtained will be between the volunteer, the chairman and if necessary the Child Protection Link.

Training

Bradford & Bingley Canoe 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 take whatever actions are needed to safeguard children.
- To recognise and respond to concerns about a child in need.
- To appreciate their own role and that of others.
- To communicate and act appropriately within national and local guidance to safeguard children.

Amended 18th November 2009

Checked and Approved by Anne Howarth, Wendy Robinson and Neill Morrison

APPENDIX 1

The five main forms of abuse

Physical Abuse includes situations where adults:

- 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
- Children are overprotected preventing them from socialising
- Children are frequently shouted at or taunted
- Children are involved in sporting activities where they are subject to unrealistic pressure by a parent or Coach in order to consistently perform to high 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

You can reduce situations for the abuse of children and help to protect staff and volunteers by promoting good practice. The following are more specific examples of care, which should be taken when working within a canoeing context:

- Always be publicly open when working with children
- 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. One should try to support the paddle rather than have direct contact on the child. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Where possible parents should take on the responsibility for their children in the changing rooms.
- Encourage an open environment e.g. no secrets.
- Where mixed groups are away from home, a male and female member of the club should always accompany them.

Everyone should be aware that it does not make sense, as a general rule to:

- Spend excessive amounts of 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 do 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.

It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or have a disability. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and prior consent of parents/carers and