



Haversham Sailing Club's Children's Welfare and Safeguarding Policy Statement

As defined in the Children Act 1989, for the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child. The policy also applies to **vulnerable adults**.

It is the policy of Haversham Sailing Club (HSC) to safeguard children and vulnerable adults taking part in boating from physical, sexual or emotional harm. The HSC will take all reasonable steps to ensure that, through appropriate procedures and training, children participating in HSC activities do so in a safe environment. We recognise that the safety and welfare of the child is paramount and that all children, whatever their age, gender, disability, culture, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, social status or sexual identity, have a right to protection from abuse.

The HSC actively seeks to:

- Create a safe and welcoming environment, both on and off the water, where children can have fun and develop their skills and confidence.
- Support and encourage recognised training centres, affiliated clubs and class associations to implement similar policies.
- Recognise that safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone, not just those who work with children.
- Ensure that HSC-organised training and events are run to the highest possible safety standards.
- Be prepared to review its ways of working to incorporate best practice.

We will:

- Treat all children with respect and celebrate their achievements.
- Carefully recruit and select all employees, contractors and volunteers.
- Respond swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected or actual child abuse.

This policy relates to all employees, contractors and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults in the course of their HSC duties. It will be kept under periodic review. All relevant concerns, allegations, complaints and their outcome should be notified to the HSC Designated Person for Child Protection.

Designated Person for Child Protection

Although everyone has a role to play in ensuring that children are safe, HSC will ensure there is a **designated individual** with specific responsibility for implementing the policy, and who will act as the point of contact to receive information and advice from the RYA.

The designated person's general terms of reference are:

- Maintaining an 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.
- Advising the management committee on child protection issues.
- Maintaining contact details for local Children's Social Care Services and Police.

If there is a concern, the designated person would:

- 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).
- Keep the RYA informed as necessary (*see flowcharts below*).

Haversham Sailing Club's Designated Person for Child Protection is **Alison Butler**, who can be contacted via 01908 225657 or emailed at safeguarding@havershamsc.org

The RYA Safeguarding Team can be contacted on 02380 012796 or emailed at safeguarding@rya.org.uk

The RYA's Child Protection Co-ordinator can be contacted on 02380 604104

Appointing staff

HSC, in appointing paid or volunteer staff, will follow the RYA's guidelines on good practice. This includes assessing the level of risk (in respect of unsupervised contact with children), taking up references, disclosure, and seeking DBS/CRB clearances.

Good practice guidelines

Culture

It is important to develop a culture within Haversham Sailing Club where both children and adults feel able to raise any concerns, knowing that they will be taken seriously, treated confidentially and will not make the situation worse for themselves or others.

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 child who has experienced racism may find it difficult to trust an adult from a different ethnic background.

Minimising risk

HSC will 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. Good practice protects everyone – children, volunteers and staff.

These common sense guidelines should be available to everyone within HSC:

- 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.

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 both 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.

Responsibilities of staff and volunteers

HSC will make sure staff or volunteers are given clear roles and responsibilities, are aware of this child protection policy and procedures and are issued with guidelines on:

- following good practice (*see above*) and
- recognising signs of abuse

RYA-certified Coaches and Instructors are expected to comply with the RYA Code of Ethics and Conduct.

Child Protection Training

A three-hour basic awareness workshop 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children' and other training initiatives, both on- and off-line, are available from <https://www.ukcoaching.org/> and the RYA. Some County Sports Partnerships, Local Authorities and Local Safeguarding Children Boards also offer open training. For more information visit the Child Protection in Sport Unit on the NSPCC website: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/>

Parental responsibility and club liability

Although HSC has a duty of care to its 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 ('carer') to take that responsibility, outside formal club-organised activities. For further information on club liability and duty of care, see the RYA's website www.rya.org.uk, Working with Us, Clubs and Class Associations.

Changing rooms and showers

It is preferable for adults to stay away from the changing rooms while there are children there. However bullying or harassment can be an issue, and a common sense approach should be taken depending on the situation. In general it is better if one adult is not alone. Extra vigilance may be required if there is public access to the venue. 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 gender.

First aid and medical treatment

First aid is part of HSC's normal duty of care. Emergencies excepted, consent should be obtained if medication or medical treatment is required in the absence of the parent/carer.

Organising and hosting events

When hosting an open junior or youth event, HSC will 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 on site responsible for their welfare who can be contacted if they have any concerns.

The RYA Racing Department, in conjunction with the recognised junior and youth classes, has developed best practice guidelines covering all aspects of running a major junior or youth event and these are available to clubs and Class Associations on request. RYA organised events will be run under these guidelines. The Child Protection in Sport Unit also publishes a comprehensive guide 'Safe Sports Events'.

Away events

It is essential that those accompanying young people to away events or training camps, and the competitors themselves, have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and the conduct expected of them. The RYA publishes a Sailor Supervision Guidelines document for those involved with the national junior and youth squads.**Bullying**

HSC endorses the RYA's anti-bullying policy which is available on the website under Youth, About Youth Sail Racing Programmes.

Photography

Publishing articles and photos in club newsletters, websites, local newspapers etc is an excellent way of recognising young people's achievements and of promoting HSC 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 and their parents/carers for their images to be taken and used

- A consent form should be included with the event entry 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 Ethics and Conduct.
- Care must be taken in the storage of and access to images.

When publishing images, HSC will make sure they are appropriate and 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 prize winners, without identifying them by name.
- In recognising the achievement of an individual sailor and publishing their name with their photo, DO NOT publish any other information (eg. where they live, name of school, other hobbies and interests) that would enable someone to contact, befriend or start to 'groom' the child.
- Ensure that the young people pictured are suitably clothed, to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.

Much 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 HSC's Designated Person 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 use of cameras or camera phones in changing areas should not be permitted in any circumstances. Such use by young people should be regarded as a form of bullying.

Handling concerns, reports or allegations

A complaint, concern or allegation may come from any number of sources: the child, their parents, someone else within HSC. It may involve the behaviour of one of the 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.

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 that 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
- 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 more questions than are necessary for you to be sure that you need to act
- take sole responsibility – consult someone else (ideally the club's Designated Person, 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 must not ignore it.

Recording and handling information

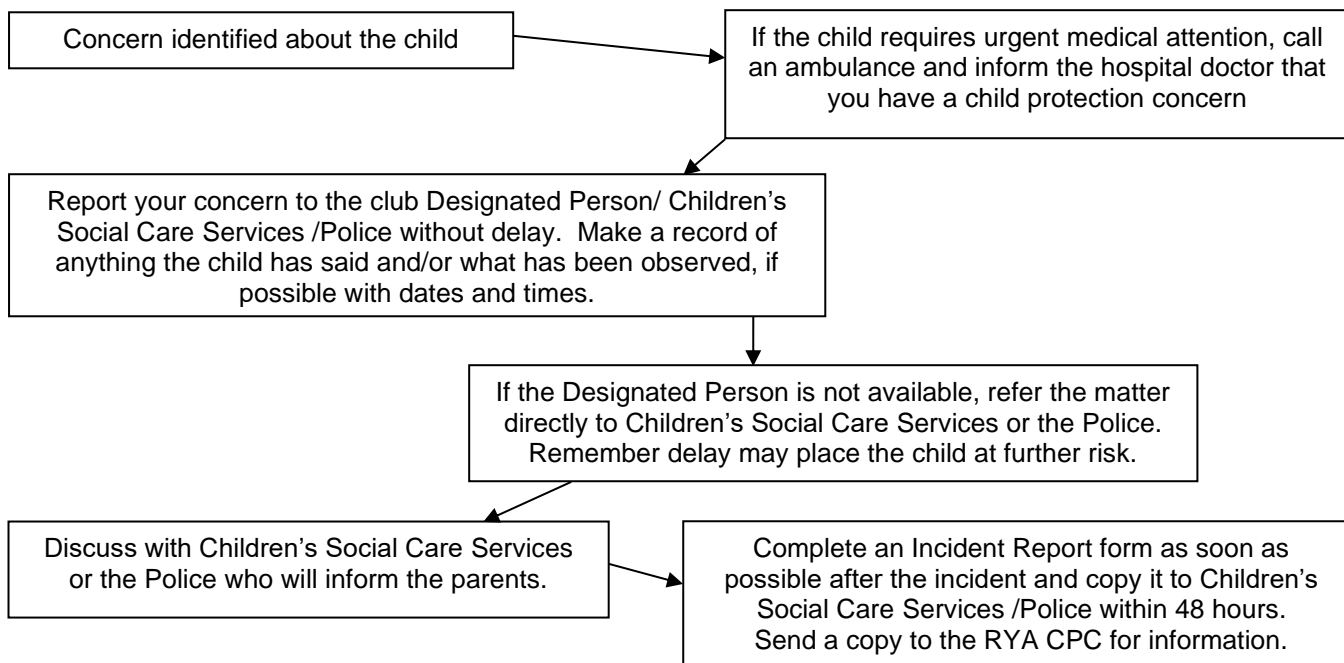
If you suspect that a child may have been the subject of any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, the allegation must be referred as soon as possible to Children's Social Care Services or the Police who have trained experts to handle such cases. Do not start asking questions which may jeopardise any formal investigation. 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 *Incident Report Form – Template* below).

All information must be treated as confidential, stored securely and only shared with those who need to know. If the allegation or suspicion concerns someone within HSC, only the child's parents/carers, the person in charge of the organisation (unless they are the subject of the allegation), the relevant authorities and the RYA Child Protection Co-ordinator should be informed. If the alleged abuse took place outside the sport, the Police or Children's Social Care Services 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.

Procedures

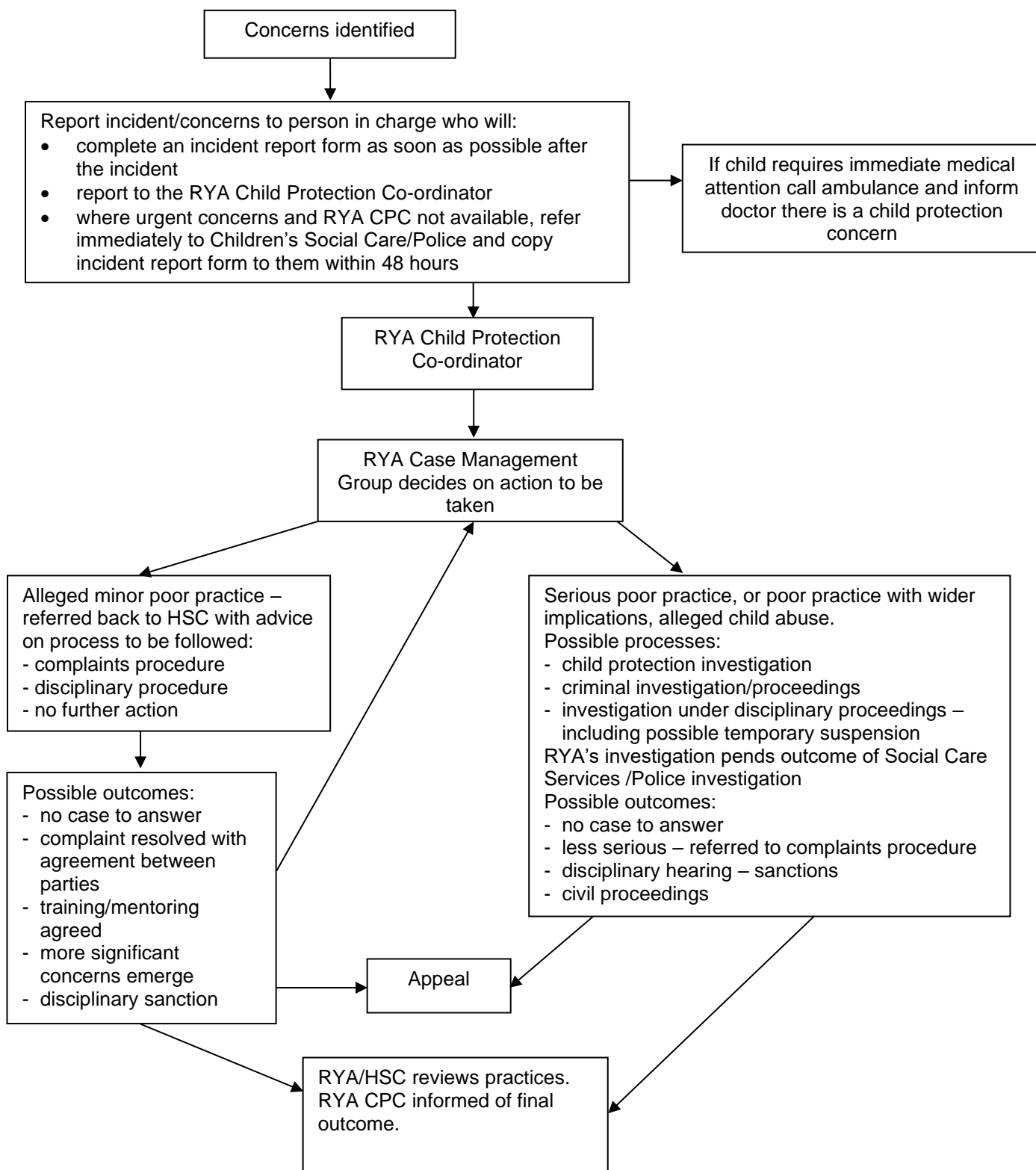
Procedures to be followed by anyone concerned about a child's welfare, either outside the sport or within your organisation (see *flowcharts below*)

Flowchart 1 – What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused outside the sport's environment (but the concern is identified through the child's involvement in the sport)



If you are uncertain what to do at any stage, contact the RYA's Child Protection Co-ordinator on 023 8060 4104 or the NSPCC free 24 hour helpline 0808 800 5000.

Flowchart 2 – What to do if you are concerned about the behaviour of any member, volunteer, staff, coach or official working for the RYA or an RYA affiliated/recognised organisation



Incident Report Form – Template

Date and time of incident	
Name and position of person about whom report, complaint or allegation is made	
Name and age of child involved	
Nature of incident, complaint or allegation (continue on separate page if necessary)	
Action taken (continue on separate page if necessary)	
If Police or Children’s Social Care Services contacted, name, position and telephone number of person handling case	
Name, organisation and position of person completing form	
Contact telephone number	
Signature of person completing form	
Date and time form completed	
Name and position of organisation’s child protection or person in charge (if different from above)	
Contact telephone number	

This form should be copied, marked ‘Private and Confidential’, to the RYA Child Protection Co-ordinator and to the statutory authorities (if they have been informed of the incident) within 48 hours of the incident.