

GREENSFORGE SAILING CLUB

Child Welfare Policy Statement and Procedures

It is the intention of Greensforge Sailing Club (GSC) to create a welcoming and supportive environment where children can have fun and develop their sailing skills. GSC has a duty of care to safeguard them from physical, emotional and sexual harm and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that children taking part in sailing and other activities with the club do so in a safe environment.

For the purpose of this policy anyone under 18 years of age is to be considered a child.

All members of the club should be aware of this policy and follow the Good Practice Guidelines therein, which are based on those of the Royal Yachting Association (RYA). A copy of this policy should be available at the clubhouse and on the GSC website.

Responsible Adult

All adult members of GSC have a role to play in looking after the welfare of children at the club, helping as required and keeping an eye on their safety. However, this does not take away the responsibility of parents/guardians for their own children.

It is the policy of GSC that whilst on club premises all children under 16 years of age should be under the direct supervision of a parent or appointed guardian who is responsible for their welfare at all times. 16 and 17 year olds can be at the club on their own, but are still the responsibility of their parents/guardians.

Club Child Welfare Officer

Telephone : 07977 119556

Email: juliahook@doctors.org.uk

The welfare officer is Julia Morrice. If you have any concerns or queries about the welfare of a child within the club please contact Julia as above. Any communication will be dealt with in confidence and will follow the procedures laid out in the RYA document "Child Protection Policy and Guidelines" (see rya.org.uk)

Good Practice

The Good Practice Guidelines are appended. It is advised that these guidelines should be followed by all members of the club. They are here to protect both children and adults. Any members working with or coming into regular contact with children are advised to familiarise themselves with the RYA Guidance on recognising abuse (see link below).

Situations worth a specific mention are dealt with below:

Physical Hazards

There are obvious physical hazards present at a sailing club. The following are brought to attention but commonsense should prevail in all situations.

1. All persons should wear a buoyancy aid on the water and on the jetty, and it is advised that young children and non-swimmers wear lifejackets both on and near the water.
2. Non-swimming children in addition should be accompanied on the water by an adult who is a competent swimmer
3. Areas of particular hazard are the upper level of the Timing Hut, the Slipway (which is extremely slippery), the garage and equipment stores and the kitchen and utility areas.
4. Care must be given to handwashing after contact with the water of the reservoir due to contamination with toxic algae (see notices within the clubhouse)
5. Potentially dangerous tools, equipment and chemicals should as far as is reasonable be kept out of reach of young children.

Accompanied Sailing

Consent should be obtained from both the parent/guardian and the Officer of the Day before a child is allowed to sail with a club member. The boat should remain in clear sight of the Timing Hut or safety boat.

Changing rooms

GSC has limited showering and changing facilities and we consider it unrealistic to expect adults to not use these facilities at the same time as children. However a cautious approach should be taken. In general it is advised that more than one adult should be present in these facilities if children are using them.

Photography/Filming

Photography is commonplace at GSC, especially at specific events such as the Regatta. Photographs are displayed within the clubhouse to illustrate events and may be put on the club website. Any club member wishing to take photographs/films of children in any situations at the club should check that their parent/guardian has given permission. There is a section on the membership form regarding this permission but this information is not readily available at the clubhouse; the simplest approach would

be to ask those parents present at the time. Similarly parental permission should be sought before using any such photographs at the clubhouse, on the website or in any other published material.

If GSC publishes images of children, no identifying information other than names will be included.

It would be helpful if any parent/guardian who does not wish the taking of or reproduction of photographs of their children should let the Officer of the Day know as soon as possible.

Greensforge does not have exclusive rights to the waterfront and we obviously have little control over the actions of non-members, although we would aim to apply due vigilance as required. Any unfamiliar persons seen taking photographs/films of child members should quite appropriately be asked their identity and purpose. Any concerns about inappropriate photography or use of images should be reported to the Club Welfare Officer.

Criminal Records Bureau and other checks

GSC is a small sailing club. The risks at GSC with respect to the welfare of children is felt to be low, there being no regular contact between any particular adult and child/children. In general members whose role (e.g. coaching) brings them into contact with children are well known and respected members, and we currently consider it unreasonable to expect them to provide references, complete self-disclosure forms or obtain Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks. However, any member or other volunteer who is involved in instructing or supervising young children may be asked to do so.

If you have concerns

If you have concerns about the welfare of a child within the club setting you should contact the Child Welfare Officer (details above).

If this is not possible, or you would prefer to speak to someone else, help and advice can be obtained from:

1) NSPCC Child Protection In Sport Unit via their helpline for adults:

Tel: 0808 800 5000

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

2) RYA Child Protection Officer

Tel: 02380604104

Website: www.rya.org.uk/infoadvice/childprotection

If you have concerns about abuse or neglect away from the club, you still have a duty of care to that child and should seek advice as above. Talking to the child's parents/guardians may put the child at greater risk.

Good Practice Guidelines

Below are only essential points of good practice. More information and details about specific points, including how to recognise abuse, are available in:

The RYA's Child Protection Policy and Procedures, which can be found on their website www.rya.org.uk/infoadvice/childprotection.

The NSPCC, who have a unit dedicated to child protection in sport www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/cpsu/contact/contact_wda60537.html or direct via e-mail at cpsu@nspcc.org.uk).

Anyone in contact with children at the club should:

- Treat all children fairly and with respect
- Avoid spending any significant time working with children in isolation
- Do not take children alone in a car, however short the journey
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child

You should never:

- Take part in or tolerate behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises a child or that negatively affects their self esteem
- Tolerate acts of aggression, by adults or other children
- Take children alone in a car, however short the journey
- Take children to your home as part of club activities
(If any of the above are unavoidable, ensure that you have the informed consent of the child's parent/guardian or, if this is impossible, from a person nominally in charge at the club at the time).
- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged, or use such language yourself with children
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Fail to respond to an allegation made by a child, however trivial; always act

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 be carried out with the full understanding of the child if possible, and of the parent/guardian. In emergency situations parents should be informed where feasible, and any personal care tasks should be undertaken with the utmost sensitivity and discretion.