



# **Baltic Wharf Sailing Club**

Sailing in Bristol harbour

## **Under 18's Safeguarding Policy**

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## **Baltic Wharf Sailing Club Child Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines**

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## **1. BWSC Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

This policy outlines the steps Baltic Wharf Sailing Club will make to safeguard children sailing with the club.

Baltic Wharf Sailing Club is a small, friendly RYA-affiliated sailing club, sailing in Bristol Floating Harbour, a commercial harbour operated by Bristol City Council.

Membership is open to members of the public upon application. As part of the application all members must agree to comply with the club rules and bylaws.

This policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of Baltic Wharf Sailing Club in working together with other professionals and agencies in Child Safeguarding.

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.

## **2. Policy Statement**

BWSC is committed to safeguarding each Members and Associate Member from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or bullying, whilst participating in BWSC activities.

All members of the Club should be aware of the policy. Which is published both on our website and on the noticeboard in our club room.

All members, visitors and associates should contact BWSC Safeguarding Officer, for any concerns/queries they have in regards to safeguarding Children. At times it may be appropriate to contact another member of the committee, the social services or the police. We should be informed about everything, However, in some circumstances concerns should be raised with the police first.

In the absence of Baltic Wharf Sailing Club Safeguarding Officers, the Club secretary maybe contacted. A log of the concern must be kept.

The Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for making a decision about notifying external agencies themselves if required and to consider alternative actions, where necessary. If the police are involved, the police should be consulted prior to giving any consultation with a third party to ensure any criminal investigation is not affected.

## **3. Culture**

We recognise that the safety, welfare and needs of all members are paramount and that all members, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual or gender identity or social status, have a right to protection from discrimination and abuse.

Children and adults are able to raise concerns at any time with the club safeguarding officer; all concerns will be taken seriously and treated confidentially.

#### **4. Minimising risk**

##### **4.1 Common sense guidelines**

- 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 is essential to send an individual message, copy it to the child's parent or carer.

##### **4.2 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/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

##### **4.3 Additional vulnerability**

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'.

#### **4.4 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.

#### **4.5 Bullying**

If a child alleges bullying or shows signs of being bullied, this must be investigated.

The RYA's Anti-bullying policy is available on the RYA website under Racing, Youth and Junior, Information, Policies:

<http://www.rya.org.uk/racing/youthjunior/information/Pages/Policies.aspx>

The Child Protection in Sport Unit, have also publishes a sample Anti-bullying policy and guidance:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/anti-bullying/>

### **5. Responsibilities**

This policy is intended to support the membership and associates of Baltic Wharf Sailing Club to understand their role and responsibilities in safeguarding Children. All members, visitors and associates are expected to follow this policy.

The key objectives of this policy are for all employees and volunteers of Baltic Wharf Sailing Club to:

- have an overview of Child safeguarding
- be clear about their responsibility to safeguard Children
- ensure the necessary actions are taken where a Child with care and support needs is deemed to be at risk

At the safety briefing before Club events on the water, the Officer of the Day (OOD1) must be made aware of all minors and must be introduced to the parent, guardian or person acting in loco parentis.

All minors must have a parent, guardian or someone in loco parentis sailing in the same boat with them or on the quayside in contact with the OOD1. It is the responsibility of members to inform the OOD1 that a minor is sailing with them, even if the child is their own.

### **5.1. 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. 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.

### **5.2. Club liability**

For information on a Club's legal liability and duty of care, please go to the Clubs section of the RYA website (you'll need your club's login) and select Support, Club Management, Health & Safety, Organising and Managing Events, or click on the link below.

<http://www.rya.org.uk/clubs/support/management/healthandsafety/Pages/organisingandmanagingevents.aspx>

## **6. 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. Consent should be obtained if medication or medical treatment is required in the absence of the parent/carer. In an emergency situation.

## **7. Changing rooms and shower**

Changing rooms and shower within Bristol Floating Harbour areas are under the control of the Harbourmaster (employed by Bristol City Council).

Bristol Floating Harbour is a commercial harbour operated by Bristol City Council. BWSC have no direct control over the facilities.

It is recommended that RYA-affiliated sailing club where possible have the following;

- Shower areas should, where possible, be designed to allow both adults and children to shower and dress in reasonable privacy
- As a minimum there should be separate male and female changing rooms and, if relevant, unisex disabled changing

- If there is an opportunity to redevelop or refurbish changing facilities, clubs should endeavour to provide some family changing areas similar to those provided at public swimming pools
- It is preferable for adults to stay away from the changing rooms while there are children there
- 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 a child alleges bullying or shows signs of being bullied, this must be investigated and information passed to the Harbourmaster

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.

## **8. What should I do if I am concerned?**

Members, visitors and associates at Baltic Wharf Sailing Club who have any child safeguarding concerns should:

### **8.1. Respond**

- Take emergency action if someone is at immediate risk of harm/in need of urgent medical attention. Dial 999 or 911 for emergency services.
- Get brief details about what has happened and what the child would like done about it, but do not probe or conduct a mini-investigation. Write down details of a conversation as soon as you are able to.
- Seek consent from the child to take action, you must say “that you cannot keep it a secret and that you must report it to the authorities” however you should seek their permission, to report the concern. Consider whether the child may lack capacity to make decisions about their own and other people’s safety and wellbeing. If you decide to act against their wishes or without their consent, you must record your decision and the reasons for this.

### **8.2. Report**

- Members, visitors and associates need to report any potential safeguarding concerns to BWSC Safeguarding Officer or a member of the committee.

### **8.3. Record**

- As far as possible, notes should be made, as soon as possible after the interview dated and signed.
- Keep records about safeguarding concerns confidential and in a location where the alleged abuser will not have access to the record. Access should not be given to any unauthorised personal for accessing confidential information including the sharing of passwords.

## 9. Club websites and social media RYA recommendations:

When promoting BWSC 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. By informing the Safeguarding Officer.
- Have a robust procedure for handling and assessing such a report or request and acting promptly to remove the offending content

## 10. 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 BWSC 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 four key principles to bear in mind:

1. Before taking photos or video, obtain written consent from the child and their parents/ carers for their images to be taken and used
2. When publishing images, make sure they are appropriate and that you do not include any information that might enable someone to contact the child
3. DO NOT publish any other information (e.g. where they live, name of school, other hobbies and interests) that could enable someone to contact, befriend or start to 'groom' the child.
4. 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 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.

Children/ parents may withdraw their consent to use a child's image for the promotion of the BWSC, up until the point of publication when it may not be possible.

The use of cameras or smart phones/tablets in changing areas should **not be permitted** in any circumstances. Such use by young people should be regarded as a form of bullying.

## 11. Conformity

### 11.1 Children sailing Constraints

- To conform to the above recommendations and guidance within this document and the risk assessment for the Sailing area at Baltic Wharf & Race control: parents with sailors under 18 years of age must complete the BWSC 'Under 18' sailing form each year, as part of their club membership application or the first time the Under 18 sails that season.

#### 11.2 Forms

- Completed forms will be retained by the Safeguarding Officer and a copy held securely / confidentially within the club room.

#### 11.3 Information

- The information may be used in the event that a parent, guardian or someone in loco parentis sailing is incapacitated and is unable to fulfil their duties under the child safeguarding policy, at which point the Safeguarding Officer plus a committee member will take on this role, until the parent or guardian assumes the role of safeguarding.