



# SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN POLICY



# BRITISH ROWING SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN POLICY

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# GLOSSARY

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition / Explanation</b>
Abuse	See section 2.4.
Child	Anyone under the age of 18.
Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)	The CPSU team is sited within the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and was established with joint funding from Sport England.
Child Protection Officer (CPO)	British Rowing officer whose responsibilities are explained in Section 5.3.
Child Protection Case Manager (CPCM)	Individual within British Rowing whose responsibilities are explained in Section 5.2.
Children's Social Care Services	The Local Authority statutory agency with responsibility for safeguarding and protecting children and families, formerly known as Social Services.
Club Welfare Officer (CWO)	The designated individual within a British Rowing affiliated club whose responsibilities are explained in Section 4.1.
Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)	Administrators who check on behalf of the Home Office for 'Registered Bodies'.
Duty of Care	The duty that rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of any person involved in an activity for which that individual or organisation is responsible (WG 3.1).
In loco parentis	The additional obligation on a coach, or other individual with responsibility for children, to act as a 'reasonable parent' would be expected to act.
Independent Safeguarding Authority	Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), established under the <i>Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006</i> , to administer the Vetting and Barring Scheme.
Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)	The LSCBs replaced the Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs). They co-ordinate what is done by all agencies/organisations who provide services for children and have responsibility to safeguard them and promote their welfare. LSCBs provide local inter-agency guidelines related to the procedures that should be followed in cases of actual or suspected child abuse. Some areas have established sports sub-groups to inform their work.
Parent	A generic term which includes parents, carers and guardians.
Personnel	Employees of British Rowing and its affiliated clubs, or facilities used in rowing as well as volunteers and all participants in the sport of rowing.
Position of trust	This is where an individual, such as a coach, teacher, or club officer who makes decisions for or about a child, can influence the child's actions and may misuse that position to groom or abuse the child. This position can be a positive one, in building confidence and self-esteem in children.
Registered Body	An organisation such as British Rowing that is able to act as recipient of CRB information on behalf of its members.
Registered member	A person registered with British Rowing (as defined in the British Rowing Rules).

Regulated Activity	<p>Regulated Activity (RA) involves contact with vulnerable groups and is: Of a specific nature eg. training, teaching, supervising, advice, treatments or transport provided for the purposes of the activity</p> <p><b>Or</b> In a specified place eg. schools, children’s homes and hospitals, juvenile detention facilities, adult care homes.</p> <p><b>And</b> Occurs once a week or more</p> <p><b>And/or</b> Occurs on four or more occasions in a 30 day period</p> <p><b>And/or</b> Occurs overnight between 2am and 6am.</p>
Regulated Activity Provider	The person or organisation responsible for employing or deploying workers to facilitate an activity, whether these workers are paid or unpaid. See WG 2.9.
Risk assessment	A procedure to help identify possible sources of danger and take appropriate action to minimise these risks taking into account the age, number and competence of participants. See British Rowing’s <i>RowSafe</i> guide for examples.
Rower	Generic term to include every rower, sweep-oar or sculler, cox or indoor rower.
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006	Established ISA and VBS to protect children and vulnerable adults.
Significant Access	<p>Being in a position to have regular and direct contact with children/vulnerable adults whether as a volunteer or employee (see ‘Position of Trust’). The CRB describes this as a ‘regulated position’:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Those whose normal duties (paid or unpaid) include caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of those under 18 years of age.</li> <li>2. Those whose normal duties include supervising or managing an individual in his work in a regulated position.</li> </ol>
Welfare of the child is paramount	This is a key principle of the <i>Children Act 1989</i> . It means that the needs of children override those of the adults working with them.
WG	Welfare Guidance documents, detailed in Section 10.
Vetting and Barring Scheme	The Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) is a registration scheme administered by the ISA that identifies those people who may work in a regulated activity and who are not barred from working with children or vulnerable adults.

# 1. SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN POLICY

## 1.1 General principles

- Everyone who participates in rowing is entitled to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- All British Rowing clubs, competitions and associated individuals must follow the policies defined in this document.
- British Rowing is committed to helping everyone in rowing accept their responsibility to safeguard children from harm and abuse and support them to do so.
- This document sets out the procedures you need to follow to protect children and what you need to do if you have any concerns.

## 1.2 Scope

These policies apply to all rowers, coaches, volunteers, employees and anyone involved in rowing, whether or not they are British Rowing members. All these people have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and prevent their abuse.

## 1.3 Why these policies are needed

Abuse can occur in many situations including the home, school and the rowing club. We know that some individuals will actively seek access to children through rowing in order to harm them.

## 1.4 Policy statement

British Rowing is committed to:

- making the welfare of children paramount. This means that the need to ensure that children are protected is a primary consideration and may override the rights and needs of those adults working with them
- enabling everyone whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity to participate in rowing in a fun and safe environment
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings
- taking seriously all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse and responding swiftly and appropriately to them in accordance with current procedures
- ensuring that all British Rowing employees who work with children are appropriate for that role and responsibilities and provided with relevant training
- requiring all its member clubs, competitions and regional councils to accept responsibility for the welfare of the children in their care in accordance with all British Rowing's policies and procedures, and to incorporate these in their constitutions and rules
- recognising that children and families from minority group backgrounds may face additional barriers to accessing help and reporting concerns in respect of safeguarding issues.

# 2. GOOD PRACTICE, POOR PRACTICE AND ABUSE

## 2.1 Introduction

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental. It is not the responsibility of an individual in rowing to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place, but everyone has a responsibility to:

- identify poor practice and possible abuse
- act if they have concerns, as explained in Section 3.

## 2.2 Good practice

British Rowing strongly advises that coaches of junior rowers:

- be a registered British Rowing member
- fully accept the British Rowing Code of Conduct (WG 1.4)
- hold a British Rowing recognised qualification
- have completed a recognised Child Protection Basic Awareness course as a minimum standard.

Everyone should:

- conduct a risk assessment before undertaking any rowing related activities
- aim to make the experience of rowing fun and enjoyable
- promote fairness and playing by the rules
- not tolerate the use of prohibited or illegal substances
- treat all children equally and preserve their dignity; this includes giving more and less talented members of a group similar attention, time and respect.

Coaches and those working directly with children should:

- respect the developmental stage of each rower and not risk sacrificing their welfare in a desire for club or personal achievement
- ensure that the training intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the rower (see WG 3.2)
- work with parents and children to develop training and competition schedules which are suited to the needs and the lifestyle of the rower, not the ambitions of the parents, coaches, team managers or club
- build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, encouraging children to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making
- always be publicly open when working with children:
  - avoid coaching sessions or meetings where a coach and an individual athlete are completely unobserved
  - keep parents informed about the content and nature of any communications you have directly with their children including emails and text messages
  - try to avoid one on one situations in changing rooms. If children need to be supervised/helped try to involve parents or helpers
- maintain an appropriate and open environment, with no secrets
- avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Physical contact (touching) can be appropriate so long as:
  - it is neither intrusive nor disturbing
  - the reason that it is necessary has been fully explained
  - the athlete's permission has been openly given
  - it is delivered in an open environment
- maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with rowers. It is inappropriate for coaches and others in positions of trust to have an intimate relationship with a child under 18 years. This could be a criminal offence, an 'abuse of trust' as defined by the *Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000*
- be an excellent role model by maintaining appropriate standards of behaviour at social events and competitions

- gain written parental consent, to act in loco parentis for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical treatment if the need arises
- be aware of any medical conditions, existing injuries and medicines being taken. Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given
- arrange that someone with appropriate training in and current knowledge of emergency first aid is available
- gain written parental consent for any significant travel arrangements, especially if an overnight stay is involved (see WG 4.4).

## 2.3 Poor practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided:

- communicating directly to a child without the parents' knowledge, this includes phoning, texting and emailing
- spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- engaging in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- using inappropriate language to a child or allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- making sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in jest
- reducing a child to tears as a form of control
- letting allegations made by a child go uninvestigated, unrecorded, or not acted upon
- doing things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves
- taking children alone in a car on journeys, however short (see note below)
- inviting or taking children to your home or office where they will be alone with you (see note below)
- sharing a room with a child.

**Note:** In exceptional circumstances it may be impractical to avoid some of these particular examples of poor practice. In which case, to protect both the children and yourself, you must seek parental consent and also make sure that the CWO of your club/organisation is aware of the situation and gives approval.

If whilst in your care a child is accidentally hurt, the child seems distressed in any way, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any such incidents as soon as possible to another adult and make a brief written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

## 2.4 Abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that without appropriate intervention, they may continue to have a very negative impact upon an individual into adulthood.

An individual who has been abused may:

- find it difficult, or impossible to maintain a stable, trusting relationship
- become involved with drugs or prostitution
- attempt suicide or self-harm
- go on to abuse another child.

Children with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as:

- stereotyping
- prejudice
- discrimination, including ethnic or racial
- isolation
- powerlessness to protect themselves
- inability to communicate that abuse has occurred.

### 2.4.1 Indicators of abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is not the responsibility of those working in rowing to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.

Indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- 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 or an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- someone else, a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of a child
- unexplained changes in a child's behaviour, e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, displaying sudden outbursts of temper or behaviour changing over time



- inappropriate sexual awareness
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends
- being prevented from socialising with other children
- displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- losing weight for no apparent reason
- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

Abuse may take a number of forms, and may be classified under the following headings:

## 2.4.2 Neglect

*“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. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.”*

In a rowing situation this could include:

- a coach not keeping children safe by exposing them to undue cold, heat or the unnecessary risk of injury e.g. allowing rowers under their supervision to train or race inappropriately clothed for the prevailing conditions
- a parent consistently leaving a child without adequate provisions e.g. food, water, clothing, sun protection.

## 2.4.3 Physical Abuse

*“Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or induces illness in a child.”*

In a rowing situation this could include:

- a coach disregarding the individual requirements of each child’s growing body or needs when setting a training programme e.g. allowing 14 year olds to undertake hour-long, continuous ergos.

## 2.4.4 Sexual Abuse

*“Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. It may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.”*

In a rowing situation indicators could include:

- a coach engaging in unnecessary and inappropriate physical contact e.g. massaging the shoulders of the rowers suggestively
- a coach making suggestive comments to their rowers
- an inappropriately close relationship developing between a rower and a coach
- an individual spending an unnecessary amount of time in the changing area when children are present.

## 2.4.5 Emotional Abuse

*“Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve making the child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.”*

In a rowing situation this could include:

- a parent or coach subjecting a rower to constant criticism, name-calling, sarcasm, bullying or racism
- a parent or coach putting a rower under unrealistic pressure in order to perform to high expectations.

## 2.5 Bullying

*“Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves”*

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding kit or equipment, threatening gestures)
- **Physical** pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- **Racist** racial taunts, graffiti or gestures

- **Sexual** unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- **Homophobic** because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality
- **Verbal** name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

### 2.5.1 Anti-Bullying Policy

British Rowing is committed to fostering a caring, friendly and safe environment for everyone involved in rowing so they can participate in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in rowing. If bullying does occur, all rowers, coaches, volunteers or parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Bullies come from all walks of life. They bully for a variety of reasons and may even have been bullied or abused themselves. Typically, bullies can have low self-esteem, be excitable, aggressive or jealous. Bullies can be boys or girls, men or women. Although bullying often takes place in schools, research shows it can and does occur anywhere where there is inadequate supervision – on the way to and from school, at a sporting event, in the playground or changing rooms. Competitive sports such as rowing are an ideal environment for the bully.

The bully in rowing can be a:

- parent who pushes too hard
- coach who adopts a 'win at all costs' philosophy
- rower or cox who intimidates or ridicules a peer
- club official who places unfair pressure on a person
- spectator who constantly shouts abuse.

**See the model Anti-Bullying Policy for rowing clubs (WG 1.1).**

### 2.5.2 Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Rowers who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. Everyone involved in rowing has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### 2.5.3 Signs and Symptoms

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children. A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- says they are being bullied
- is unwilling to go to club sessions
- becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- feels ill before training sessions
- has clothes torn or possessions damaged
- has possessions go 'missing'
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

In more extreme cases:

- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night, has nightmares or wets the bed
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- self harms
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and be investigated.

### 2.5.4 Procedures for reporting bullying

1. Report bullying incidents to the Club Welfare Officer or a member of the committee.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to British Rowing for advice.
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.
7. If mediation fails and the bullying is seen to continue the club will initiate disciplinary action under the club constitution, or where appropriate under British Rowing Disciplinary Procedures.

# 3. RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS AND ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

## 3.1 Introduction

Although most cases of child abuse take place within the family setting, abuse can and does occur in rowing.

- It is essential that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken.
- It is not your responsibility to decide if child abuse is taking place.
- It is your responsibility to report your concerns to the appropriate agencies (see below).
- Not acting is not an option.

## 3.2 Receiving evidence of possible abuse

You may have concerns about abuse/poor practice because:

- you see it happening
- you recognise signs such as those listed in Section 2.4.1
- someone reports it to you
- a child approaches you directly.

If a child says or indicates that they are being abused, or you have concerns about their welfare you should:

- react calmly so as not to frighten them
- tell them they are not to blame and that it was right to speak up
- take what they say seriously
- recognise that there may be inherent difficulties in interpreting what is said by someone who has a speech disability and/or differences in language
- keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said
- reassure them, but do not promise to keep the matter secret – explain that to resolve the problem it will be necessary to inform other people as appropriate
- the safety of the child is paramount - if the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue
- record all information
- report in accordance with British Rowing's procedures.

A series of British Rowing support documents (WG 1.8, 1.9, 1.10) to help those in receipt of concerns, those against whom allegations have been made and those reporting allegations and concerns are available on the British Rowing website [www.britishrowing.org/welfare](http://www.britishrowing.org/welfare)

## 3.3 Recording information: confidentiality and information sharing

All concerns that you may have or receive should be recorded, ideally using the British Rowing form, Recording Concerns of Abuse (WG 1.2). You are recording this information for:

- yourself, so you have a record of what happened
- the CWO or other designated welfare person within your club, who will co-ordinate any action that needs to be taken
- the British Rowing Child Protection Officer and Case Manager so that they can advise you
- the Police/Children's Social Care Services if appropriate.

It is not appropriate to share sensitive and confidential information with other people, e.g:

- your club committee
- members of your club
- other acquaintances outside rowing.

Any information relating to child protection should be held under secure conditions and made available on a need-to-know basis.

When completing the form you should:

- confine yourself to the facts – what you have observed/seen, heard or had reported to you
- distinguish between what is your own personal knowledge and what you have been told by other people
- not include your own opinions on the matter. Be clear where you are giving either your own or others' interpretation of events and the reasons for this (e.g. context, individual's response to challenge).

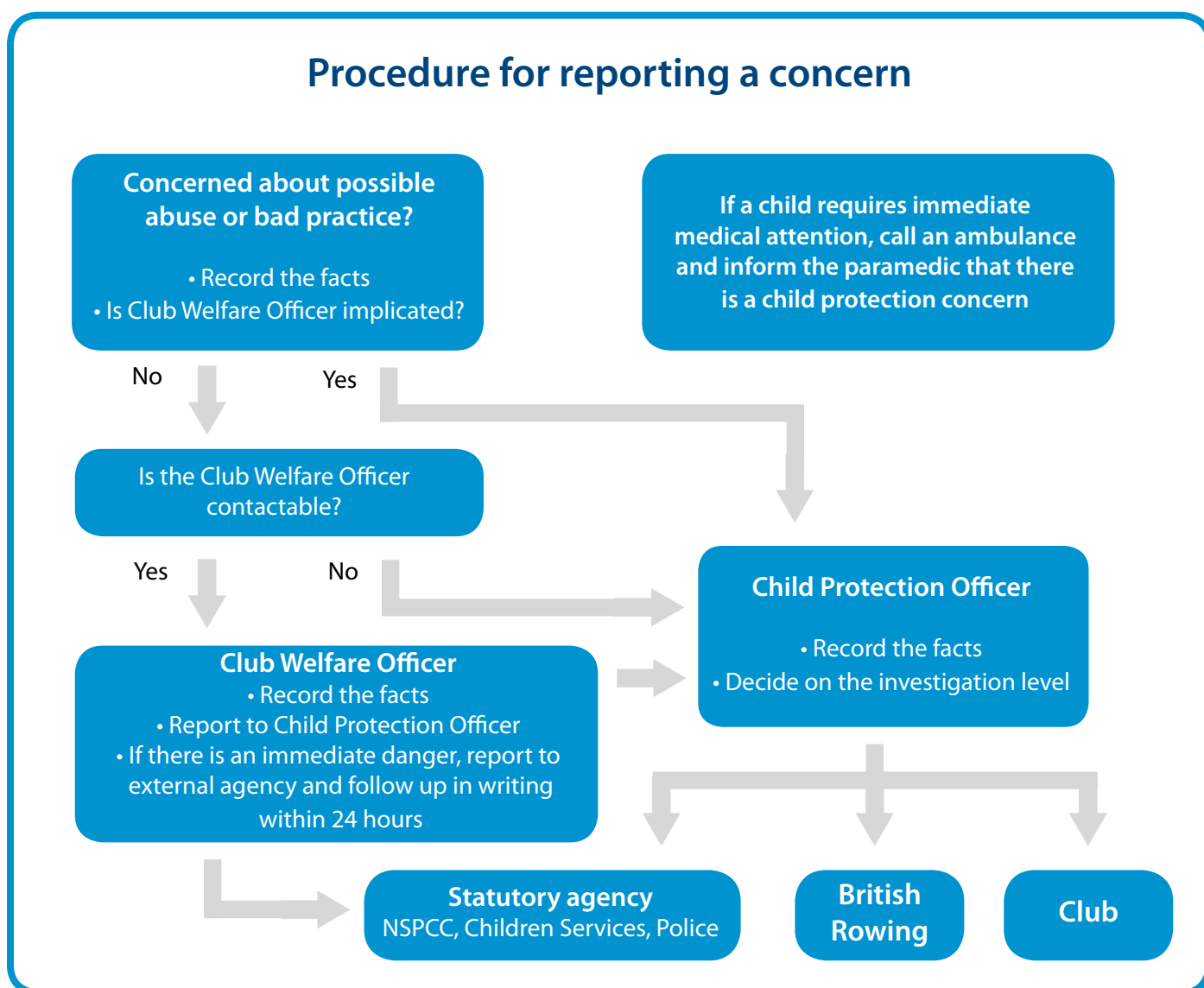
British Rowing has adopted the CPSU Information Sharing Protocol. This comprehensive document illustrates clearly, in words and diagrams, how decisions to share information are made within British Rowing and between British Rowing and other bodies. The document is available as WG 5.2 on the website [www.britishrowing.org/welfare](http://www.britishrowing.org/welfare)

### 3.4 Reporting the concern

The discovery that someone you know may be abusing a child will raise feelings and concerns at your club. Although it can be difficult to report such matters, you must remember that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- being vigilant helps to protect children
- everyone has a duty of care to report any concerns they have immediately
- a good reporting structure ensures that concerns are dealt with fairly.

Comprehensive flowcharts from the CPSU, showing the different routes for concerns arising in rowing and outside rowing, are available (WG 1.11 & 1.12). These illustrate the complete referral procedure through to the appeal stage.



British Rowing's Whistleblowing Policy (WG 1.3) assures all members, staff, and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague is or may be abusing a child.

### 3.4.1 Circumstances where reporting to the CWO is not possible

- If the CWO is unavailable or is implicated, talk directly to a senior club officer or go directly to British Rowing's Child Protection Officer for advice.
- If concerns arise in a setting where there is no CWO, e.g. at a school - inform the head teacher or the member of staff with responsibility for child protection or welfare. Always ensure, in these circumstances, that British Rowing's CPO is informed of the referral.
- When with athletes away from home, inform the person who has responsibility for welfare. This may be the head coach or team leader.

### 3.4.2 Involving parents or carers

British Rowing is committed to working in partnership with parents. In most situations, it is important that the CWO or CPO involves parents to clarify any initial concerns e.g. if a child seems withdrawn, they may have experienced a recent bereavement.

Where a parent or carer may be responsible for the abuse or may not be able to respond to the situation appropriately they should not be involved, as it may place the child at greater risk.

### 3.4.3 Involving British Rowing

The CPO must be informed of all allegations of abuse and persistent poor practice as soon as possible in order to decide the following:

- what further action should be taken by the club or British Rowing
- whether further action, advice or investigation is needed by/from the Police, Children's Social Care Services or the NSPCC.

Passing on this information is important because the matter may be just one of a series of other instances which together cause concern. It enables the Case Management Group (Section 5.4) and Child Protection Group (Section 10) to analyse trends and improve existing British Rowing policy and guidance.

Any letters to the CPO regarding referrals should be marked '**private and confidential**' and sent to: British Rowing, 6 Lower Mall, London, W6 9DJ. Alternatively the CPO can be contacted on **0208 237 6700**. The CPO or another designated person from British Rowing will keep you notified of procedures and timescales whilst any investigation is ongoing.

### 3.4.4 Involving Statutory Agencies

In any case of physical or sexual abuse or where the child's safety is at risk, you should contact one of the following statutory agencies immediately:

- Your local Police Child Protection Team or in an emergency dial **999**.

The police should be involved if the apparent abuse is of a criminal nature or if the incident involves a person outside the child's family. A record should be made of the crime reference number.

- Local Authority Children's Social Care Services (formerly known as Social Services).

This body has a statutory duty for the welfare of children, especially where the alleged person is a member of the child's family. When a referral is made, its staff have a legal responsibility to investigate. This may involve talking to the child and family and gathering information from other people who know the child. In an emergency the Samaritans (**08457 909 090**) will hold the duty officer's contact number.

- NSPCC (freephone 24 hour helpline **0808 800 5000**). You do not have to give your name but it is helpful if you can.

All telephone referrals to any of the above bodies should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. You should record the following:

- name and job title of the member of staff to whom the concerns were passed
- the time and date of the call
- a summary of the information shared and the response received.

## 3.5 Previous allegations of abuse

Allegations of abuse are occasionally made some time after the event, for example by an adult abused as a child by a member of staff who is still working with children.

Where such an allegation is made, you should follow the procedures given above and have the matter reported to the police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care Services and the CPO. This is because other children, either within the sport or outside it, may be at risk from this person.

Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to child abuse is automatically excluded from working with children.

# 4. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN THE CLUB

## 4.1 Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

Every rowing club that has junior members (under 18 years) or children regularly using its facilities must appoint a Club Welfare Officer (CWO). This person must have a child-focussed approach, good communication skills and an ability to provide support and advice. They should also be well organised, have good administrative and recording skills and an ability and willingness to promote and implement the British Rowing *Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy*, procedures and resources.

The CWO should be a figure well known in the club and approachable by children but not someone involved directly in the coaching or day-to-day running of children's or junior programmes. It is strongly advised that the CWO is a registered member of British Rowing. It is essential that the CWO is able to act in a confidential manner and to recognise the boundaries of his competence, role and responsibilities and where to seek advice and support. The role and responsibilities of a CWO are outlined in Section 5.1.

## 4.2 Codes of Conduct

Codes of conduct are useful for everyone concerned with rowing to outline the expected behaviour of different groups. There are a number of different codes of conduct and many clubs will already have adopted and adapted their own.

It may also be useful to consider specific codes of conduct for parents, junior rowers and other members. WG 1.4 lists the expected standards of conduct set out by British Rowing but you may wish to consider consulting your junior athletes and parents on other areas they might wish to include.

## 4.3 Changing rooms

- Where practical, children should be supervised in changing rooms by two adults.
- Adult coaches or volunteers should not shower or change at the same time as the children they have been working with.
- No staff or volunteers, medical or otherwise should be present when rowers of the opposite sex are showering or changing (for example a male coach working with a female crew).
- In mixed gender clubs separate changing facilities should be available.
- If a child is uncomfortable showering or changing in public no pressure should be put on them to do so, they should be encouraged to change and shower at home.
- If the club has children with disabilities they and their carers should be involved in deciding how best they can be assisted. Always ensure the children consent to the assistance that is offered.
- No photographic equipment should be used in the changing room environment. This includes cameras, video cameras, camera phones etc. Guidance on photography can found in WG 5.1.

## 4.4 Coaching ratios

Although there is government guidance for people working with groups of children, it is essential in rowing that a separate risk assessment is taken for each group of children and that this is reviewed for each training session. Participants under the age of 18, even those qualified as coaches, should be supervised at all times.

In line with the national guidance, the level of supervision should take account of the:

- age and ability of the children
- type of training session being undertaken (on land or water)
- children's growing independence
- environment that the session is taking place in
- risk assessment.

If there is an accident or incident you should ensure there is always someone available to supervise the remaining children.

Coaches working with children should ensure that they do not work in isolation.

## 4.5 Organising trips away for junior athletes

Even the simplest day trip away from the club requires planning. When planning residential trips for junior rowers clubs should use the advice and checklists given in British Rowing's 'Planning Residential Trips for Children' Guidance, Training Camp Checklist and consent forms (WG 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 & 4.4). A very useful document *Safe Sport Away* is available to purchase from NSPCC Publications: [www.nspcc.org/inform](http://www.nspcc.org/inform) or telephone on **020 7825 7422**

The main factors to consider are:

### 4.5.1 Communication with parents

For a short day trip this may amount merely to details of transport, pick up and return points and times, competition or venue details, team leader or coach contact details, emergency contact details for parents, costs, dietary requirements (if relevant) and any other special requirements or medical details. Strict instructions should be given to parents regarding the drop off and return locations and times.

### 4.5.2 Transport

Points to consider include vehicle type (public transport, minibus, coach or private car), any special requirements for rowers with disabilities, length of journey, competence of driver, journey time, distance, stopping points, supervision during journey and legislation regarding seat belts.

### 4.5.3 Supervision

The staff or volunteers organising the trip will have the duty of care to act in loco parentis for the duration of the trip. Clubs should ensure that the persons they appoint to care for the juniors are appropriately briefed in safety and safeguarding and that they have relevant information regarding any special needs or requirements of any rower. Anyone working in a supervisory role should be appropriately vetted to ensure their suitability to work with children in line with British Rowing's *Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy*.

### 4.5.4 Emergency Procedures

The team leader or coach should know how to contact emergency services and have access to at least a basic First Aid box. Those in charge of children have a duty to ensure that they are kept safe and healthy and should not hesitate to act in an emergency and to take life saving action in an extreme situation.

Any on-water accident should follow the guidelines given in '*RowSafe: a Guide to Good Practice*'. All adults working with the group should be briefed on the reporting procedure should an emergency occur.

### 4.5.5 Insurance

All registered members of British Rowing are covered for public liability and personal accident cover during rowing activities under British Rowing's policy. Passengers travelling by motor vehicle should be covered by law by the insurances required under the *Road Traffic Act (1988)*. When using private vehicles it may be necessary to check with the insurance company for any restrictions. Consideration should be given to accident, breakdown and recovery cover.

## 4.6 Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs)

British Rowing's *Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy* and the child protection procedures contained in this document and its appendices are consistent with the government guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006*. However, clubs and regions should endeavour to make themselves aware of any special Local Safeguarding Children Board's (LSCB) arrangements.

The contact details for the Chairman of each board is listed on the government website [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk). It may be useful for the CWO to have a note of their local contact.

# 5. DESIGNATED PERSONS WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

## 5.1 Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

### 5.1.1 Responsibilities

The CWO is responsible for acting as a source of advice on child protection matters and for co-ordinating action within the club on receipt of any concerns or referrals. They should endeavour to gain an understanding of British Rowing's *Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy* and keep up to date with the appropriate level of training. They should be a member of the club's committee.

### 5.1.2 Role

- To provide information and advice on child protection within the club.
- To ensure that the club adopts and follows the British Rowing *Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy* and procedures and promote awareness of the policy within the club.
- Be a confirmation signatory, verifying the identity of individuals completing CRB Disclosure application forms.
- Keep records of all those who have been vetted within the club to ensure that CRB checks are updated on at least a three yearly basis and that all those working in regulated activities are compliant with current government guidance.
- Receive information from club staff, volunteers, young people or parents and carers who have child protection concerns and record it.
- Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
- Make a formal referral to a statutory child protection agency if appropriate.
- Report any referrals or concerns to the British Rowing Child Protection Officer as soon as possible in line with British Rowing procedures.
- Ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover, using WG 1.2.
- Advise the club officers regarding the appropriate levels of child protection training and/or guidance for all adults working with children in the club.
- Promote a child-centred approach within the club, e.g maintain the junior section notice board and promote good practice.
- Advise the club of further child protection training opportunities.
- Maintain a written record of training and relevant qualifications of those working in the club.

The CWO should undergo the vetting procedure outlined in Section 6.1.

## 5.2 Child Protection Case Manager (CPCM)

The Child Protection Case Manager (CPCM) must have a child-focussed approach. They should have good administrative and system management (record keeping) skills and be able to communicate and provide advice and support at all levels. They must have knowledge of relevant legislation, government guidance and the British Rowing *Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy* and procedures.

### 5.2.1 Responsibilities

The British Rowing CPCM is responsible for acting as a source of advice on child protection matters, for co-ordinating action within British Rowing and for liaising with statutory agencies and other relevant organisations about suspected or actual cases of child abuse.

### 5.2.2 Role

- To manage and investigate cases of poor practice/abuse reported to British Rowing – including reporting cases and reporting to the lead officer and Case Management Group.
- To produce a report about any investigation carried out for consideration by the CMG.
- To manage referrals to Statutory Agencies.
- To liaise with the CPO on matters of child protection policy and procedure.



- To provide advice and support to Club Welfare Officers and British Rowing members.
- To advise on the British Rowing's child protection training needs and development of its training strategy.
- To maintain confidentiality with regards to cases.
- To keep up to date with own knowledge and skills.

The CPCM should undergo the vetting procedure outlined in Section 6.1.

## 5.3 British Rowing Child Protection Officer (CPO)

This should be someone with a child-focussed approach who can communicate and provide advice and support at all levels. They should have influencing skills and an ability to work with conflict and with emotionally distressing matters. Knowledge of relevant legislation, government guidance, the British Rowing *Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy* and procedures is essential as well as an ability to promote and demonstrate anti-discriminatory practice.

### 5.3.1 Responsibilities

The British Rowing Child Protection Officer has overall responsibility for the development and establishment of British Rowing's approach to safeguarding children.

### 5.3.2 Role

- To liaise with the CPCM over individual cases, proposed policy and guidance.
- To convene and chair the Child Protection Group meetings at least three times a year.
- To take a lead role in maintaining and reviewing British Rowing's Safeguarding Children Implementation Plan.
- To co-ordinate the dissemination of policy, procedures and resources throughout British Rowing.
- To ensure that the CPSU 'Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport' are achieved.
- To represent British Rowing at external meetings related to child protection.
- To receive reports of referrals and investigations from the CPCM on behalf of the Case Management Group and convene meetings of the Case Management Group as required.
- To keep up to date with own knowledge and skills.

The Child Protection Officer should undergo the vetting procedure outlined in Section 6.1.

## 5.4 Case Management Group

This group must work within the policies and procedures of British Rowing to ensure that all decisions relating to safeguarding children are reached following a fair, open and transparent process. The group comprises of the Child Protection Officer, National Manager and one other independent, suitably qualified person and is advised by the CPCM. It may call upon whatever professional input is required on an advisory capacity for each case.

### 5.4.1 Responsibilities

- To recommend, where appropriate, that a person is referred to ISA in accordance with *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*.
- To recommend to the officers of British Rowing, where appropriate, that a person is temporarily suspended or banned from some or all activities related to rowing.
- To monitor and review progress on all cases and to identify any trends emerging which require a review or revision of existing policies and procedures.

### 5.4.2 Role

- To make decisions on the initial approach to all reported cases related to the welfare and protection of children. That is, to the 'route' a case will take either internally or via external referral to statutory agencies, but may also include making decisions in relation to concerns arising from information gathered in the recruitment process.
- To make initial decisions as to the 'internal' level each case shall be dealt with. For example minor poor practice cases may be referred back to the club complaints or disciplinary process.
- To advise others within British Rowing about actions they may need to take, such as initiating disciplinary procedures.
- To confirm all final decisions relating to safeguarding referrals or CRB Disclosures. Each Disclosure document must be signed by at least two of the CMG members, showing clearly the identified actions and considerations taken.

The members of the CMG should undergo the vetting procedure outlined in Section 6.1.

# 6. RECRUITING AND SELECTING PEOPLE TO WORK WITH CHILDREN IN ROWING

Anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This applies to anyone whether voluntary or paid who is going to have **significant access** to children or vulnerable adults or their contact information. The steps that should be taken are the same for volunteers or employees.

## 6.1 Controlling access to children

All individuals who will have significant access to children must first be vetted to establish whether they have any criminal convictions or other past behaviour that suggests they are unsuitable to work with children or may present a risk to children. This applies equally to paid staff and volunteers.

From 1 January 2008, all new volunteers and employees working in a role that involves significant access to children, or where they have a position of trust, or existing volunteers or employees who change their role to work with these vulnerable groups, are required to complete the following vetting process:

- complete a self-declaration form (see WG 2.5 & 2.6)
- complete a CRB Disclosure application
- provide two appropriate referees
- provide details of previous volunteering experience or relevant employment.

In addition those working in a Regulated Activity must also comply with legal requirements of the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*, as these are implemented. See WG 2.9.

Club Welfare Officers (CWOs) as recruiting officers should satisfy themselves that the position that the individual will be working in is a **regulated position**. For the purposes of rowing, a regulated position, as defined by the CRB Code of Practice, would include:

- Those whose normal duties (paid or unpaid) include caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of those under 18 years of age
- Those whose normal duties (paid or unpaid) include supervising or managing an individual in his work in a regulated position.

The self-declaration form (WG 2.6) requires prospective volunteers and employees to declare any criminal records they may have, even if these are considered 'spent', or any disciplinary investigations by any organisation including employers, the police or social services that relate to inappropriate behaviour towards a child or vulnerable adult.

The CWO or recruiting officer should make it clear that a failure to disclose relevant information will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal or exclusion. It should also be made clear that having a criminal record is not necessarily a barrier to working in rowing. Individuals being asked to complete a self declaration and CRB application should be made aware of British Rowing's policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders (WG 2.1).

WG 2.5 should be completed and returned to the CWO. WG 2.6 must be sent, marked **private and confidential**, to the Child Protection Officer at British Rowing. This declaration should be renewed if the individual significantly changes their role within the club or joins a new club.

Those with significant access to children or vulnerable adults, or who hold a position of trust, must also complete a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure application. On receipt of the self-declaration form (WG 2.6), British Rowing will send a CRB Disclosure application form to the CWO. The CWO should return the application form to the British Rowing CPO. CRB application forms must not be sent directly to the CRB. Information about completing the Disclosure form is available in WG 2.3.

CRB Disclosure information will be assessed by the British Rowing Case Management Group in line with British Rowing's policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders (WG 2.1) and the CRB Code of Practice. Completing a CRB form is a confidential and sensitive matter for some people and care should be taken to explain how the information contained on the certificate will be treated. This is explained fully in WG 2.1.

As a registered body of the CRB, British Rowing is fully compliant with the CRB Code of Practice including the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information (See WG 2.8). Any disclosures will be dealt with confidentially, following the Child Protection in Sport Unit's Protocol for Information Sharing (WG 5.2).

CRB Disclosures must be renewed at least every three years if a person remains in post or more regularly if, for example, there is a concern raised, if the person changes their role or moves to a new club, or if the person has been absent from the club for a significant period.

All new volunteers and employees must supply at least two referees who will vouch for the suitability of that person to work with children. The CWO or recruiting officer must contact these referees to verify their references. This should be done in writing where possible, however where a check has taken place verbally, a written note must be kept of the conversation by the CWO or recruiting officer. This note may be brief. A standard form is available for this purpose (WG 2.4).

The prospective volunteer or employee should be asked to provide details of previous employment/relevant volunteering and any gaps in the employment history must be accounted for.

CRB Disclosures for volunteers are free of charge. The definition of a volunteer for this purpose is a person who is engaged in any activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travel and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit someone (individuals or groups) other than or in addition to close relatives.

**Note:** Completing the above process does not guarantee that an individual is safe to work with children. British Rowing will use information from the CRB as part of an overall recruitment and selection process to assess any potential risk. The club will also need to assess for itself the individual's suitability by taking up references, interviewing and supervision.

## 6.2 Who should be CRB checked?

Every rowing club that has children regularly using its facilities must ensure that the following roles are CRB checked:

- Club Welfare Officer (CWO)
- Junior coach
- Junior co-ordinator
- Trailer drivers who spend time away with children at regattas
- Club residents who may have unlimited access to club facilities.

The following roles should only be CRB checked if they involve significant access to children, that is they satisfy the CRB's guidelines for 'regulated positions' as outlined in Section 6.1:

- Club officers / committee members
- Volunteer / parent helper
- Bar staff
- Competition organiser
- Umpire / race official
- Club member
- Club employee / steward.

# 7. AWARENESS AND TRAINING

To create an enjoyable and safe environment for all children, everyone involved in rowing must be aware of what is good practice and how to deal with poor practice and abuse.

Formal training will help people to work safely and effectively with children by:

- comparing their own practice against what is regarded as good practice and identifying ways to improve
- ensuring that they are not placing themselves at risk from allegations
- recognising their responsibilities and reporting any concerns about suspected poor practice or abuse
- understanding the recruitment and selection procedures described (Section 6).

The CWO should maintain a written record of training and relevant qualifications of those working with children within the club.

## 7.1 Recommended minimum levels of awareness and training

Within the club environment everyone has a responsibility to be aware of the *Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy*, understand what is good and poor practice and know what to do if they have a concern. All members should have access to the policy document at the club or be made aware that it can be accessed through the British Rowing website.

Role	Read <i>British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy</i>	British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop or equivalent	CPSU 'Time to Listen' CWO course
Membership secretary	✓		
Club Welfare Officer (CWO)	✓	✓	✓
Junior coaches	✓	✓	
Junior co-ordinator	✓	✓	
Trailer drivers	✓		
Club residents	✓		
Club officers / committee members	✓	✓	
Volunteer / parent helper	✓		
Bar staff	✓		
Competition organiser	✓	✓	
Umpire / race official	✓		
Club employee / steward	✓		

## 7.2 Training

British Rowing SPC workshops are accredited with the NSPCC and form part of the British Rowing's Level 2 Coaching Awards. Details of these courses can be found on the British Rowing website.

- Coaches and volunteers may undertake the generic sportscoach UK course, 'Safeguarding and Protecting Children' but this is not specific to rowing. Information is available at [www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org)
- A number of local authorities/LSCBs also run basic awareness level safeguarding courses although these will not be specific to rowing and may not be specific to sport.
- British Rowing has a rowing specific training course for Club Welfare Officers and those with designated responsibilities for safeguarding and protecting children: Time to Listen. This course has been developed by the CPSU and sportscoach UK and adapted to reflect British Rowing policy, procedures and guidance and a rowing context.

British Rowing will promote all safeguarding and protecting children training via regional newsletters and at [www.britishrowing.org](http://www.britishrowing.org)

# 8. COMPLAINTS & DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

British Rowing has its own complaints & disciplinary procedure (WG 1.7) for dealing with breaches of the *Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy* and procedures.

- If a case is being investigated by a statutory agency, British Rowing may suspend the individual concerned whilst this investigation is taking place. This is a neutral act and is not intended to prejudice the outcome of the investigation, but simply to remove the individual from contact with children until the investigation is concluded. Once the statutory agency's investigation is completed, and irrespective of its findings, British Rowing will assess the case following its disciplinary procedures.
- If the abuse is alleged to have been committed in the course of a person's employment, he or she will be subject to whatever disciplinary procedures and sanctions are stated in their employment contract. British Rowing may decide to await the outcome of such procedures before starting its own investigation.
- In accordance with British Rowing's Rules, British Rowing may impose disciplinary sanctions against clubs who fail to adopt and implement the *Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy* and procedures, particularly if such failures are serious or persistent. If concerns remain once a matter has been handled by the club these should be referred to the CPO who will ask the senior officers of British Rowing to decide how to deal with this and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.
- Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality for all concerned, and consideration will be given to what support may be appropriate to children, parents, members of staff and volunteers. Support Information Sheets are available (WG 1.8, 1.9, 1.10) for those reporting or receiving a concern, and for those against whom an allegation has been made.
- It is not always possible to determine exact timescales for when cases will be resolved, however British Rowing will always try to ensure that all parties know what procedure will be followed and what the expected time scales are. If there is a delay they will endeavour to inform all parties why there is a delay and when any development is expected. There should not be any period without communication of more than 28 days with involved persons. Ideally case management processes should not extend over more than three months, only in exceptional circumstances should they extend up to six months.

# 9. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING PROCEDURES

British Rowing has established a Child Protection Group (CPG) to oversee the implementation of these procedures, to monitor their application in practice and to support the implementation of British Rowing's work towards achieving the Standards for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport.

It is the CPG's responsibility to check that:

- British Rowing's procedures continue to reflect the current recommendations of external agencies that specialise in child protection
- the procedures are disseminated and applied by British Rowing's members and staff.

The CPG has designed a checklist for clubs and other organisations to monitor their own compliance with the requirements set out in this booklet (WG 3.6). From time to time, checks will be conducted to verify the results of this self-monitoring procedure.

Clubs who have junior members or children regularly visiting must ensure that the name and contact details for their CWO, or in the case of an educational establishment, the person with responsibility for welfare, are completed in their British Rowing Annual Return. This information must be updated, as necessary, during the year by the club secretary or other senior club officer.

The CPG will make an annual report to British Rowing's Executive Committee, through the CPO, on the progress of its activities in implementing and monitoring these procedures, and on the incidence and outcome of cases that have arisen in the year. The CPG may from time to time call upon external expert advice in auditing its procedures and improving its policies.

# 10. GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

The Welfare Guidance documents (WGs) are available to download from the British Rowing website [www.britishrowing.org/welfare](http://www.britishrowing.org/welfare)

Stay up to date with new guidance on the British Rowing website

[www.britishrowing.org/welfare](http://www.britishrowing.org/welfare)

## Section 1. Codes of Conduct, disciplinary procedures and raising concerns

- 1.1 Model Anti-Bullying Policy for rowing clubs
- 1.2 Report form for recording concerns and referrals
- 1.3 Whistleblowing Policy
- 1.4 British Rowing Code of Conduct
- 1.5 Question and Answer Advisory Sheet: codes of conduct and disciplinary matters
- 1.6 The adoption and application of codes of conduct for rowing clubs
- 1.7 Complaints & Disciplinary procedure
- 1.8 Advice and support for individuals receiving a concern or allegation
- 1.9 Advice and support for those who have reported concerns
- 1.10 Information for those against whom a complaint of poor practice or allegation of abuse has been made
- 1.11 Flowcharts for referral procedure within rowing
- 1.12 Flowchart for referral procedure outside rowing
- 1.13 Advice and support for junior rowers

## Section 2. CRB Disclosure and ISA guidance

- 2.1 Recruitment of Ex-offenders
- 2.2 Obtaining a CRB clearance
- 2.3 Applying for a CRB clearance
- 2.4 Template volunteer reference form
- 2.5 New volunteer/employee details
- 2.6 Declaration of criminal record and CRB applications
- 2.7 Guidance on the portability of CRB Disclosures
- 2.8 Secure storage, handling, use, retention & disposal of disclosure information
- 2.9 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act
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- 2.11 Changes to CRB arrangements

## Section 3. Club, training and competition guidance

- 3.1 Duty of Care
- 3.2 How much and how often?
- 3.3 Safeguarding juniors at club events where alcohol is being consumed
- 3.4 Guidelines for rowing competitions
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- 3.6 Club Audit
- 3.7 Physical contact and young people in rowing
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## Section 4. Training camps and residential visits

- 4.1 Planning residential trips for children
- 4.2 Parental consent for residential trips
- 4.3 Coach/volunteer information sheet for trips away
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## Section 5. Use of social media and information sharing

- 5.1 Safeguarding and photography
- 5.2 CPSU Information Sharing Protocol
- 5.3 Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing
- 5.4 Using social networking and social media
- 5.5 Text and email messaging



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