



# Peterborough Sailability

## Standard Operating Procedure

### SOP 12: Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults



This Children & Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding policy is based on RYA Guidelines and should be read in conjunction with their full policies and procedures, Contact; [www.rya.org.uk](http://www.rya.org.uk) Tel. 08445 569555 and ask for the Safeguarding and Equality Manager

#### Policy Statement

Peterborough Sailability (PS) is committed to safeguarding, from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or bullying, children & vulnerable adults taking part in its activities. We recognise that their safety, welfare and needs are paramount and that, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual or gender identity or social status, they have a right to protection from discrimination and abuse. For the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 will be considered as a child. All members of Peterborough Sailability should be aware of the policy.

PS actively seeks to:

- Create a safe and welcoming environment, both on and off the water, where participants can have fun and develop their skills and confidence.
- Recognise that safeguarding children & vulnerable adults is the responsibility of everyone, not just those who work directly with them.
- Ensure that PS organised training and events are run to the highest possible safety standards.
- Be prepared to review its ways of working to incorporate good practice.

PS will:

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

This policy relates to all contractors and volunteers who work with children & vulnerable adults in the course of their Peterborough Sailability duties. It will be kept under periodic review. All relevant concerns, allegations, complaints and their outcome should be notified to Peterborough Sailability Safeguarding Officer

#### PS Volunteers

All Peterborough Sailability volunteers whose role brings them into regular contact with young children & vulnerable adults will be asked to provide references. The Club Safeguarding Officer and those regularly instructing, coaching or supervising will also be asked to apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure, with Barred List check if appropriate.

## **Culture**

It is important to develop a culture within PS where both children and adults feel able to raise concerns, knowing that they will be taken seriously, treated confidentially and will not make the matter worse for themselves or others. Plan the work of the organisation and promote good practice to minimise situations where people are working unobserved or could take advantage of their position of trust. Good practice protects everyone – participants and volunteers.

Anyone who is concerned about the welfare of a child / vulnerable adult, either outside the activity or within the Club, should inform the Club Safeguarding Officer immediately, in strict confidence.

## **Good Practice**

All Club members should apply the following good practice guidelines where working with children and vulnerable adults and be aware of the guidance of recognising abuse.

- Always communicate clearly, in whatever way best suits the individual, and check their understanding and expectations
- Always try to work in an open environment in view of others
- Avoid spending any significant time working with children & vulnerable adults in isolation
- Do not take a child or vulnerable person alone in a car, however short the journey, unless you are certain that the individual has the capacity to decide to accept a lift
- Do not take a child or vulnerable person to your home as part of PS organisation's activity
- Where any of these is unavoidable, ensure that it only occurs with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation or the person's carers
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual
- If you need to help someone with a wetsuit or buoyancy aid or provide physical assistance or support, make sure you are in full view of others

You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games or activities
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Use inappropriate language
- Make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun
- Fail to respond to an allegation made by a child or vulnerable person; always act
- Do things of a personal nature that the person can do for themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature to help someone with a physical or learning disability. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of both the individual (where possible) and their carers. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, if the individual lacks the capacity to give consent, carers should be fully informed as soon as possible. In such situations it is important to ensure that anyone present is sensitive to the individual and undertakes personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

## **Recognising Abuse**

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons, and may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It can range from poor professional practice to pervasive ill-treatment. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship & may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

It is not always easy, even for the most experienced carers, to spot when a child or vulnerable adult has been abused. However, some of the more typical symptoms which should trigger your suspicions would include:

- 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
- sexually explicit language or actions
- a sudden change in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper)
- the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- a change observed over a long period of time (e.g. the child losing weight or becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt)
- a general distrust and avoidance of adults, especially those with whom a close relationship would be expected
- an unexpected reaction to normal physical contact
- difficulty in making friends or abnormal restrictions on socialising with others.

It is important to note that a child or vulnerable adult could be displaying some or all of these signs, or behaving in a way which is worrying, without this necessarily meaning that they being abused. Similarly, there may not be any signs, but you may just feel that something is wrong. If you have noticed a change in their behaviour, first talk to the parents or carers. It may be that something has happened, such as a bereavement, which has caused the person to be unhappy.

Children and vulnerable adults may be abused by a wide range of people including family members, professional staff, care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends, and individuals who deliberately exploit them. Abuse may occur when a they live alone or with a relative, within schools, nursing, residential or day care settings, hospitals and other places assumed to be safe, or in public places.

Some instances of abuse will constitute a criminal offence, for example assault, sexual assault and rape, fraud or other forms of financial exploitation and certain forms of discrimination. This type of abuse should be reported to the Police.

## **Safety of Sailors, Carers and Volunteers**

All of us, whether carers or volunteers, are responsible for keeping people safe, both ashore and afloat. We will always do our best to provide a safe and enjoyable sailing experience for all our sailors.

However there may be circumstances where it is not safe for us to take a particular person out sailing, and we reserve the right not to allow him / her to sail. For example we may refuse sailing if the sailor's behaviour is unmanageable or violent, or his / her weight exceeds the permitted maximum boat / hoist safe working loadings.