

# WELSHROWING



# RHWYFOCYMRU

## Welsh Rowing Safeguarding Policy

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Welsh Rowing would like to express their appreciation to British Rowing for their support, and for making their Safeguarding documentation available for use. Documents referred to as WG in this policy are available from the British Rowing website.

# Glossary

Term	Definition / Explanation
Abuse	See section 2.4.
Adults at Risk	Formerly referred to as Vulnerable Adults, see British Rowing's <i>Safeguarding and Protecting Adults at Risk Policy</i> for a full definition.
Barred Lists	Established by the <i>Safeguarding Groups Act 2006</i> , these are lists of people who are barred from working in Regulated Activity. Following the <i>Protection of Freedoms Act 2012</i> the Disclosure and Barring Service manage these lists.
Child or Children	Anyone under the age of 18.
Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)	The CPSU team in Wales is sited in Sport Wales, Cardiff.
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 or Welsh Rowing affiliated club whose responsibilities are explained in Section 4.1 and WG 3.10
Criminal Records Check	A disclosure of the relevant criminal records and other relevant information held by the police about an individual who will be working with Children or Adults at Risk. For Welsh Rowing, this check is administered through the the NCVA which is a Registered Body with the DBS. The criteria for those requiring Criminal Records Checks are set out in Section 5. All Criminal Record Checks must be carried out at the 'Enhanced' level.
Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)	Formed by the merger of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) under the <i>Protection of Freedoms Act 2012</i> . Administrators who carry out Criminal Record Checks and administer the Barred Lists on behalf of the Home Office for 'Registered Bodies' in Wales and England . In Scotland this body is known as 'Disclosure Scotland' and in Northern Ireland as 'Access Northern Ireland'.
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.
Junior	A person who is eligible to compete in Junior class events, as defined by British Rowing Rules of Racing (4-1-6)
Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)	The designated person appointed by Welsh Rowing whose responsibilities are explained in WG 3.10
Parent	A generic term which includes Parents, carers and guardians.
Personnel	Employees of Welsh 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 NCVA, through whom Welsh Rowing makes applications for Criminal Records Checks and Barred Lists Checks on behalf of its members.
Registered Individual	A person registered with British Rowing (as defined in the British Rowing Rules) and paying the appropriate registration fee.
Regulated Activity	<p>Relating to Children, involves:</p> <p>Teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children;</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Providing guidance/advice on well-being to children;</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Driving a vehicle only for children.</p> <p><b>And</b></p> <p>Happens frequently (once a week or more often)</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>Happens intensively (on 4 or more days in a 30-day period, or overnight, even once) <b>And</b></p> <p>The individual is unsupervised</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>The activity involves supervising someone who would otherwise be in a Regulated Activity</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 RowSafe guide for examples.
Rower	Generic term to include every rower, sweep-oar or sculler, cox or indoor rower.
<i>Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006</i>	Established ISA and VBS to protect Children and Adults at Risk (formerly referred to as vulnerable adults). Under the SVG Act 2006 any organisation including sports organisations, may be regarded as a Regulated Activity Provider if they offer services for vulnerable groups, that is: Children aged under 18 years or Adults at Risk. Under the SVG Act the Regulated Activity Provider has a legal responsibility to refer anyone who it has removed from a Regulated Activity due to safeguarding concerns to the DBS. The LSO can help with this process or you can find details of how to make a referral at <a href="http://www.isa.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs">www.isa.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/dbs</a>
Significant Access	Being in a position to have regular and direct contact with Children/Adults at Risk whether as a volunteer or employee (see also 'Position of Trust').
'Welfare of the Child is Paramount'	This is a key principle of the Children Act 1989. It means that the needs of Children override those of the adults working with them.
WG	Welfare Guidance documents, see <a href="http://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/safeguarding">http://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/safeguarding</a>

# 1. Safeguarding Policy

## 1.1 General principles

- Everyone who participates in rowing is entitled to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.
- All Welsh Rowing clubs, competitions and associated individuals must follow the policies defined in this document.
- Welsh 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 sport in order to harm them.

## 1.4 Policy statement

Welsh 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 Welsh 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 Welsh 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

Welsh Rowing strongly advises that coaches of Junior Rowers:

- be a Registered Individual member of British Rowing
- fully accept and adopt the British Rowing Code of Conduct (WG 1.4)
- hold a British Rowing recognised coaching qualification
- have completed a recognised Safeguarding & Child Protection Basic Awareness course, within the last three years, 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.

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 rower 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-to-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 children. 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 rower'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 with a child without the parents' knowledge, this includes phoning, texting, social media 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 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

Welsh 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, and investigate, these possible signs 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 Club's committee.
- 2 Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- 3 The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
- 4 An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.

- 5 In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to Welsh Rowing for advice.
- 6 If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
- 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 Welsh Rowing Disciplinary Procedures.

# 3. Responding to suspicions and allegations of poor practice and 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.

**If you are not sure and want to discuss something please contact the Lead Safeguarding Officer at Welsh Rowing or NSPCC for advice.**

## 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 Welsh Rowing's procedures.

**Avoid asking leading questions such as 'Was it X who did this?' Rather say, 'Is there anything else you want to tell me?'**

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 <http://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/safeguarding>

## 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 Welsh Rowing Lead Safeguarding Officer 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, or 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).

Welsh Rowing makes decisions on sharing sensitive and confidential information using the *Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers*, published by HM Government, 2008. This determines how decisions to share information are made within Welsh Rowing and between Welsh Rowing and other bodies. The full document and a number of concise guides are available to download from [www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople](http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople); the 'Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing' are included in the British Rowing document WG 5.3 available <http://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/safeguarding>

### 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:

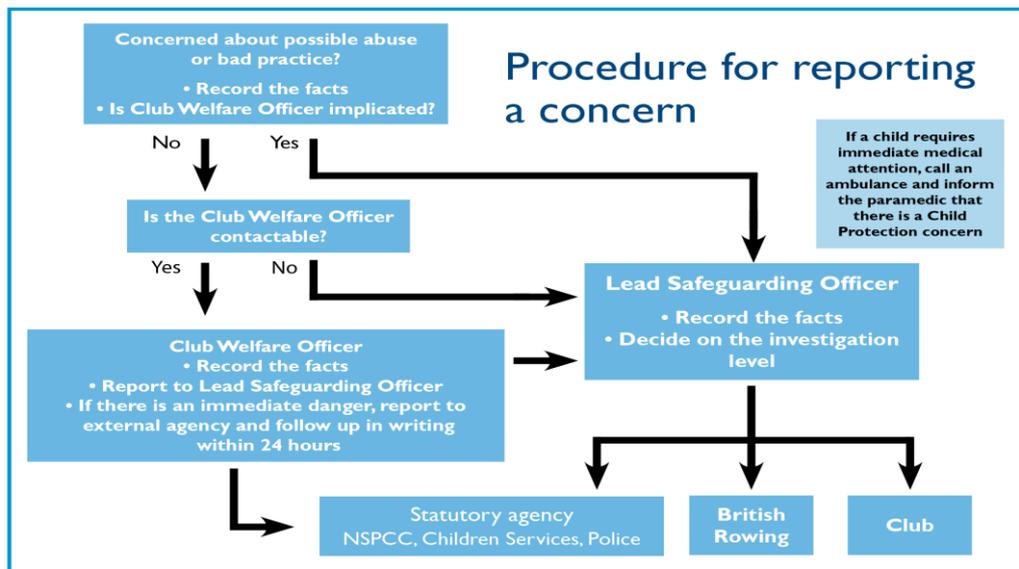
- the welfare of the child is paramount
- being vigilant helps to protect children
- everyone has a duty of care to report any concerns they have immediately
- a good reporting structure ensures that concerns are dealt with fairly.

**If the CWO or LSO at Welsh Rowing is not available and the matter is urgent:**

1. **Contact a statutory agency directly for advice**
2. **Complete the incident referral form and send to LSO at Welsh Rowing**

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.

**NB** Where 'British Rowing' is identified in the CPSU flowcharts, in Wales this refers to 'Welsh Rowing'.



Welsh Rowing's Whistleblowing Policy 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 Welsh Rowing's Lead Safeguarding 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 Welsh Rowing's LSO is informed of the referral.

- When with rowers 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

Welsh Rowing is committed to working in partnership with parents. In most situations, it is important that the CWO or LSO 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 Welsh Rowing

The LSO 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 Welsh 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 Board of Welsh Rowing to analyse trends and improve existing Welsh Rowing policy and guidance.

Any letters to the LSO regarding referrals should be marked '**private and confidential**' and sent to: LSO, Welsh Rowing, Channel View Centre, Cardiff, CF11 7HB. Alternatively the LSO can be contacted on 07890 992858. The LSO or another designated person from Welsh 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 has 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 Allegations of previous 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 LSO. This is because other children, either within the sport or outside it, may be at risk from this person.

## 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 Welsh Rowing Safeguarding Policy, procedures and resources.

The CWO should be a figure well known in the club and approachable by children but must not be 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 Welsh Rowing. It is essential that the CWO is able to act in a confidential manner and to recognise the boundaries of their competence, role and responsibilities and where to seek advice and support. The role and responsibilities of a CWO are outlined in WG 3.10.

### 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 is 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 rowers 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 be 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 British Rowing 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 rowers

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 **0844 892 1026**

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 Welsh Rowing's Safeguarding Policy and current legislation.

### 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 lifesaving 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 Individual 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.

# 5. Recruiting & selecting people to work with children in rowing

## 5.1 Safe recruitment in rowing

Welsh Rowing will ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with Children under their jurisdiction. This applies equally to those recruited in a paid or unpaid (voluntary) position.

The responsibility for having safe and careful recruitment processes in place rests with the Regulated Activity Provider, i.e. the local organisation, club or event, including those supported by, or employing, people in voluntary roles. Reference checking, interviewing, attitude and aptitude testing, relevant experience and qualifications are important elements of this process. All of these are just as important as a Criminal Records and/or Barred Lists Check.

The following recruitment procedures set out the minimum standards you must apply to recruitment at a Welsh Rowing affiliated club or event. These procedures apply equally to paid or unpaid persons within your club or event.

All persons who will have Significant Access to children, or who hold a Position of Trust with the children with whom they come into contact, 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. Existing volunteers or employees who change their role must also complete the same vetting process.

- 1 Complete an application form. This will help assess the applicant's suitability to work with children, based on their skills and competencies as well as eliciting information about an applicant's past
- 2 Provide a self-disclosure about any matter that might influence their suitability to work with children.
- 3 Provide two referees
- 4 Provide details of previous volunteering experience or relevant employment
- 5 Provide evidence of their identity (such as a driving licence with photo or passport)
- 6 Complete a Criminal Records Check at the enhanced level for the specific role

In addition anyone working in a Regulated Activity must complete a Barred Lists Check, please see Glossary for the definition of 'Regulated Activity'.

Eligibility for Criminal Records or Barred Lists Check depends on the specific role in question. If you are not sure about the eligibility of the role please seek advice from the Lead Safeguarding Officer at Welsh Rowing.

Please note that completing the above process does not guarantee that an individual is safe to work with children. Welsh Rowing will use the information from a Criminal Records Check to support the overall recruitment process and assess any potential risk, however the employer or recruiting organisation must also assess for the individual suitability by taking up references, interviewing and supervising.

*Detailed notes for CWOs relating to this process are contained in WG 2.11*

DBS Criminal Records and Barring information will be assessed by the Case Management Group in line with British Rowing's policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders (WG 2.1) and the DBS Code of Practice. Completing a Criminal Record or Barred Lists Check is a confidential and sensitive matter 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.

Any disclosures will be dealt with confidentially, following the guidance set out in *Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers*, HM Government 2008.

Criminal Record and, where relevant, Barred Lists Check should 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.

## 5.2 Who should have a Criminal Records Check?

Every rowing club that has children regularly using its facilities must ensure that the following roles have a Criminal Record and Barred Lists Check as these involve working in a Regulated Activity:

- Club Welfare Officer (CWO)
- Coaches who will be training children or junior rowers unsupervised
- Any coaches supervising other volunteers or coaches not in Regulated Activity but with access to children whose role would otherwise be considered Regulated Activity
- Junior co-ordinator
- Trailer drivers who spend time away with children at regattas

The following roles should only have a Criminal Records Check if they involve Significant Access to, and direct contact with, children:

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

If in doubt please contact Welsh Rowing for advice.

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

## 6. Awareness and training

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 5).

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

### 6.1 Recommended minimum levels of awareness and training

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

Role	Read Welsh Rowing Safeguarding Policy	British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop or equivalent
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	●	

### 6.2 Training

British Rowing SPC workshops are accredited by the NSPCC and are a pre-requisite for 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 also run basic awareness level safeguarding courses although these will not be specific to rowing and may not be specific to sport.
- There are a number of update-courses that are available online. Please contact British Rowing for details of approved courses.

Welsh Rowing will promote all Safeguarding and Protecting Children training via its website and newsletter.

## 7. Complaints & disciplinary procedures

Welsh Rowing has its own complaints & disciplinary procedure for dealing with breaches of the *Safeguarding Policy* and procedures. 'The case management process at Welsh Rowing' sets out the procedure from referral to appeal and is on the Welsh Rowing website.

- If a case is being investigated by a statutory agency, Welsh 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, Welsh Rowing will assess the case following its disciplinary procedures.
- Irrespective of the findings of any social services or police inquiries, the CMG will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be re-instated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases the CMG must reach a decision based upon the available information, which may for example suggest that, on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child(ren) must remain of paramount importance throughout.
- 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. Welsh Rowing may decide to await the outcome of such procedures before starting its own investigation.
- In accordance with Welsh Rowing's Rules, Welsh Rowing may impose disciplinary sanctions against clubs who fail to adopt and implement the Safeguarding 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 LSO who will ask the lead Board member for safeguarding at Welsh 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 for children, parents, members of staff and volunteers. Support Information Sheets are available (VG 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 Welsh 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.

## 8. Guidance documents

The British Rowing Welfare Guidance documents (WGs) mentioned in this document are available to download from the British Rowing website <http://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/safeguarding>