

St Mawes SC

Child Protection Policy and Guidelines

*A guide for club officers, volunteers and staff working
with children on club courses, events and activities.*

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*Thanks to the RYA for their advice and allowing this document
to be based on their "Child Protection Policy & Procedures."*

Section A: Club Policy

1. Child Protection Policy

1.1 Statement of Child Protection Policy

- The child's welfare is paramount.
- All children (whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity,) have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

1.2 Scope

This document applies to paid staff and volunteers working with children within recognised club activities and events. (e.g. JST instructional staff, Junior Race Week volunteers, safety boat crews.)

As defined in the Children Act 1989, anyone under the age of 18 years should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document.

1.3 Child Protection Officer

Greg Williams (01326 270379) is the club's appointed Child Protection Officer.

Section B: Procedures

2. Recruitment

This section applies to paid staff (employed by or on behalf of the club) and volunteers working with children within club activities or events.

2.1 JST Staff

The JST centre Principal (Bob Warren) is responsible for staff recruitment and should be satisfied that staff do not have previous convictions for criminal offences against children and have appropriate experience / training for the role.

Two procedures will be used to ascertain this information:

- References to be taken up (where appropriate).
- Self Declaration Form to be completed.

In line with RYA guidelines, St Mawes SC does not regard it as necessary for full CRB disclosure certificates to be obtained. However, if the centre Principal feels it necessary, there is no reason why a CRB check should not be obtained.

2.2 Junior Race Week Volunteers

Because parents are present on site and on the water throughout Junior Race Week the risk is seen as slight. Therefore, the following guidelines are appropriate:

- Volunteers **may** be asked by the Event Coordinator to complete a Self Declaration Form. (Volunteers who are not parents of participating children or are not well known to the organisers are likely to be required to complete a SDF.)
- Child Protection guidelines will be covered at the pre-event meeting.

2.3 Safety Boat Drivers

The rescue boat drivers *employed* by the club will be subject to the following procedures:

- A completed Self Declaration Form is required before duties commence.
- CP guidelines sheet to be issued to drivers and crews.

2.4 Club Webmaster

The club webmaster should be subject to the same procedures as JST staff because:

- The website is used to distribute JST paperwork to relevant people.
- Photos of children are often used on the website.

Section C: Guidelines

3. If Abuse is Suspected or Alleged

3.1 General Background

Although it is a sensitive and difficult issue, child abuse can and does occur outside the home.

When there's an allegation of abuse against a staff member, there may be 3 types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation
- a child protection investigation
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the police and social services investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

It is important to understand that a member of staff reporting a case of child abuse may undergo a very high degree of stress, including feelings of guilt for having reported the matter.

Greg Williams should be contacted immediately on 01326 270379. If unavailable, contact Social Services on 01872 278533 or the Joint Consultancy Team on 01872 254549.

3.2 Guidelines to Staff and Volunteers

See "Reporting Procedures", "Recording Information" and "Incident Report Form" in section D for guidelines.

3.3 What Constitutes Child Abuse?

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and often by people they know and trust. It refers to the damage done to a child's physical or mental health. Children can be abused within or outside their family, at school and in a sports or community environment. Child abuse can take many forms:

Physical abuse where adults or other children:

- physically hurt or injure children (e.g. by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning)
- give children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison
- attempt to suffocate or drown children
- in sport situations, physical abuse might also occur *when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body*

Neglect includes situations in which adults:

- fail to meet a child's basic physical needs (e.g. for food, warm clothing, essential medication)
- consistently leave children alone and unsupervised
- fail or refuse to give children love, affection or attention
- neglect in a sports situation might also occur if a teacher or coach fails to ensure children are safe or exposes them to *undue cold or risk of injury*

Sexual abuse. Boys and girls are sexually abused when adults (male or female) or other young people use them to meet their own sexual needs. This could include:

- full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, fondling
- showing children pornographic books, photographs or videos, or taking pictures for pornographic purposes
- sport situations which involve physical contact (e.g. supporting or guiding children) could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Abusive situations may also occur if adults misuse their power over young people

Emotional abuse can occur in a number of ways. For example, where:

- there is persistent lack of love or affection
- there is constant overprotection which prevents children from socialising
- children are frequently being shouted at or taunted
- there is neglect, physical or sexual abuse
- emotional abuse in sport might also include situations where parents or coaches subject children to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations.

Bullying may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. The bully may often be another child.

Although anyone can be a target of bullying, victims are typically shy, sensitive and perhaps anxious or insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons - being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

3.4 Recognising Child Abuse

It is not always easy to spot when children have 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 general distrust and avoidance of adults, especially with whom a close relationship would be expected
- an unreasonable reaction to normal physical contact

However, it is important to note that a child could be displaying some of all of these signs, or behaving in a way which is worrying - this does not necessarily mean the child is being abused. Similarly, there may not be any signs, you may just feel something is wrong.

If you have noticed a change in the child's behaviour, first talk to the parents or carers. It may be that something like a bereavement has caused the child to be unhappy. However, if your concerns are about sexual abuse or violence, talking to the parents might put the child at greater risk.

If your concerns remain or you cannot talk to the parents/carers, consult the person in charge. It is the responsibility of this person to make the decision to contact the police.

3.5 Further Advice

If you want to talk things through to gain some advice, you can phone the following 24 hour free telephone numbers:

- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk
- ChildLine: 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

If you are an instructor and have had an allegation made against you, advice and support can be gained from the following sources:

- Local Citizens' Advice Bureau
- RYA Legal (023 8060 4220)

4. JST Specific Guidelines

In addition to the universally applicable guidelines contained in the previous section and the handouts within this document, the following notes are applicable to JST:

- The normal procedure should be that groups are supervised by two members of staff. (e.g. RYA Dinghy Instructor and Assistant.)
- Where possible, this two person team should comprise one male and one female.
- Mailings to parents before the start of courses should strongly encourage sailors to arrive changed and ready to sail.

Self-Declaration Form

Title:

Surname:

First Name(s):

Gender:

Date of Birth:

Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offence?

YES / NO

If yes, please supply details of any criminal convictions:

Note: You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 1986 you should declare all convictions including "spent" convictions.

Are you known to Social Services as being an actual/potential risk to children?

YES / NO

If yes, please supply details:

Have you had any disciplinary sanction relating to child abuse?

YES / NO

If yes, please supply details:

Important: I understand that I may be asked to apply for a Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure and agree to do so if required. I understand that the information contained in this form and in the Disclosure received by the RYA may be disclosed, where strictly necessary, to regulatory bodies and/or third parties who have an interest in child protection issues.

Signed by the above named person:

Date:

Parental Consent Form

Child's Name:

Event / Course:

Date of Event / Course:

 to

I, the parent / guardian* of the above named child give permission to the instructors / coaches / staff participating in the above named activity / course / event to administer any relevant treatment or medication to the named participant, when/if necessary. I shall inform the organising body of any known conditions and medication requirements.

In addition, if the case arises, I authorise the members of staff to take my son/daughter to hospital and give full permission for any treatment required to be carried out in accordance with the hospital's diagnosis. I understand that I shall be notified, as soon as possible, of the hospital visit and any treatment given by the hospital.

Details of Known Conditions / Medication Requirements:

Consent to Photographs / Video Footage of Child Being Taken:

Photographs / videos may be taken during events /courses for one of two reasons:

- On training courses, instructors / coaches may use photos / video footage to provide feedback to sailors. This footage will be deleted when the training course ends.
- Photos may be taken for promotional purposes (e.g. club yearbook, club website etc) on behalf of the club. Published photos will not be linked to personal details of the people involved.

I, the parent / guardian of the above named child, **do / do not** give permission for the instructors / coaches / staff participating in the above named activity / course / event to use photos / videos in the ways described above.

Parent's/Guardian's Consent:

Signature:

Print Name:

Relationship to Child:

Date:

St Mawes SC

Child Protection Guidelines

- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children.
- Do not take children alone in a car.
- Do not take children to your home.
- Do not photograph or video children without the knowledge and consent of their parents. Be sensitive to the risk that images could be misused by a third party.
- Do not publish information that might enable someone to contact a child.

You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child.
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents.

In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed. In such situations, it is important to ensure that all staff are sensitive to the child and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

Important: All instructors and volunteers should read the full version of the club's *Child Protection Policy & Guidelines*.

Recording Information

In cases of child abuse the main aim is to keep calm and provide a positive, friendly attitude to encourage the child to talk.

- **DO** listen
 - Do take notes
 - Do tell the RYA and make sure that all information is passed onto the police
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- **DON'T** ask direct questions
 - Don't try to stop the child telling you about their problem
 - Don't make promises
 - Don't allow anyone else outside the police or social services to interview or ask questions of the child
 - Don't assume!

The complexity of child protection issues means that there can never be a set of prescriptive questions. Don't try to get too much information, rather, let the child give you as much as they feel prepared to give. The adult listening should try to act as natural as possible throughout. Make notes during the interview, but only those necessary; it might be possible to gain certain contact information from existing administrative records.

COMMON QUESTIONS that can be used in some situations:

THE DOs - open questions/statements

- Would you like to tell me what happened?
- Can you tell me where/when this happened?
- Would you like to tell me who was involved?
- Can you tell me what happened next?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me?
- Thank you for telling me this but you do realise I will have to do something about it

THE DON'Ts - leading/closed questions/comments

- Was it your father/coach/friend that did this to you?
- Are you sure that's what happened?
- Why did you let them do that to you?
- Why do you think this happened?
- I expect you must be very upset about this.
- This can be our little secret

Incident Report Form

Try and keep the process friendly rather than a formal; you want the child to feel as comfortable as possible during this stressful process. Refer to the "Recording Information" sheet for guidance.

Interviewer's Details

Name:		Position:	
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Child's Details

Name:		Date of Birth:	
Address:		Parent/Carer:	

ATTACH ON SEPARATE SHEETS, THE DETAILS OF WHAT WAS SAID.

Details Of Action Taken:

POLICE	Police Station & Officer Reported To:	
	Date/Time Reported:	
	Details of Any Advice From Police:	

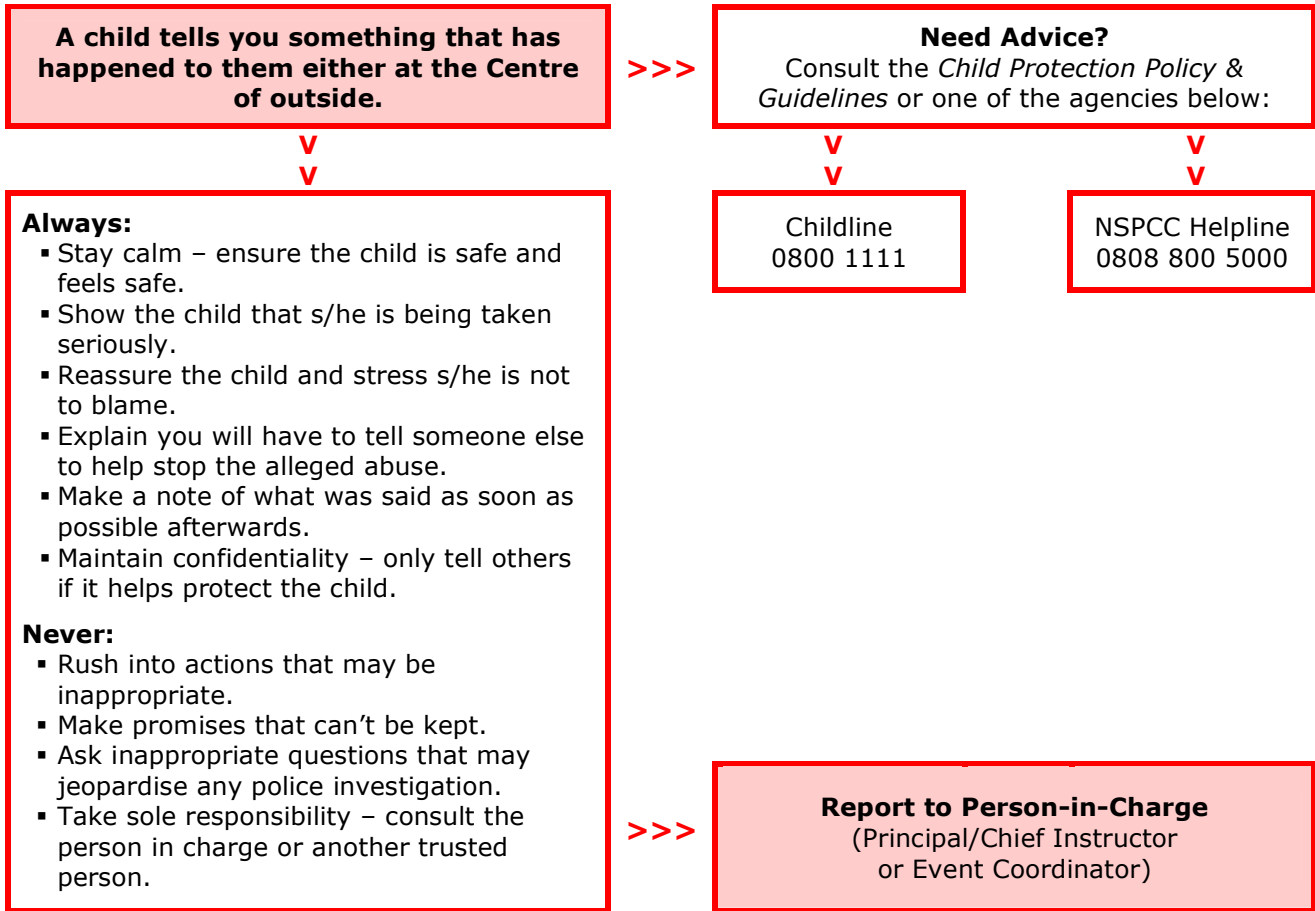
RYA	Reported to Child Protection Officer? YES / NO (If So, Name:)	
	Date/Time Reported:	
	Details of Any Advice From RYA:	

Other Organisation Contacted for Advice	Organisation & Person Contacted:	
	Date & Time of Call:	
	Details of Any Advice Received:	

Interviewer Signature:	
Date:	

Reporting Procedure for Allegations of Child Abuse

For Instructors, Staff & Volunteers:



Person In Charge / Club / Centre:

