



Horizons Children's Sailing Charity

Child Protection Policy and Procedures pg 1

As defined in the Children Act 1989, for the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child. The policy also applies to vulnerable adults.

Policy Statement: Horizons (Plymouth) is committed to providing a safe environment for children.

- 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.
- 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.

Child Protection Co-ordination The Lead Trustee for Personnel is also the Child Protection Officer. He/ she is to ensure that this policy (and associated procedures) is kept up to date; and that staff and volunteers understand the procedures and put them into practice; to receive reports of any concerns or allegations; in conjunction with the Chairman, to decide on the appropriate action to be taken; to keep the RYA Child Protection Coordinator informed as necessary.

Code of Practice and Procedures

1. Recruitment (Paid Staff and Volunteers) All applications for work, whether paid staff or volunteers, will be subject to scrutiny. Application forms will elicit information about the applicant's past career or experience (requiring explanations for any gaps) and establish any criminal record. References will also be taken up, if possible to include at least one regarding previous work with children. Checks will also be made with the Criminal Records Bureau to find out if the applicant has any conviction for criminal offences against children. (Applicants will be asked to signify their consent to checks, using the RYA Self Declaration Form). Horizons will access the CRB through the RYA, which operates as a registered umbrella body. Details of a person's criminal record are provided (with the individual's consent) in the form of a Disclosure Certificate. Checks will only be accessed for the selected candidate, not to help shortlist.

2. Prevention of Abuse The Project Manager is expected to reduce situations for abuse of children and help to protect staff and volunteers from false allegations being made by promoting good practice. He should ensure volunteers awaiting results of CRB checks never work alone with children. He is to include Child Protection policy and procedures in the refresher and induction training programme for volunteers, using the RYA Policy Guidelines. All Staff and volunteers are issued with a Good Practice Guide handout - they are required to read Horizon's Child Protection Policy and Procedures at the beginning of the season (April). The common sense guidelines for everyone within Horizons are as follows:

- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
- Do not take children alone in a car on journeys, however short
- Do not take children to your home
- Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation or the child's parents
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child
- Do not photograph or video children, or publish their pictures, without the knowledge and consent of their parents



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You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded; always act
- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves

However, it may be sometimes necessary for staff or volunteers 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 all staff are sensitive to the child and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

3. Horizons CP training.

Volunteers and Staff attend the CP2 "Understanding Child Protection course" provided by Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board

4. What to do if abuse is suspected/alleged to have occurred

Trustees/Manager. The Action Guide in the RYA Child Protection Policy Guidelines - Template Z – is to be followed if there are allegations of abuse against a member of staff or volunteer. Allegations of sexual or physical abuse will be reported to the Police and Social Services by the Child Protection Officer. He will also determine the appropriate action to be taken for allegations of bullying, emotional abuse or neglect.

Where there is an allegation of abuse against a member of staff, there may be three types of investigation: a criminal investigation; a child protection investigation; a disciplinary or misconduct investigation within Horizons.

It is important to understand that a member of staff/volunteer reporting a case of child abuse, particularly by a colleague, may undergo a very high degree of stress, including feelings of guilt for having reported the matter. It is therefore important to ensure that appropriate counselling and support is made available in such a situation.

Instructors/Volunteers. What should I do if a child tells me s/he is being abused?

Always:

- stay calm - ensure the child is safe and feels safe
- show and tell the child that you are taking what s/he says seriously
- reassure the child and stress that s/he is not to blame
- be honest, explain you will have to tell someone else to help stop the alleged abuse
- make a note of what the child has said as soon as possible after the event
- maintain confidentiality - only tell others if it will help protect the child

Never:

- rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- make promises you cannot keep
- ask inappropriate questions, which may jeopardise any impending police investigation
- take sole responsibility - consult someone else (the Child Protection Officer and the Project Manager, or the Chairman) so you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself



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Taking appropriate action if you are worried about abuse is never easy - it takes courage but it protects a young life. You may be upset about what the child has said or you may worry about the consequences of your actions. Sometimes people worry about children being removed from their families as a result of abuse but in reality this rarely happens. However, one thing is certain - you cannot ignore it. The effects of abuse on children can be devastating, especially if children are left unprotected or do not receive help to cope with the abuse. The most serious effect is that children can and do die as a result of abuse. They can develop behavioural difficulties, problems at school, their development can be delayed and they can become depressed and withdrawn. Some of these problems, if left untreated, can persist into adulthood.

Recognising 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, *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 young person. 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.*



How would I recognise if a child is being abused?

It is not always easy to spot when children have been abused even for the most experienced carers. 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 with whom a close relationship would be expected*
- *an unreasonable reaction to normal physical contact*
- *difficulty in making friends or abnormal restrictions on socialising with others*

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 are worried, it is NOT your responsibility to decide if it is abuse BUT it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it.



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Child Protection Policy: Handout for staff and Volunteers.

Good Practice Guide

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Reporting Procedure : Allegations of sexual, physical, emotional abuse or bullying and neglect should be reported to the Project Manager or the Child Protection Officer (Mrs Jayne Hall).

Important: All staff and Volunteers should read the Child Protection Policy and Procedures detailed in the Horizons' Management Handbook on induction and every April.

Volunteers

Volunteer helpers are recruited to assist with boat operations, sailing instruction, administration and maintenance tasks under the supervision and direction of a member of staff, or a qualified volunteer. (The recruitment procedures are detailed in the Child Protection Policy section). Volunteers are provided with free instruction to obtain RYA qualifications necessary for work afloat.). Volunteers are registered as members of Horizons; they are not required to pay a subscription and they are entitled to vote at General Meetings. A Membership Register is kept by the Secretary. Volunteers are required to sign the following agreement:



Horizons Children's Sailing Charity

Agreement between the Trustees of Horizons (Plymouth) and Volunteer Workers

Role : The Trustees of Horizons are committed to advance the education and improve the quality of life of young people by providing experience of boating and related activities. Volunteers are recruited to assist the permanent staff operate and maintain the boats and administer activities. They have a vital part to play in helping Horizons help young people to widen their horizons.

General : The purpose of this agreement is to clarify expectations - the terms are binding in honour only. Horizons does not intend a contractual relationship to be created with volunteers and there is no obligation to offer work. Volunteers will not receive remuneration; expenses may be reimbursed when agreed in advance. Obligations to comply with Horizons policies are required for compliance with legal duties and the proper performance of work in support of Horizons' activities.

Volunteers agree:

- To work under the supervision of a permanent member of staff.
- To exercise a duty of care to other workers and members of the public, and observe Health and Safety policies.
- To abide by Horizon's objects and policies and procedures for equal opportunities, personal standards, confidentiality, discipline, grievance and child protection.
- To obey the Manager's instructions/orders/ SOPs, both verbal and written.
- To inform the Manger when no longer available to undertake voluntary duties.
- To set high standards of personal behaviour and endeavour to work at all times on the basis of Christian principles, setting a good example to young people.

The Trustees of Horizons agree:

- To provide all necessary training for work afloat
- To provide protective clothing and lifesaving equipment to enable the volunteer to undertake voluntary duties.
- To provide public liability /employer insurance cover for injury/death in event of Horizons negligence or breach of statutory duty.
- To attempt to provide opportunities for volunteers to obtain work satisfaction and fulfilment.
- To provide free membership of Horizons - members are entitled to vote at general meetings as detailed in the governing document.

I agree to comply with the terms of this agreement ,

signed Date.....

Signed on behalf of trustees Chairman, Horizons