



BRITISHROWING

# Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy

March 2020

TEAMWORK | OPEN TO ALL | COMMITMENT



*This policy was reviewed in 2018 with some further amendments made in March 2020. A number of the Welfare Guidance documents are still under review. References to those will be added as soon as completed.*

## **Policy Statement**

British Rowing prioritises the safeguarding and protection of all children who participate in, or come into contact with rowing through our National Governing Body, our clubs and/or coaches.

We are committed to upholding safeguarding best practice and minimising the risk of children being harmed; our safeguarding policies, procedures, training and support promote safe, inclusive, fun and child-centred environments in which all children have a positive and enjoyable experience of our sport.

British Rowing acknowledges that some children are more at risk of abuse, particularly those who are disabled, or at risk of feeling or being isolated due to their ability, race, religion or belief, ethnic background, sex, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background. We take reasonable and appropriate steps to safeguard their welfare.

British Rowing recognises that child abuse can take place anywhere, including in a rowing environment, and that it is everyone's responsibility to report concerns, whether or not abuse may be occurring. We acknowledge that abuse can take place face-to-face and online; that it can be historical or current; and that perpetrators can be other children or adults, including those in positions of trust. We have policies, procedures, training and support that enable British Rowing to prevent, recognise, report and respond to complex safeguarding challenges.

All concerns about a child must be acted upon in line with our safeguarding reporting procedure. Where concerns and disclosures of abuse against a child occur, we prioritise the well-being of children and act in accordance with UK legislation and guidance. Poor practice will be taken extremely seriously and viewed as a breach of our safeguarding policies and procedures.

*Everyone is responsible for reporting concerns; not acting is not an option.*



### **Our commitment to safeguarding includes:**

- Promoting and prioritising the safety and wellbeing of all children who come into contact with rowing. We do this through the development, communication, implementation and upholding of clear, up-to-date safeguarding policies and procedures. These are mandatory for everyone involved in rowing.
- Enabling everyone to understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities and be provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to safeguarding concerns and disclosures.
- A safely recruited, trained, resourced British Rowing Safeguarding Team who proactively promote child safeguarding and protection and take appropriate action when concerns and disclosures are made (*Appendix B Responding to Concerns and Disclosures*).
- Supporting clubs to be safe, child-centred environments by mandating that all clubs read, understand and uphold this policy and related policies, procedures and guidance. This includes having a Welfare Officer and coaches in every British Rowing club where children may be present who have:
  1. a signed-off criminal records check
  2. two positive references
  3. up-to-date safeguarding training
- Having British Rowing safeguarding procedures, and enabling clubs to have such procedures that support the implementation of this policy, including:
  1. Listening to children – providing opportunities for children to tell us what we are doing well, what risks there are to them and how we can help keep themselves and others safe;
  2. Child-centred communication, including using images and language that empowers children face-to-face, online and on social media;
  3. Safe recruitment, including criminal records checks and references to minimise the likelihood of employing and deploying individuals who may pose a risk of harm to children;
  4. Accurately recording and safely storing confidential information (see Appendix B);
  5. Creating and maintaining safe, inclusive environments for all children through the delivery of child-centred British Rowing activities in all clubs and events;
  6. Risk assessing and monitoring the implementation of British Rowing safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance and enabling clubs to do so;
  7. Promoting anti-bullying procedures and enabling clubs to do so;
  8. Identifying and responding to poor practice.



- Reviewing our safeguarding policies, processes and guidance whenever there are changes in safeguarding legislation or our own programmes or procedures that this policy does not cover.

Our safeguarding policies and procedures are mandatory for everyone involved in British Rowing governed activities, whether or not they are British Rowing members. Failure to comply with our safeguarding policies and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal or exclusion from the sport. All concerns and disclosures that indicate illegal action may take or have taken place will be reported to external authorities.

*This policy is intended to be used alongside the British Rowing Welfare Guidance documents which outline how to put this policy into practice.*

## Key definitions

<b>Child</b>	anyone under the age of eighteen years.
<b>Child abuse</b>	physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse and/or neglect. Note that abuse can take place in person and online, by other children and/or adults, including those in positions of trust.
<b>Child protection</b>	responding to concerns and/or disclosures of abuse to children. Note that poor practice may be treated as a child protection concern.
<b>Child safeguarding</b>	proactively promoting safe, inclusive, child-focused environments which keep all children safe from harm. Recognising that some children may be more vulnerable to abuse or neglect, such as children with disabilities; and putting tailored procedures in place to minimise the risk of harm to all children.
<b>Poor practice</b>	non-adherence to the British Rowing safeguarding policies, procedures, and/or guidance where the intent or outcome is not child abuse. Note that poor practice is potentially damaging to a child and organisation and can sometimes lead to the creation of environments conducive to abuse as well as concerns about an individual's motivation.

Below are some examples of child abuse. Note these are not exhaustive. British Rowing recommends that all appropriate staff and volunteers attend safeguarding training to better understand categories and examples of abuse.



*Examples of child neglect:*

- 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.

*Examples of child physical abuse:*

- 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.
- an older child using his/her physical strength to hurt or intimidate a younger child.

*Examples of indicators of child sexual abuse:*

- 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

*Examples of child emotional abuse:*

- 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.

See Appendix A for a full list of definitions.

## **Dos and Don'ts**

Everyone in British Rowing is expected to uphold the 'Dos and Don'ts' at all times:

1. Always prioritise the well-being of all children at all times
2. Be a positive role model and act with integrity. Help to create a safe, inclusive environment for all children, free from poor practice, discrimination and/or bullying
3. Always obtain consent from parents/carers and children before taking or publishing any photos, videos or personal information about a child



4. Keep your personal and professional life separate, including on social media. Avoid face-to-face and online private one-to-one communication with a child and where possible, do not be alone with a child
5. Do not abuse, neglect, discriminate against or otherwise harm a child or act in a way that may be interpreted as such\*
6. Doing nothing is NOT an option: report all concerns and disclosures as soon as possible, as outlined in this policy. If someone is in immediate danger, call the police (999)
7. When in doubt, seek advice: contact your Welfare Officer or the British Rowing Safeguarding Team.

\*It is illegal to have a relationship with someone who is under 18 years old if you are in a position of trust; it is illegal to have a sexual relationship with anyone under the age of 16 whether they give consent or not.

## **Responsibility for the implementation of safeguarding and child protection in British Rowing**

- British Rowing's Board has overall accountability for British Rowing's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The British Rowing executive, supported by the British Rowing Safeguarding Team, has overall responsibility for updating the policy and its implementation including supporting clubs and individuals to uphold these policies and procedures. They do so by providing information, guidance, training and case management support, to enable everyone to implement the policies and procedures.
- All clubs affiliated to British Rowing, headed up by a club committee, are responsible for upholding this policy and related procedures; safely recruiting a Welfare Officer and coaches with appropriate training, a criminal records check that is verified by the British Rowing Safeguarding Team, and two independent references.
- All concerns and disclosures must be reported to the British Rowing Safeguarding Team, who are responsible for deciding and implementing next steps in line with this policy and UK legislation. Where appropriate, the Club Welfare Officer will be involved in this process.
- The British Rowing Case Management Group is comprised of independent experts who are responsible for advising and making decisions on child protection cases, in line with this policy
- The British Rowing Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Panel is responsible for overseeing the implementation of safeguarding policies and procedures across British Rowing governed activities, including in clubs and supporting the implementation of British Rowing's work towards the CPSU Framework for Safeguarding Children in and through sport. The SVGP produces a report for the British Rowing Board on an annual basis.
- Everyone involved in rowing is responsible for raising concerns and/or disclosures.



The British Rowing Safeguarding Team also has responsibility for sharing knowledge and implementing the Prevent Duty which prevents children from being drawn into extremism and terrorist actions.

## **Where there is a safeguarding concern / disclosure**

- The individual who is told about, hears, or is made aware of the concern/disclosure is responsible for following the Concern Reporting Procedure, reporting their concern to their Welfare Officer, or if the Welfare Officer is not available, to the British Rowing Safeguarding Team as soon as possible (within 48 hours) 020 8237 6700; [iso@britishrowing.org](mailto:iso@britishrowing.org) (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm). If a child is in immediate danger, call the police (999). The NSPCC can be contacted via their 24-hour helpline (0808 800 5000) for advice when neither the Welfare Officer nor British Rowing Safeguarding Team can be contacted.
- The Welfare Officer is responsible for sharing all concerns/disclosures with the British Rowing Safeguarding Team. Where an individual has reported a concern to an external body (such as the NSPCC or police), this should be reported to the Team by the individual within 24 hours.
- All verbal disclosures are recorded in writing. Individuals who report concerns are asked to complete a Report a Concern form.
- Parents/carers are informed of concerns or disclosures involving their child unless doing so poses (further) risk of harm to that child.
- An individual who has allegations made against them may be temporarily suspended from rowing activities without prejudice for the duration of the investigation if British Rowing deem it necessary to prioritise the safety and well-being of children.
- The British Rowing Safeguarding Team is responsible for assessing all safeguarding concerns/ disclosures that are reported to them and working with the club Welfare Officers to follow up as appropriate on a case-by-case basis, prioritising the well-being of the child at all times. Dependent on the concern/disclosure, a referral may be made to:
  - The police in an emergency (999);
  - Local Authority Children's Social Care Services;
  - Designated Officer (England; Wales);
  - National Disclosure and Barring Service for concerns/disclosures about a member of staff, consultant, coach, official or volunteer;
  - Local police force;
  - Prevent Officer for concerns about children at risk of being drawn into extremism or terrorist activity and Channel with permission from the individual and parent/carer for those under eighteen years old;



- The British Rowing Case Management Group; and/or
  - The British Rowing Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Panel;
  - Sport Resolutions for independent investigations on child protection cases.
- The Welfare Officer and British Rowing Safeguarding Team are responsible for updating records and storing them securely. Child protection case files will be kept for at least fifty years.
  - Where feasible, individuals involved in the concern/disclosure will be kept up to date with proceedings. It may not be possible to give a clear indication of how long proceedings may take as this is dependent on additional information that can emerge; and the actions that external authorities take.
  - Access to counselling and other reasonable support may be offered to those involved in concerns/disclosures related to British Rowing. If you would like to discuss this, contact the British Rowing Safeguarding Team.

Data protection legislation does not prohibit the reporting of child protection concerns and/or disclosures as outlined in this policy.

## **Non-recent allegations**

British Rowing encourages individuals and organisations to discuss any concerns about historical abuse with the British Rowing Safeguarding Team. We take historical allegations extremely seriously and adhere to the procedures outlined in this policy.

## **Whistleblowing**

British Rowing takes all safeguarding concerns and disclosures extremely seriously, prioritising the well-being of children. Our whistleblowing policy highlights our stance on protecting and supporting anyone who whistle-blow. Where an individual or organisation believes that good practice has not been adhered to:

- Contact the British Rowing Safeguarding Team
- If the Team does not resolve your concern, or your concern is about the Team, the British Rowing Complaints Policy outlines our formal complaints process
- Alternatively, you can contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line (0800 028 0285; email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)).





## **Breaches of this policy and/or safeguarding procedures**

Any breaches of this policy will be taken extremely seriously and may result in dismissal, prohibition from attending or participating in British Rowing governed activities and/or legal action. Breaches will be managed by the British Rowing Safeguarding Team and may use Sport Resolutions as an independent body. For more information see the Safeguarding Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure (Welfare Guidance Document).

## **Related policies, procedures and guidance**

- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure
- Welfare Guidance documents:
  - section 1. Codes of Conduct, disciplinary procedures and raising concerns
  - section 2: DBS guidance
  - section 3: club training and competition guidance
  - section 4: training camps and residential visits
  - section 5: use of social media and information sharing.

The Welfare Guidance documents (WGs) are available to download from the British Rowing website [www.britishrowing.org/about-us/safeguarding](http://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/safeguarding) and there are useful briefing documents on the CPSU website: [www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/cpsu](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/cpsu).

## **Reviewing our Child Safeguarding and Protection policy**

This policy is reviewed every two years or sooner where there is a reason for doing so (such as a change in legislation; British Rowing's structure and/or programmes).

## Appendix

## A

### Glossary of safeguarding and protection terms

<b>Adult at Risk</b>	an adult at risk of abuse or neglect: an adult who has care and support needs; is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect; and because of their care and support needs cannot protect themselves against actual or potential abuse or neglect. See British Rowing's <i>Safeguarding and Protecting Adults at Risk Policy</i> .
<b>Child</b>	anyone under the age of eighteen years.
<b>Child abuse</b>	physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse and/or neglect. Note that abuse can take place in person and online, by other children and/or adults, including those in positions of trust. UK legislation outlines four categories of child abuse:
<i>Emotional abuse</i>	the ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child. It can involve deliberately trying to scare or humiliate a child or isolating or ignoring them and can seriously damage a child's emotional health and development. Children who are emotionally abused are often suffering another type of abuse at the same time.
<i>Physical abuse</i>	deliberately hurting a child including hitting, kicking, poisoning, burning, slapping or throwing objects at a child, causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts. Shaking or hitting babies can cause non-accidental head injuries (NAHI). Sometimes parents or carers will make up or cause the symptoms of illness in their child (fabricated or induced illness (FI)).
<i>Sexual abuse</i>	forcing or persuading a child to take part in sexual activities. It does not have to be physical contact and it can happen online. Sometimes the child will not understand that what is happening to them is abuse or understand that it is wrong.
<i>Neglect</i>	the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs. A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care; may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm. They may not get the love, care and attention they need from their parents. A child who's neglected will often suffer from other abuse as well. Neglect can cause serious, long-term damage to a child.
<b>Child protection</b>	responding to concerns and/or disclosures of abuse to



	children. Note that poor practice may be treated as a child protection concern.
<b>Child safeguarding</b>	proactively promoting safe, inclusive, child-focused environments which keep all children safe from harm. Recognising that some children may be more vulnerable to abuse or neglect, such as children with disabilities; and putting tailored procedures in place to minimise the risk of harm to all children.
<b>Club Welfare Officer</b>	(CWO) the designated individual within a British Rowing affiliated club whose responsibilities are currently outlined in Section 4.1 and WG 3.10.
<b>Criminal Records Check</b>	A disclosure of the relevant criminal records and other relevant information held by the police about an individual who will be working with children and/or Adults at Risk. This check is administered through the relevant Registered Body and the DBS. British Rowing's criteria for those requiring Criminal Records Checks are set out in WG 2.2.
<b>DBS: Disclosure &amp; Barring Service</b>	Formed by the merger of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) under the <i>Protection of Freedoms Act 2012</i> .
<b>Duty of Care</b>	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).
<b>Lead Safeguarding Officer</b>	(LSO): Previously known as the Child Protection Officer (CPO).The designated person appointed by British Rowing whose responsibilities are explained in WG 3.10.
<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>	a process that helps improve performance and achieve results. Its goal is to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact.
<b>Poor practice</b>	non-adherence to the British Rowing safeguarding policies, procedures and/or guidance where the intent or outcome is not child abuse. Note that poor practice is potentially damaging to a child and organisation and can sometimes lead to the creation of environments conducive to abuse as well as concerns about an individual's motivation.



<b>Position of Trust</b>	an individual, such as a coach, teacher, or club officer who makes decisions for or about a child and can influence the child's thoughts, and/or actions such as building confidence and self-esteem in a child. However, individuals can misuse that position to groom or abuse a child.
<b>Prevent Duty</b>	the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 on specified authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
<b>Risk assessment</b>	a procedure to help identify possible sources of danger and take appropriate action to minimise risks taking into account the age, number and competence of participants. See British Rowing's RowSafe guide for examples.

## Key safeguarding and child protection bodies

British Rowing Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Panel

British Rowing Case Management Group

CPSU: Child Protection in Sport Unit. The CPSU team is sited within the NSPCC

NSPCC: National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Local Authority Children's Social Care Services: the Local Authority statutory agency with responsibility for safeguarding and protecting children and families, formerly known as Social Services.

(Local Authority) Designated Officer (LADO – now referred to as DO): employed by the local council; responsible for managing all child and adult at risk protection allegations made against staff and volunteers.

Police: Law enforcement in the UK. Most law enforcement is carried out by police officers serving in regional police services. The police can be contacted on 999 in an emergency, or 101 for non-emergency cases.

Sport Resolutions: an independent dispute resolution service for sport in the UK, offering arbitration, mediation, expert opinion and tribunal appointment and administration service.

## Appendix B

### Responding to a disclosure of abuse

You may have concerns about abuse or poor practice because:

- you see it happening;
- someone reports it to you;
- a child approaches you directly; or
- you are concerned a child may be being harmed, or at risk of being harmed.

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

- react calmly and listen to what they have to say;
- do not take notes when the child is speaking so that you can show you're really listening to them;
- don't ask questions unless you need to clarify information; if you need to do so, only ask open questions (who, when, where, what, how);
- tell them they are not to blame and that it was right to speak up. Reassure them;
- do NOT promise to keep what they have told you secret – explain that to resolve the problem it will be necessary to inform other people as appropriate;
- 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;
- explain what you will do next to prioritise their safety and well-being (who you will inform, how they will be supported);
- follow the British Rowing Reporting Concerns procedure
- record all information using the Reporting Concerns form
- talk to British Rowing Safeguarding Team if you are personally affected by the concern/disclosure.

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/about-us/safeguarding](http://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/safeguarding)



## **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.

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 Safeguarding Team so that they can advise you;
- the Police/Children's Social Care Services if appropriate.

Information should be shared on a 'need to know' basis. It should not be shared with friends and acquaintances.

When completing the Reporting Concerns form you should:

- report 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;
- if you know the child well, you may have an opinion on the concern. If this is the case, clearly state that it is your opinion and why you are giving it.

British 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 British Rowing and between British 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)

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