



# INFINITY BOAT CLUB

Safeguarding and Protecting Children

Policy

August 2023



# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Our Mission**

At Infinity Boat Club, our mission is to engage & inspire young lives by bringing the benefits of rowing to socially disadvantaged young people, especially to those who are most in need because of financial hardship or social circumstance. Rowing is a sport that has the potential to form and transform the character, resilience and health of young people through the skills, teamwork, physical activity, and personal disciplines it fosters. Our target groups will require little prior sporting background, as rowing can be learned as a teenager and is able to incorporate a wide base level of physical capabilities, often engaging those who have not participated in sports programs previously.

Protecting children and young adults at risk from harm and promoting their wellbeing is fundamental to achieving this mission.

## **1.2 Recognising our Duty of Care**

Infinity Boat Club recognises that safeguarding children and adults at risk is the responsibility of everyone.

Infinity Boat Club understands that it has a Duty of Care to implement effective policies and procedures for safeguarding the welfare of children and adults at risk.

This Policy is intended to ensure and promote good practice and sound judgement from all that are involved in Infinity Boat Club activities.

## **1.3 Creation of the Infinity Boat Club Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy**

The National Governing Body, British Rowing, has robust policies in place for the Safeguarding & Protecting of Children & Adults at risk. Infinity Boat Club will adopt these as our overarching policies for good practice. We recognise that we may need to adapt these policies, to incorporate local Education Authorities and school policies.

## **1.4 Reviewing and Updating the Infinity Boat Club Policy**

Infinity Boat Club is committed to improving its operations and processes wherever and whenever possible. Infinity Boat Club has implemented a process for reporting incidents and reviewing where adjustments in policy or procedures will reduce the risk of harm, or promote the wellbeing of children and adults at risk.

The CEO and CWO of Infinity Boat Club (or equivalent) will review this policy on an annual basis (minimum) or when needs dictate.



## **2 Safeguarding and Protecting Children & Adults at risk Policy**

### **2.1 General principles**

- Everyone who participates in Infinity Boat Club activities is entitled to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment
- All individuals that are involved with Infinity Boat Club activities must follow the policies in this document
- Infinity Boat Club will support everyone involved with its activities to accept their responsibility to safeguard children & adults at risk from harm and abuse
- Infinity Boat Club will ensure a suitably skilled and trained Child Welfare Officer is available as a designated point of contact for raising concerns

### **2.2 Scope**

These policies apply to anyone that comes into contact with Infinity Boat Club participants. This includes contracted staff, session coaches, school & partner organisation staff, volunteers (including mentors) and parents.

All these people have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and adults at risk and prevent their abuse.

For the purposes of this policy, a child or children shall be defined as: anyone under the age of 18 years old.

A junior shall be defined as: a person who is eligible to race in Junior Class Events, as defined by British Rowing's Rules of Racing.

An adult at risk shall be defined as: those people of or over 18 years of age who have health or social care needs (irrespective of whether or not those needs are being met by social services) and who are unable to safeguard themselves as a result. While we recognise that some people will be vulnerable due to their learning disability or mental health needs there are also those adults who are at risk due to a specific circumstance, they may find themselves in, for example; domestic abuse, forced marriage, and sexual or commercial exploitation (this is not an exhaustive list).

### **2.3 Why these policies are needed**

- Abuse can occur in many forms, and at locations including the home, school and the boat club
- Some individuals will actively seek access to Children through sport in order to harm them.
- This policy is intended to help prevent abuse or harm from occurring and to help ensure an appropriate response in the event that it does



## 2.4 Policy statement

### **Infinity Boat Club is committed to:**

- Making the welfare of children and adults at risk paramount. This means that the need to ensure that children and adults at risk 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 IBC activities in a fun and safe environment
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children and adults at risk 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
- Recognising that children, adults at risk and families from minority group backgrounds may face additional barriers to accessing help and reporting concerns in respect of safeguarding issues
- Ensuring that all IBC employees, part-time staff and volunteers who work with children & adults at risk are appropriate for that role and the associated responsibilities. All IBC staff will be provided with relevant training and all volunteers will be appropriately supervised
- Ensuring to the extent possible that all IBC partner organisations have appropriate safeguarding policies and processes in place. IBC partner organisations must recognise their safeguarding responsibilities and implement suitable policies & procedures. Where IBC works with organisations that have more established and mature safeguarding processes in place (e.g. schools), IBC will, where appropriate, align with the safeguarding procedures of that organisation

## 2.5 Responsibility of Infinity Boat Club Employees and Volunteers

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental. There are five types of abuse:

- Neglect
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Bullying

Each is discussed in more detail in Appendix A1.

It is not the responsibility of an individual in our communities to make judgements about whether or not abuse is taking place, but everyone working in connection with IBC has a responsibility to:

- Identify poor practice and possible abuse
- Act if they have concerns – how to report concerns is outlined in Section 4.

An introduction to Good and Poor Practice is included in Appendix A2.

As part of using the internet and social media, everyone working with IBC has a responsibility to:



- Understand the safety aspects – including what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for staff and children – when using websites, social media, apps and other forms of digital communication
- Be aware that it doesn't matter what device is being used for digital interaction, but that the same safety aspects apply whether it is a computer, mobile phone or game console
- When using social media platforms (including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), ensure that we adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines

More detail about how to use the internet and social media safely is included in Appendix A2.

### **3. Infinity Boat Club Named Contacts Responsible for Safeguarding**

#### **3.1 Infinity Boat Club safeguarding leads and oversight**

Infinity Boat Club will appoint a lead Child Welfare Officer (CWO) and an alternate Child Welfare Officer (CWO). The current appointees are:

Lead: Michele Holdsworth

Alternate: TBC

The CWO will be supported by senior management to deliver their role.

At Board level, The Trustees have oversight of both Safeguarding and Health & Safety.

#### **3.2 Child Welfare Officer (CWO) Role**

Infinity Boat Club will ensure there is an appointed a Club Welfare Officer (CWO) at all times. IBC will use its best endeavours to ensure that this person has a child-focused approach, good communication skills and an ability to provide support and advice. They will also be well organised, have good administrative and recording skills and an ability and willingness to promote and implement the IBC Safeguarding & Protecting Children & Adults at risk Policy, procedures and resources.

Infinity Boat Club will use its best endeavours to appoint a CWO that is well known and approachable by Children but not involved directly in the coaching or day-to-day running of Children's or Junior programmes. IBC will use its best endeavours to ensure 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 CWO and Alternate are responsible for acting as a source of advice on Child Protection matters and for co-ordinating action within IBC upon receipt of any concerns or referrals. They should have a detailed understanding of the IBC Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Children Policy and British Rowing guidance.

The CWO and Alternate will complete formal safeguarding training within 3 months of appointment ('Time to Listen' course or equivalent), and will keep up to date with the appropriate level of training



and latest safeguarding legal developments. The CWO and Alternate will hold individual British Rowing membership (as do all IBC coaching staff).

It is critical that the CWO is known and approachable to all IBC staff, volunteers and (to the extent practically possible) participants. A safeguarding information poster will be displayed at each site, detailing IBC's CWO contact details.

Further details on the role & responsibilities of the IBC CWO is included in Appendix A3.

### **3.3 Extended absence**

In the event of either the Lead CWO or Alternate CWO being unavailable for an extended period, IBC will notify staff of a temporary replacement.

## **4. Responding to Suspicions and Allegations of Poor Practice**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Although most cases of abuse take place within the family setting, abuse can and does occur in rowing environments.

- **It is essential that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken**
- **It is not your responsibility to decide if 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 IBC CWO or Alternate CWO, the British Rowing Lead Safeguarding Officer or NSPCC for advice.

### **4.2 Receiving evidence of possible abuse**

You may have concerns about abuse or poor practice because:

- You see it happening
- You recognise signs such as those listed in Appendix A1 or A2
- Someone reports it to you
- A participant approaches you directly

If a participant 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 participant is paramount - if the participant 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 Infinity Boat Club'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?'**

Use the IBC Reporting form to record this information if useful.

#### 4.3 Recording information: confidentiality and information sharing

All concerns that you may have or receive should be recorded. You are recording this information for:

- Yourself, so you have a record of what happened
- The IBC CWO who will co-ordinate any action that needs to be taken
- The British Rowing Lead Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Case Manager so that they can advise IBC if required
- The Police/Children's Social Care Services if appropriate

It is not appropriate to share sensitive and confidential information with other people, for example:

- Your club committee, or members of your club
- Other acquaintances outside the rowing community

Any information relating to Child Protection should be held under secure conditions and made available on a need-to-know basis. This is outlined in more detail in IBC Data Protection policy.

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
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#### 4.5 Reporting the concern

**The process detailed on the following page should be followed to report a concern.**

The discovery that someone you know may be abusing a Child will raise feelings and concerns. Although it can be difficult to report such matters, you must remember that:

- The welfare of the participant is paramount
- Being vigilant helps to protect participants
- Everyone has a duty of care to report any concerns they have immediately
- A good reporting structure ensures that concerns are dealt with fairly

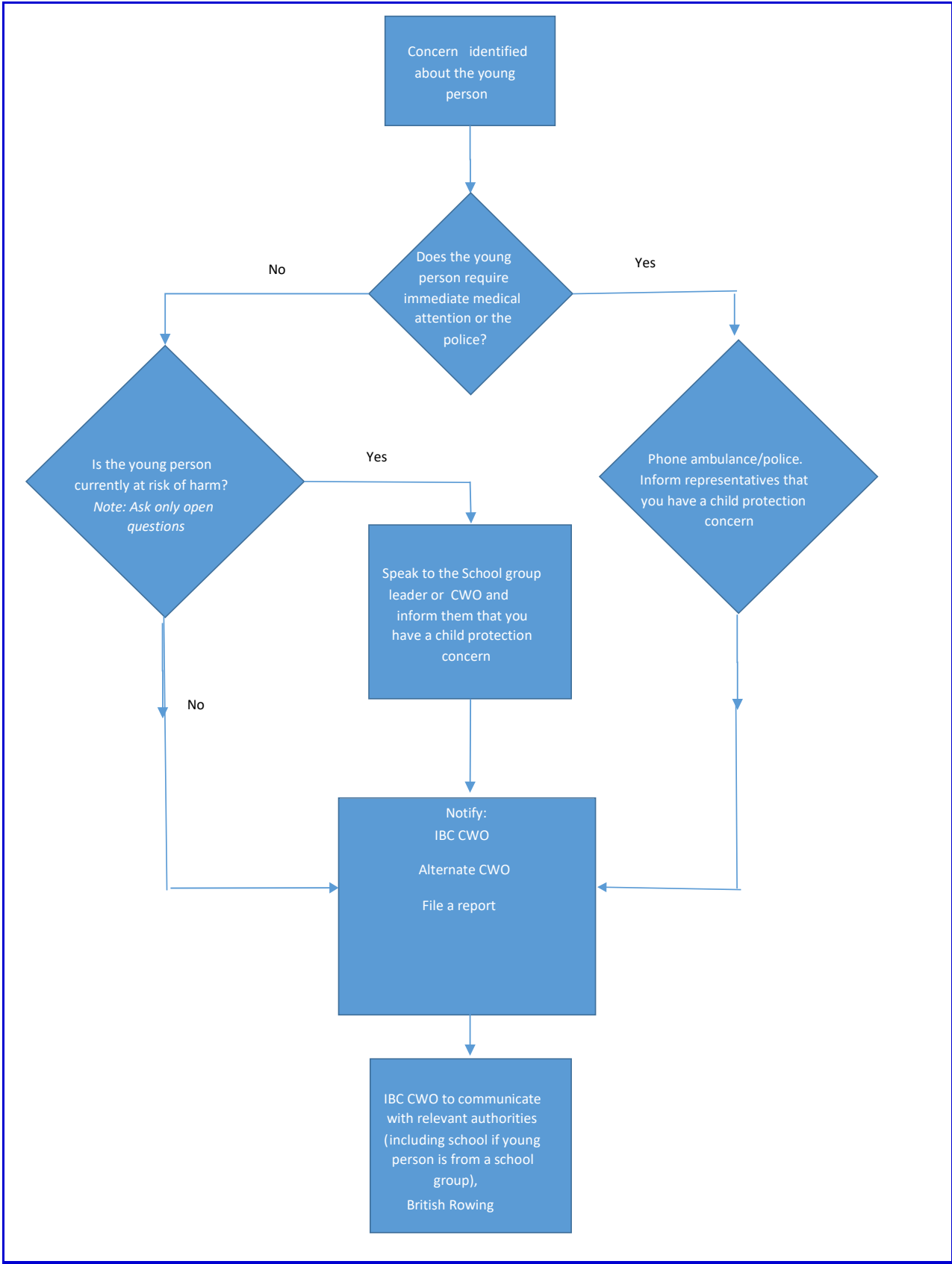


**If the CWO or alternate CWO is not available and the matter is urgent:**

- 1. Contact the CEO of IBC**
- 2. Contact a statutory agency directly. Appropriate agencies are listed in Appendix A4**

**The Infinity Boat Club Safeguarding Concern Reporting Workflow is included on the next page.**







## 4.5 Further guidance

The following documents are relevant for this section:

- Infinity Boat Club Code of Conduct
- Infinity Boat Club Complaints & Disciplinary Procedure
- Infinity Boat Club Report form for recording concerns and referrals
- Infinity Boat Club Whistleblowing Policy
- Infinity Boat Club
- Infinity Boat Club Policy for Employing Ex-Offenders
- Infinity Boat Club Photography Policy
- Infinity Boat Club Anti-Bullying Policy

Further information relating to Safeguarding in Rowing can be found at:

[safeguarding@britishrowing.org](mailto:safeguarding@britishrowing.org)

- Advice and support for individuals receiving a concern or allegation
- Advice and support for those who have reported concerns
- Information for those against whom a complaint of poor practice or allegation of abuse has been made
- Advice and support for junior rowers
- Adults at risk: How to record concerns of abuse
- Dealing with allegations of bullying of adults at risk
- Contacts – local and national agencies

## 5 Safeguarding participants during regular Infinity Boat Club activities

### 5.1 Infinity Boat Club Code of Conduct

In line with good practice, IBC has created the Infinity Boat Club Code of Conduct to ensure that everyone involved in IBC activities understands the expected behaviour of different groups.

Anyone that is regularly involved in IBC activities must read, understand and sign this document. This includes:

1. Participants and competitors
2. Parents/carers involved in rowing
3. Rowing coaches
4. Volunteers

### 5.2 Running Sessions – Coaching & Supervision 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 on an on-going basis.



The Head Coach or Group Leader should keep an up-to-date log of participants' personal risk factors (inc. injuries, allergies, medication) and emergency contact details. This information should be available confidentially to other IBC staff as required.

**Any participants under the age of 18, even those qualified as coaches, should be supervised at all times.**

In line with the national 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)
- Participant's growing independence
- Environment that the session is taking place in
- Risk assessment

If there is an accident or incident you should, where possible, ensure there is always someone available to supervise the remaining Children.

Coaches should remain aware that the level of supervision required might change after the original assessment is made (for example, weather conditions, injuries or broken equipment). In these scenarios, coaches should return to an appropriate level of supervision as quickly and safely as possible, which may mean cancelling the activity.

### 5.3 Changing rooms

- In mixed gender clubs separate changing facilities should be available
- Where practical, participants should be supervised by two adults in the vicinity
- Adult coaches or volunteers should not shower or change at the same time as the participants they have been working with
- No staff or volunteers, medical or otherwise should be present when participants of the opposite sex are showering or changing (for example a male coach working with a female crew)
- If a participant 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
- Participants should not be allowed to change outside of designated areas (for example participants should not change in areas where members of the public or participants of the opposite sex may walk in or be visible)
- If the club has participants with disabilities, they and their carer's should be involved in deciding how best they can be assisted. Always ensure the participant consents 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 British Rowing Welfare Guidance document and IBC's Photography Policy

## 6 Safeguarding on trips

As part of the service that IBC provides, there are many trips involving varying degrees of complexity. These include:

- Minibus journeys to and from IBC sites
- Day trips (e.g. to competitions or events)
- Overnight or residential trips (e.g. multi-day competitions, training camps)

### 6.1 Organising trips away for Junior Rowers

British Rowing provides comprehensive guidance on planning and undertaking such trips. The details of these documents are included at the bottom of this section.

The main factors to consider when planning a trip include:

#### 6.1.1 Communication with parents

For all IBC organised trips, parents should be made aware of:

- The 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)
- Any other special requirements or medical details
- Strict instructions regarding the drop off and return locations and times

#### 6.1.2 Transport

When planning transport options, the IBC Organiser should consider:

- The appropriate vehicle type (public transport, minibus, coach or private car)
- Any special requirements for Rowers with disabilities
- Competence of driver
- Journey length, time, distance, stopping points, refuelling
- Supervision during journey
- Legislation regarding seat belts and the need to wear them at all times
- Action plan in case of breakdown
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### 6.1.3 Supervision

The staff or volunteers organising the trip have the duty of care to act in the place of a parent for the duration of the trip.

Infinity Boat Club ensure that the persons appointed to care for the participants is appropriately briefed in safety and safeguarding and that they have relevant information regarding any special needs or requirements of any participant.

Infinity Boat Club ensures that anyone working in a supervisory role is appropriately vetted to ensure their suitability to work with Children in line with IBC's Safeguarding & Protecting Children & Adults at risk Policy and current legislation.

### 6.1.4 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 and be trained in First Aid.

Those in charge of participants 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.

### 6.1.5 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. Infinity Boat Club also retains public liability insurance.

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.

## 6.2 Further guidance

British Rowing has created a set of Welfare Guidance supporting documents that give further information on these topics. Links to these documents can be found at the following address:

In particular, the following documents are relevant for this section:

- Planning residential trips for children
- Parental consent for residential trips
- Coach / volunteer information sheet for trips away
- Training camps checklist: water safety and welfare
- Adults at risk: Organising trips away



## 7 Safeguarding at competitions & events

IBC may organise competitions and events both on and off IBC sites. Although the same principles apply as during normal IBC activities, it is important to recognise the additional risks and responsibilities as the organiser of the event.

Should an allegation arise at a competition, or any individual witness an act of poor practice or abuse during the competition, which is not appropriately acted on, the organising committee may be in breach of its duty of care.

A welfare plan must be created for any IBC - organised competition or event. A welfare officer should be appointed and act as the point of contact for any concerns or allegations. This plan must be easily accessible to staff and volunteers ahead of the event, in their event packs or on the website. This welfare plan will include:

1. Reporting structure & escalation processes
2. Competition rules and code of conduct
3. Medical provision
4. Appropriate level of security
5. Procedures for missing participants
6. Staff & volunteer vetting procedures
7. Required basic training
8. DBS checks for anyone holding personal contact details of children
9. Photography guidelines

In addition, a brief notice should be clearly visible in changing rooms, boating areas and appropriate public areas of IBC events outlining:

- IBC's commitment to safeguarding children & adults at risk (see statement below)
- Details of the reporting procedures in the event of a concern or issue arising
- Contact details for the appointed welfare officer and an alternate

Below is the standard IBC statement for competitions and events:

*The Organising Committee of [event name], an Infinity Boat Club event, believe that the welfare and wellbeing of all children is paramount. All children, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, religion or ability, have equal rights to safety and protection. All suspicions, concerns and allegations of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.*



## 8 Safeguarding Requirements of Partner Organisations

### 8.1 Working with partner organisations

Infinity Boat Club works with a range of partner organisations including schools, rowing clubs and youth organisations. All of these may vary in their own maturity to safeguarding Children.

IBC recognises that there may be increased risk to participants in scenarios which may involve:

- Unfamiliar surroundings
- Non- IBC individuals being in the vicinity
- Crowds, unexpected events, or excessive noise
- Heightened emotions (nerves, excitement, disappointment)

As the organiser of the activity, IBC has a duty of care to maintain the safety and promote the welfare of participants despite these challenges.

### 8.2 The minimum requirements of partner organisations

Infinity Boat Club cannot assume that appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place and must undertake appropriate due diligence.

Where procedures are not appropriate, IBC will assist the organisation to implement the IBC Safeguarding & Protecting Children & Adults at risk Policy.

**In situations where this is not possible, IBC will not partner with the organisation.**

## 9 Recruiting and selecting people to work with children and adults at risk

### 9.1 Safe Recruitment Process

Infinity Boat Club ensures that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with participants under their jurisdiction. This applies equally to those recruited in a paid or unpaid (voluntary) position.

Infinity Boat Club recognises its responsibility as a regulated activity provider to have safe and careful recruitment processes in place. IBC recognises that reference checking, interviewing, attitude and aptitude testing, relevant experience and qualifications are important elements of this process, and just as important as a Criminal Records and/or Barred Lists Check.

### 9.2 DBS Checks

Infinity Boat Club recognises that a clear Criminal Records Check / Barred Lists Check does not guarantee that an individual is safe to work with children & adults at risk. IBC will use the information to support the overall recruitment process and assess any potential risk. IBC will also assess for the individual suitability by taking up references, interviewing and supervising.



In the case that the Disclosure contains details of current or spent convictions, IBC will refer to its separate policy on Employing Ex-Offenders. IBC will only employ people who have completed a DBS check that IBC considers acceptable. IBC may obtain guidance from British Rowing or other appropriate bodies if required to support any assessment required.

IBC to have a robust process for tracking the date of expiry of DBS checks. These checks must be renewed at least every three years if a person remains in post or more regularly if new information indicates an updated check would be appropriate.

## **10 Training & Awareness**

Infinity Boat Club recognises that formal training will help people to work safely and effectively with children & adults at risk by:

- Improving awareness of good practice and identifying ways to improve
- Ensuring that they are not placing themselves at risk from allegations
- Recognising their responsibilities and reporting concerns about suspected poor practice or abuse
- Understanding the recruitment and selection procedures described (Section 5)

### *10.1 Minimum levels of awareness and training*

All individuals involved in IBC activities have a responsibility to be aware of the IBC Safeguarding & Protecting Children & Adults at risk Policy, understand what good and poor practice are and know what to do if they have a concern.

All members of IBC and volunteers should know how to access the policy document, and be aware of where to go for advice or questions. Volunteers should sign the policy document to acknowledge receipt and understanding.

Infinity Boat Club commits to providing the appropriate level and frequency of training to individuals based on their role, as outlined below:

- All IBC Staff – basic safeguarding training delivered by British Rowing or another competent body
- CWO and Alternate, CEO & Head Coaches – “Time to Listen” safeguarding course

The above qualifications will be arranged on joining Infinity Boat Club or moving into the relevant role, with staff completing a refresher every 3 years at a minimum.

Infinity Boat Club will run internal refresher training for all staff at least every 6 months.





## A1. Appendix – Types of Abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child or vulnerable adult 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

### Indicators of abuse

Even for those experienced in working with 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 whether abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns.**

Below are some examples of indications that a participant is being abused. This list is not exhaustive, and any concerns should be reported to the CWO:

- 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 participant describes what appears to be an abusive act involving themselves
- someone else, a participant 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
- 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:**

### **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.

### **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.

### **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 an indicator 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.



## **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.

## **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 focusing on, the issue of sexuality
- Verbal - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

Infinity Boat Club has adopted an Anti-Bullying Policy, which is available.

## **Further guidance**

British Rowing has created a set of Welfare Guidance supporting documents that give further information on these topics.

Links to these documents can be found on the British Rowing website :

In particular, the following documents are relevant for this section:

- Model Anti-Bullying Policy for Rowing Clubs



## A2. Appendix – Good and Poor Practice

### Good practice

#### **Good practice for ensuring appropriate vetting & training of individuals**

Infinity Boat Club requires that **all employees** have:

- Read and signed the *IBC Code of Conduct* and The *IBC Safeguarding & Protecting Children & Adults at risk Policy*
- Completed a recognised Safeguarding & Child Protection Basic Awareness Course within 3 months of starting with IBC, which is refreshed every 3 years
- Completed a Disclosure and Barring Service (including Enhanced Check) refreshed every 3 years

In addition, Infinity Boat Club requires that all **employee coaching staff**:

- Are registered as individual members of British Rowing

Infinity Boat Club requires that all **regular volunteers**:

- Read and signed the *IBC Code of Conduct* and The *IBC Safeguarding & Protecting Children & Adults at risk Policy*
- Complete a recognised Safeguarding & Child Protection Basic Awareness Course within 3 months of starting with IBC, which is refreshed every 3 years
- Completed a Disclosure and Barring Service (including Enhanced Check) refreshed every 3 years

Infinity Boat Club requires that all **one-off volunteers** (e.g. events, work experience):

- Read and sign the *IBC Code of Conduct*
- Are briefed on IBC's Safeguarding Principles
- Are supervised by DBS checked members of staff

#### **Good practice for ensuring an appropriate approach to risk**

Infinity Boat Club requires that all Coaches operate within IBC's risk assessment policy. In doing so, they:

- Aim to actively identify areas where risk to participants can be reduced, and adjust practices and documents accordingly
- Review existing Risk Assessments regularly to keep them up to date

#### **Good practice for ensuring an appropriate approach to rowing training**

Everyone should:

- Aim to make the experience of rowing or other watersports or physical activity fun and enjoyable
- Promote fairness and playing by the rules



- Not tolerate the use of prohibited or illegal substances
- Treat all participants 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 participants should:

- Respect the developmental stage of each participant and not risk sacrificing their welfare in a desire for club or personal achievement
- Ensure that the intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the participant (see British Rowing “How Much & How Often Guidance”)
- Work with parents and participants to develop training and competition schedules which are suited to the needs and the lifestyle of the participant, not the ambitions of the parents, coaches, mentors, team managers or club
- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect, encouraging participants to take responsibility for their own development and decision-making

### **Good practice for ensuring the safeguarding of participants**

- Always be publicly open when working with participants:
  - Avoid coaching sessions or meetings where a coach and an individual participant 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
  - Avoid one on one situations in changing rooms. If participants need to be supervised / helped try to involve parents or helpers to maintain an appropriate and open environment, with no secrets
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with children or adults at risk. Physical contact (touching) can be appropriate so long as:
  - It is neither intrusive nor disturbing nor sexual in nature
  - 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 participants and avoid forming an intimate relationship with any current or recent IBC participants as this may threaten the position of trust and respect between an athlete and their coach
- Be an excellent role model by maintaining appropriate standards of behavior 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 British Rowing guidelines)

### **Good practice for managing Infinity Boat Club online presence**

The following steps are regarded as good practice and it is the responsibility of all who work with IBC to adhere:

- All social media accounts will be password-protected, and at least 3 members of staff will have access to each account and password
- The accounts will be monitored by a designated person
- The designated person managing our online presence will seek advice from our designated safeguarding lead to advise on safeguarding requirements
- Anyone working with IBC will seek advice of the designated safeguarding lead if they have any concerns about the use of internet or social media
- A designated supervisor will remove inappropriate posts by children or staff, explaining why, and informing anyone who may be affected (as well as the parents/guardians of any children involved)
- Account, page and event settings will be set to 'private' so that only invited club members can see their content
- Live recordings should normally consist of one-way communication from the person working with IBC via a public platform
- Identifying details such as a home address, school name or telephone number shouldn't be posted on social media platforms
- Any posts or correspondence will be consistent with our aims
- Parents will be asked to give their approval for us to communicate with their children through social media, or by any other means of communication unless the conversation is initiated by the young person on a public platform
- All of our accounts and email addresses will be appropriate and fit for purpose
- Staff should not 'friend' or 'follow' children or young people from personal accounts on social media
- Staff should not communicate with young people via personal accounts or private messages
- Rather than communicating with parents through personal social media accounts, staff should choose a more formal means of communication such as face-to-face, via email or in writing, or use an IBC account, profile or website
- At least one other member of staff should be copied in to any emails sent to children or young people
- Emails should be written and signed off in a professional manner, avoiding the use of emojis or symbols.
- Any disclosures of (or suspicions of) abuse reported through social media should be dealt with in the same way as a face-to-face disclosure, according to our reporting procedures
- Smartphone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy
- Staff and young people must not engage in 'sexting' or send pictures or messages to anyone that are obscene, indecent or menacing.



Those working with Infinity Boat Club must also take responsibility for:

- avoiding having children's or young people's personal numbers and will instead seek contact through the parent or guardian
- seeking parental permission on each occasion they need to contact the child or young person directly; the purpose for each contact will be clearly identified and agreed upon
- being accountable for sharing copies of social media communications to parents or IBC's lead safeguarding officer
- having a separate phone from their personal one for any contact with parents or young people
- texting/social media messaging only to provide information and not to engage in conversation
- if a young people misinterpret such communication and tried to engage someone working with IBC in conversation, the person working with IBC should take the following steps:
  - i. end the conversation or stop replying
  - ii. suggest discussing the subject further at the next practice or event
  - iii. if concerned about the child or young person, provide contact details for IBC's CWO or appropriate agencies

The following is what IBC expects of the children and young people that they engage with:

- To be responsible for their behaviour when using a phone at the rowing centre, including the content accessed and how they conduct themselves
- To not deliberately create, browse or access material that could be considered offensive or illegal. If, accidentally they come across any such material, they will report this to a member of staff
- To not use social media or the internet to send anyone material that could be considered threatening, offensive, upsetting, bullying or that is illegal
- To understand that they should only use the IBC's official social media or website communication channels to contact IBC and should not seek out individual members of staff or coaches

To understand that their use of internet and social media is potentially visible to everyone and that any issues involving their behaviour online may be addressed by a coach or other staff members at the club

- To not give out any personal information (such as name, age, address or telephone number) online, or that of anyone else.
- To not share passwords with anyone else.
- To not arrange to meet someone that they have contacted online unless accompanied by a member of staff or parent.
- To understand that these rules are designed to keep them safe, and if they are not followed IBC may contact their parents/teachers/guardians
- To avoid using their mobile phone during activities as they understand that it will have an impact on their safety and opportunity to learn and achieve
- To be aware that if they are experiencing bullying behaviour or abuse online, they can contact the IBC CWO
- To know that they can contact Childline on 0800 11 11 or at [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) if they have any worries about something they have seen or experienced online.



## Poor practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided:

- Unnecessary communication directly with a participant without the parents' knowledge
- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children and adults at risk away from others
- Engaging in rough, physical or inappropriate behavior
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form
- Using inappropriate language to a participant or allowing participants to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a participant, even in jest
- Reducing a participant to tears as a form of control
- Letting allegations made by a participant go uninvestigated, unrecorded, or not acted upon
- Doing things of a personal nature that participants can do for themselves
- Taking participants alone in a car on journeys, however short (see note below)
- Inviting or taking participants to your home or office where they will be alone with you (see note below)
- Sharing a room with a participant

**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 participant and yourself, you must seek written parental consent. It is also crucial that both the coach & athlete are comfortable with the situation and that the current IBC CWO is aware of the situation and gives formal approval.*

If whilst in your care a participant is accidentally hurt, the participant 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 IBC's CWO and make a brief written note of it. Parents should also be informed of the incident.

## Further guidance

British Rowing have a number of Welfare Guidance supporting documents relevant for this section, available at on their website

- Duty of Care
- How much and how often?
- Physical contact and young people in rowing





### **A3. Appendix – CWO Job Description**

#### **The Role: Child Welfare Officer**

- Proactively work with partner clubs, schools, sites and British Rowing to ensure appropriate safeguarding measures are in place. This will include regular attendance at coaching sessions, in order to be a visible presence known to young people taking part in IBC's programmes, and to be a viable alternative point of contact in the event of any child welfare concerns and to give non-rowing support to young people on IBC's programmes
- As CWO, work with IBC's CEO to update policies for safeguarding young people and adults at risk
- Work with IBC's CEO to appropriately resolve concerns arising in relation to child welfare
- Coordinate delivery of relevant training (external and internal) for staff and volunteers to support the implementation of safeguarding policies
- Together with the CEO, liaise with experts and counterparts in safeguarding at organisations including but not restricted to British Rowing to ensure that IBC complies with best practice and fulfils all legal requirements and those of our insurance policies
- Provide oversight of the practical implementation of IBC's safeguarding policies to help ensure compliance throughout IBC. This will involve ongoing monitoring of training and communication with other managers and staff to identify and address any potential compliance gaps
- Regularly review existing safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that online safeguarding issues are fully integrated including:
  - Making sure concerns of abuse or disclosures that take place online are written into our reporting procedures
  - Incorporating online bullying ('cyberbullying') into our anti-bullying policy
- Provide training for staff and volunteers responsible for managing IBC's online presence



## A4. Appendix – Key Contacts

1. Infinity Boat Club Child Welfare Contacts at partner rowing clubs & open satellites:

2. Local Authorities where Infinity Boat Club principally operates.

#	Local Authority	E Mail	Telephone
1	Stockton	<a href="mailto:childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk">childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk</a>	<b>Emergency Duty Team</b> Tel: 01642 524 552 <b>Non-urgent 01429 284284 / 01642 130080</b>
2	Middlesbrough	<a href="mailto:MiddlesbroughMACH@middlesbrough.gov.uk">MiddlesbroughMACH@middlesbrough.gov.uk</a>	Middlesbrough Multi-Agency Children's Hub on <b>01642 726004</b>

1. Other Points of Contact in lieu of CWO or Alternate

[Welfare@infinityboatclub.com](mailto:Welfare@infinityboatclub.com)

**Out of hours:**

**In an emergency contact Cleveland Police on 101 (999)**

NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)

See: <http://thecpsu.org.uk/>

### **The Children's Hub**

Civic Centre  
Hartlepool  
TS24 8AY

Tel 01429 284284 / 01642 130080

**Email:**

[childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk)



## **British Rowing**

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

Together with the policy are a number of guidance documents. These are currently under review but much of the guidance is relevant. Should any questions arise the CWO will receive advice from:

Email: [iso@britishrowing.org](mailto:iso@britishrowing.org) (Safeguarding)

Email: [governance@britishrowing.org](mailto:governance@britishrowing.org) (DBS / CWO queries)

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

## **Safeguarding Training**

<https://www.ukcoaching.org/courses/workshops/safeguarding-protecting-children>

<https://www.ukcoaching.org/courses/learn-at-home/sgp> (Refresher)

## **Other**

[Child Protection in Sport Unit NSPCC](#)

## **Useful reading:**

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) Guidance on key issues children face ([ChildLine website](#))