



Tamesis Club

Child Protection Policies and Procedures

1. Document History

Version	Date	Amendment	Amended by
1.0	17/12/2013	Issued for approval	R. Harris

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3 Policy

It is the policy of Tamesis Club (“the Club”) to safeguard children and young people taking part in boating from physical, sexual or emotional harm. The Club will take all reasonable steps to ensure that, through appropriate procedures and training, children participating in Club activities do so in a safe environment. We recognise that the safety and welfare of the child is paramount and that all children, whatever their age, gender, disability, culture, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, social status or sexual identity, have a right to protection from abuse.

For the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child. All members of the Club should be aware of the policy.

3.1 Club Welfare Officer

Contact details for the Club Welfare Officer can be found in the Club’s handbook or on the Club’s website: www.tamesisclub.co.uk

3.2 Volunteers

Volunteers whose role brings them into regular contact with young people may be asked to provide references if they are not already known to the Club. The Club Welfare Officer and those instructing or coaching young people will be asked to apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure.

3.3 Good Practice

All members of the Club should follow the good practice guidelines attached (see Appendix 1). Remember that children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. Abuse can take various forms: physical abuse; neglect; sexual abuse; emotional abuse; and bullying (including cyber bullying). Those working with young people should have regard to the RYA’s Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidelines, which include guidance on recognising abuse, and which can be found at: <http://www.rya.org.uk/infoadvice/childprotection/Pages/CPPolicyGuidelines.aspx>

The Club will seek written consent from the child and/or their parents/carers before taking photos or video at an event or publishing such images. Parents and spectators should be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state their purpose for photography/filming. If the Club publishes images of children, no identifying information other than names will be included without consent. Any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography or the inappropriate use of images should be reported to the Club Welfare Officer.

3.4 Concerns

Anyone who is concerned about a young member’s welfare, either outside the sport or within the Club, should inform the Club Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence. The Club Welfare Officer will follow the attached procedures (see Appendix 2).

Any member of the Club failing to comply with the Child Protection policy and any relevant guidance and procedures may be subject to disciplinary action under Club Rule 9.

Appendices

4 Appendix 1 Good Practice Guidelines

This guide only covers the essential points of good practice when working with children and young people and should be read in conjunction with the Club's Child Protection Policy and Procedures and the RYA's Safeguarding and Child Protection Guidelines which are available for reference at all times.

- Avoid spending any significant time working with children in isolation.
- Avoid entering the showers and changing rooms at times when children are changing before or after junior/youth training or racing, unless accompanied by another adult.
- Do not take children alone in a car, however short the journey.
- Do not take children to your home as part of your organisation's activity.
- Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure that they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation or the child's parents.
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child.
- If a child is having difficulty with a wetsuit or buoyancy aid, suggest they ask a friend to help if at all possible.
- If you do have to help a child, make sure you are in full view of others, preferably another adult.

You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged, or use such language yourself when with children.
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- fail to respond to an allegation made by a child; always act.
- do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the child (where possible) and their parents/carers. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed. In such situations it is important to ensure that any adult present is sensitive to the child and undertakes personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

5 Appendix 2 Handling concerns, reports or allegations

This section is primarily for the Club's designated Welfare Officer, but everyone should be aware of the procedures to follow if there are concerns (see flowcharts below).

A complaint, concern or allegation may come from a number of sources: the child, their parents, someone else within the Club. It may involve the behaviour of one of our volunteers or employees, or something that has happened to the child outside the sport, perhaps at home or at school. Children may confide in adults they trust, in a place where they feel at ease.

An allegation may range from mild verbal bullying to physical or sexual abuse. If you are concerned that a child may be being abused, it is NOT your responsibility to investigate further BUT it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and report them to the appropriate statutory authorities. For guidance on recognising abuse, see Appendix 2.

Handling an allegation from a child

Always:

- stay calm – ensure that the child is safe and feels safe
- show and tell the child that you are taking what he/she says seriously
- reassure that child and stress that he/she is not to blame
- be careful about physical contact, it may not be what the child wants
- be honest, explain that you will have to tell someone else to help stop the alleged abuse
- make a record of what the child has said as soon as possible after the event
- follow the Club's child protection procedures.

Never:

- rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- make promises you cannot keep (eg. you won't tell anyone)
- ask more questions than are necessary for you to be sure that you need to act
- take sole responsibility – consult someone else (ideally the designated Child Protection/Welfare Officer or the person in charge or someone you can trust) so that you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself.

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.

Recording and handling information

If you suspect that a child may have been the subject of any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, the allegation must be referred as soon as possible to Children's Social Care or the Police who have trained experts to handle such cases. Do not start asking questions which may jeopardise any formal investigation. Listen to and keep a record of anything the child tells you or that you have observed and pass the information on to the statutory authorities (if you wish you may use the Referral Form attached).

All information must be treated as confidential and only shared with those who need to know. If the allegation or suspicion concerns someone within your club, only the child's parents/carers, the person in charge of the organisation (unless they are the subject of the allegation), the relevant authorities and the RYA Child Protection Co-ordinator should be informed. If the alleged abuse took place outside the sport, the Police or Children's Social Care will decide who else needs to be informed, including the child's parents/carers. It should not be discussed by anyone within the Club other than the person who received or initiated the allegation and, if different, the person in charge.

Confidential information must be stored securely. It will be retained for at least 3 years and destroyed by secure means, eg. by shredding or burning.

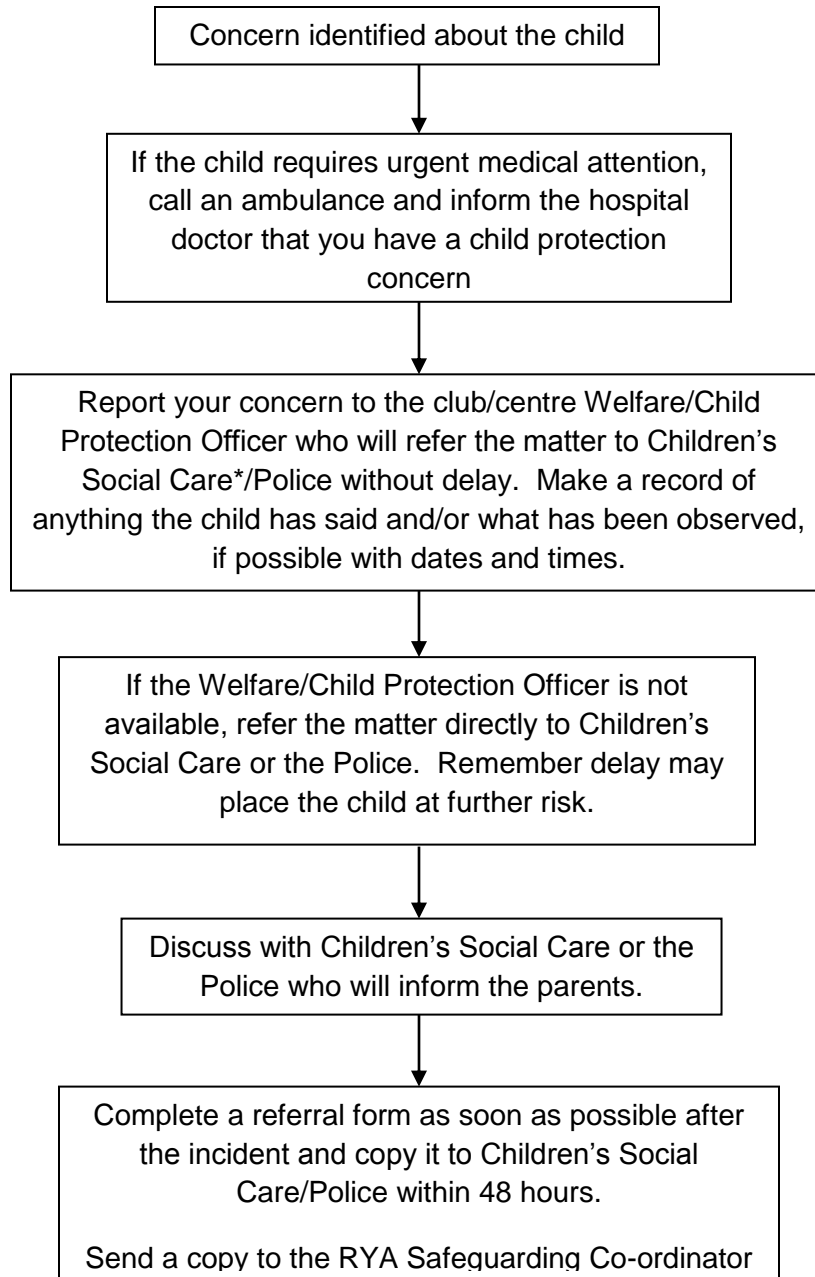
Statutory Authorities

If the Club is contacted by the Police or Children’s Services concerning information received or a complaint made by or about a member, volunteer or employee, we will contact the RYA Child Protection Co-ordinator as soon as possible for guidance and support. We will co-operate fully with official requests for factual information, but must not express any personal opinions on the person’s conduct. See also ‘Handling the media’ below.

Handling the media

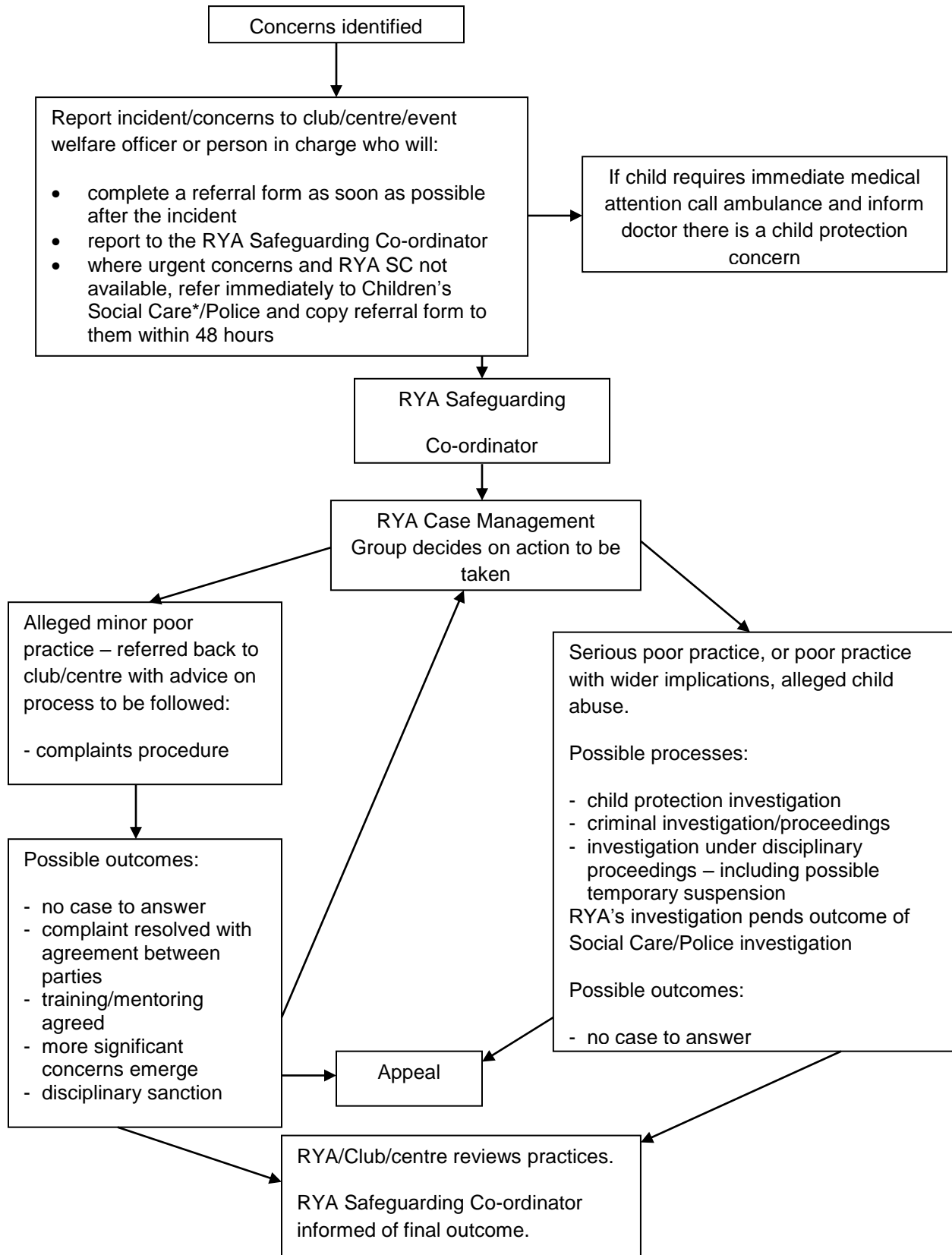
If there is an incident at the Club which attracts media interest, or if the Club is contacted by the media with an allegation concerning one of the members or employees, do not give any response until you have had an opportunity to check the facts and seek advice. We may wish to contact the RYA’s Communications department for professional advice on handling the media.

Flowchart 1 – What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused outside the sport’s environment (but the concern is identified through the child’s involvement in the sport)



If you are uncertain what to do at any stage, contact the RYA’s Child Protection Co-ordinator on 023 8060 4104 or the NSPCC free 24 hour helpline 0808 800 5000.

Flowchart 2 – What to do if you are concerned about the behavior of any member, volunteer, staff, coach or official working for the RYA or an RYA affiliated/recognised organisation



6 Appendix 3 Child Protection referral form

Date and time of incident	
Name and position of person about whom report, complaint or allegation is made	
Name and age of child involved	
Nature of incident, complaint or allegation (continue on separate page if necessary)	
Action taken (continue on separate page if necessary)	
If Police or Children's Social Care Services contacted, name, position and telephone number of person handling case	
Name, organisation and position of person completing form	
Contact telephone number	
Signature of person completing form	
Date and time form completed	
Name and position of organisation's child protection/welfare officer or person in charge (if different from above)	
Contact telephone number	

This form should be copied, marked 'Private and Confidential', to the RYA Child Protection Coordinator, Jackie Reid, RYA House, Ensign Way, Hamble, Southampton, SO31 4YA and to the statutory authorities (if they have been informed of the incident) within 48 hours of the incident.