



# SAFEGUARDING POLICY

## HORSHAM CANOE CLUB



# Horsham Canoe Club Safeguarding Policy

## Policy Statement

Horsham Canoe Club is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all members, particularly children and vulnerable adults, in line with the safeguarding guidelines set out by Paddle UK. The club recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of young and vulnerable members by ensuring that all activities are conducted in a manner that prioritises their safety, protection, and well-being.

This policy outlines the procedures and responsibilities that must be followed to prevent abuse, respond to concerns, and ensure the highest standard of care within the club.

## Principles

- Zero Tolerance: Horsham Canoe Club has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of abuse or neglect. All members, volunteers, and coaches have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults and to prevent harm, bullying, or exploitation.
- Child-Centered Approach: The well-being of children and young people is paramount, and their opinions, views, and concerns should be respected.
- Equality & Respect: All individuals, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability, religion, or sexual orientation, are to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Partnership with Parents/Guardians: The club will work in partnership with parents and guardians to ensure the safety and well-being of young people participating in club activities.

## Scope of the Policy

This safeguarding policy applies to all club members, including junior members, volunteers, coaches, officials, and parents/guardians. It covers all club activities, including training, events, trips, and competitions, whether conducted on-site at Southwater Lake or other venues.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Club Committee

The committee is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding policies are implemented and regularly reviewed, in line with Paddle UK guidelines. They are also responsible for ensuring appropriate safeguarding training is available to all relevant personnel.

### Club Welfare Officer (Child Protection Officer)

The Club Welfare Officer is responsible for:

- Overseeing the implementation of this policy.

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- Acting as the point of contact for safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring all volunteers, coaches, and officials working with young people or vulnerable adults undergo relevant safeguarding checks, such as Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.
- Promoting awareness of safeguarding within the club and ensuring appropriate safeguarding training is up to date.

### **Coaches, Officers and Members**

Coaches, Officers and Members must:

- Always put the welfare of children and vulnerable adults first.
- Ensure they follow Paddle UK's Code of Conduct for safeguarding.
- Participate in safeguarding training as required.
- Immediately report any safeguarding concerns to the Club Welfare Officer or an appropriate authority.

### **Recruitment of Coaches and Officers**

Horsham Canoe Club follows a safe recruitment policy to ensure that individuals working with young people and vulnerable adults are suitable for their roles. This includes:

- A structured recruitment process with interviews and reference checks.
- Enhanced DBS checks for all coaches, and officials working directly with young people or vulnerable adults.
- Safeguarding training for relevant individuals.

### **Responding to Concerns or Allegations**

All safeguarding concerns or allegations must be taken seriously and handled sensitively. If a child or vulnerable adult discloses information or if there are concerns about their welfare, the following steps should be taken:

1. Listen and Reassure: Allow the individual to speak freely, listen carefully, and reassure them that they have done the right thing by speaking up.
2. Record: Make a clear and concise record of what was said or observed, including dates, times, and any action taken. Do not ask leading questions or make assumptions.
3. Report: Immediately report any concerns to the Club Welfare Officer. If the Club Welfare Officer is not available or if the concern involves the Welfare Officer, contact Paddle UK's safeguarding team.
4. Action: The Welfare Officer will follow the appropriate safeguarding procedure, which may involve contacting local safeguarding authorities, Paddle UK's safeguarding team, or the police.

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## Confidentiality and Data Protection

All safeguarding concerns will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis to ensure the protection of the child or vulnerable adult. The club will comply with data protection laws regarding the handling of personal and sensitive information.

## Training and Awareness

Horsham Canoe Club is committed to ensuring that all coaches, volunteers, and relevant personnel complete safeguarding training as recommended by Paddle UK. The Club Welfare Officer will provide regular safeguarding updates and ensure that any changes in policy or procedure are communicated to all members.

## Photography and Social Media Policy

- By signing the membership terms and conditions, members agree to photos being taken.
- Photographs or videos of children will not be published on the club's website or social media without appropriate consent.
- The club will not allow the use of any photos or recordings that may put children or vulnerable adults at risk or cause them distress.
- It's a good practice for members to ensure all social media content, like on Facebook and WhatsApp, remains suitable for all audiences and is free from offensive material. This helps maintain a welcoming and respectful community within the club and online

## Collection of Juniors

**Parental/Guardian Permission:** Only individuals authorized by a junior member's parent or legal guardian are permitted to collect the junior. Authorization must be provided in writing and include the name and relationship of the authorized individual.

**Designated Collection Points:** Juniors will only be collected from designated, supervised areas within the club's premises at Southwater Country Park. A club officer or coach will be present during collection times to ensure adherence to protocols.

**Late Collection:** If a parent or guardian is delayed, they should notify the club as soon as possible. In the event of a late pickup, a club representative will remain with the junior until they are safely collected by an authorized person.

## Travelling with Juniors

**Written Permission:** Parents or guardians must provide written consent for all travel involving junior members. The consent form should include emergency contact information and any relevant medical details.

**Itinerary and Details:** Parents/guardians will receive full details of the travel plans, contact numbers, destination, duration, and transport arrangements.

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**Alternative Pickup Locations:** If a different collection point or time is necessary for travel arrangements, this should be agreed upon with parents or guardians in advance.

## Travel Arrangement

**Club-Organised Transport:** Wherever possible, the club will arrange transport through reputable providers or pre-approved vehicles, ensuring that they comply with safety standards.

**Private Vehicles:** If private vehicles are used, they must be insured, roadworthy, and driven by club officers, coaches, or volunteers who have undergone background checks and hold a valid driver's license. Drivers should avoid being alone in a car with a junior; if this is unavoidable, parents/guardians will be informed and consulted beforehand.

**Seatbelts and Safety:** All juniors must wear seatbelts or appropriate safety restraints at all times during travel. Vehicles must meet legal safety requirements, and drivers should adhere to all speed limits and road safety regulations.

## Supervision During Travel

**Adult-to-Junior Ratios:** At least two adults will accompany any group of juniors when traveling, with an appropriate adult-to-junior ratio based on the age and needs of the group.

**Gender-Specific Requirements:** When possible, at least one adult of the same gender as the juniors will be present for added comfort, especially on longer trips or overnight stays.

**Clear Roles and Responsibilities:** All supervising adults will be briefed on their responsibilities and the club's safeguarding expectations before travel.

## Accommodation Arrangements (for Overnight Stays)

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**Clear Roles and Responsibilities:** All supervising adults will be briefed on their responsibilities and the club's safeguarding expectations before travel.

## Storage of medical consent information

**Confidentiality and Security:** All medical consent forms will be securely stored in a locked cabinet accessible only to authorized club officials (e.g., safety officers, lead coaches). Digital records, if kept, will be stored securely in compliance with data protection regulations.

**Access During Sessions:** For the safety of juniors, a coach or first aid officer will have quick access to relevant medical information during sessions. Medical consent forms must be present in a secure, accessible area during any club-led activity in case of emergencies.

**Review and Update:** Medical information should be reviewed and updated annually. Parents/guardians will be prompted to provide updated medical consent forms before the start of each new club year.

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**Privacy and Confidentiality:** Club members handling medical information are required to sign a confidentiality agreement to protect juniors' personal and medical information. Any breach of confidentiality will be subject to disciplinary action.

## Being in changing rooms with Juniors

**Separate Facilities:** Wherever possible, juniors and adults should use separate changing facilities. If separate changing rooms are unavailable, specific times may be designated for juniors and adults to change to ensure privacy and comfort for all members.

**Adult Supervision:** If an adult needs to be in the changing room to supervise, they must ensure that they are accompanied by another adult. Adults should refrain from being alone with juniors in changing facilities.

**Respecting Privacy:** Coaches, volunteers, and other adults should avoid entering the changing rooms unless necessary. In cases where assistance is required (e.g., for a young child needing help), this should be conducted with the utmost sensitivity to the child's privacy and in the presence of a second adult if possible.

**Code of Conduct:** All members, including juniors, will be briefed on respectful behaviour and privacy expectations within changing facilities. Any concerns or incidents should be reported to the club's Welfare Officer.

## Review of Policy

This safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes in Paddle UK's guidelines or statutory legislation. All changes will be communicated to members.

For further information, please refer to Paddle UK's Safeguarding Guidelines or contact the Horsham Canoe Club Welfare Officer.

This policy demonstrates Horsham Canoe Club's commitment to safeguarding the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults, ensuring a safe and positive environment for all members.

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