


Richmond Sub-Aqua Club Child Welfare Policy

This document aims to:

- safeguard children, both in and out of the water
- assure parents that their children are as safe at our organisation as they are when taking part in any other sport or leisure activity
- raise awareness amongst members and volunteers so that they know what to do if they are concerned about a child, whether the concern relates to the child's welfare at our site or outside the sport. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all
- protect instructors and volunteers by giving them some practical, common sense guidelines to avoid placing themselves in situations where they are open to allegations which could have damaging repercussions
- embed a culture where welfare is at the forefront of our practice and RSAC will consistently demonstrate that 'all reasonable steps' to provide a safe environment have been taken
- Ensure that personal details for children and young people is held in accordance with RSACs Data Protection Policy (available in the membership area of the RSAC website)
- Support 'Buddy Guard', the BSAC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

How to use this document

Member Category	Document checklist
All members	<p>Must read Appendix A (page 7-9) which includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Introduction to RSAC Welfare Policy 2) BSAC Welfare of Vulnerable People in Scuba Diving and Snorkelling Policy, Procedures and Guidelines 3) RSAC good practice guidelines
	
Member who is an instructor or their role may mean they will be required to have regular contact with children	<p>In addition to Appendix A, please:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read Appendix B (page 10) 'Code of Conduct for Instructors and Volunteers' 2) Read Appendix E (pages 15-17) 'Guidance on Recognising Abuse' 3) Complete DBS check if required, and provide certificate for copy.
A child wishing to join the club	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read and sign Appendix C (Page 11 & 12) 'Responsibilities of Parents and Young People' 2) Read and sign Appendix D (Page 13) 'Consent form for the use of photographs or video ' (Parent's signature also needed)
Parent of a child wishing to join the club	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Read and sign Appendix C (Page 11 & 12) 'Responsibilities of Parents and Young People' 2) Read and sign Appendix D (Page 13) 'Consent form for the use of photographs or video ' (Child's signature also needed)

RSAC Welfare and Safeguarding Policy

Designated Person

Everyone has a role to play but ultimate responsibility for safeguarding is designated to the club Welfare Officer.

The Welfare Officer's responsibilities should include:

- Maintaining an up to date policy and procedures, compatible with that of BSAC
- Ensuring that relevant staff and/or volunteers are aware of and follow the procedures, including implementing safe recruitment procedures.
- Advising the committee on safeguarding and child protection issues.
- Maintaining contact details for local Children's Services and Police.
- Instigate and oversee DBS checks for instructors or other volunteers in regular contact with children
- Refer to BSAC guidelines for additional aspects of the role
- Holding confidential information and completed forms from members

If there is a concern, the welfare officer would:

- Be the first point of contact for any concerns or allegations, from children or adults, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained in all cases.
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken, in line with the organisation's procedures and in conjunction with the person in charge
- Keep BSAC informed as necessary

It is the duty of the welfare officer to ensure that parents / carers are aware of the content of the training course that the child undertakes and the physical contact that this may require.

Photography

Publishing articles and photos in club newsletters, websites, local newspapers etc is an excellent way of recognising young people's achievements and of promoting your organisation and the sport as a whole. However it is important to minimise the risk of anyone using images of children in an inappropriate way. Digital technology makes it easy to take, store, send, manipulate and publish images.

The Club will seek written consent (Appendix E) from the child **and** their parents/carers prior to a try dive or applying for membership, and in other circumstances, before taking photos or publishing such images.

If the Club publishes images of children, **no** identifying information will be used, such as names or personal details. Any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography or use of images should be reported to the designated Welfare Officer.

Please ensure all young people pictured are suitably dressed to reduce the risk of inappropriate use. If the child is not wearing a wetsuit or T Shirt in the pool, full body and face shots will not be used, in these situations, the child should be shoulder deep in water. The focus of the photo should be on the activity, not on the child.

Photos taken of children or vulnerable adults must be stored in accordance with the data protection policy of RSAC.

Videos posted on Youtube will only be done with the specific permission of the young person and parent. Reasonable care will be taken that this does not link directly to unsuitable material on Youtube or other sites. Parents or young people must inform the club Diving Officer/Chairperson/Secretary/Welfare Officer if they wish to remove any content. RSAC will act promptly to remove the requested content.

Handling concerns, reports or allegations

This section is primarily for RSAC's designated Welfare Officer, but everyone should be aware of the procedures to follow if there are concerns.

A complaint, concern or allegation may come from a number of sources: the child, their parents, someone else within the organisation. It may involve the behaviour of a volunteer or something that has happened to the child outside of the club, 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 the responsibility of club members to investigate further BUT it is everyone's responsibility to act on their concerns and report them to the appropriate club member who must then report to the appropriate statutory authority. For guidance on recognising abuse, see Appendix F.

Handling a disclosure 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 and that they have done the right thing to tell someone
- 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 resolve the situation
- make a record of what the child has said as soon as possible

Never:

- rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- make promises you cannot keep (eg. you won't tell anyone, or that the police will not be involved)
- ask leading questions or more questions than are necessary for you to be sure that you need to act
- take sole responsibility – consult someone else (ideally Welfare Officer) 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.

Procedures

- 1) Report to designated RSAC welfare officer or if they are not available, BSAC Safeguarding Officer at BSAC HQ. Make a record of anything the child has said and/or what has been observed, if possible with dates and times. **See BSAC Child Safeguarding Referral Form. (Available in 'Membership' section of RSAC's website)**
- 2) If the Welfare Officer is not available, refer the matter directly to Children's Social Care or the Police. Remember delay may place the child at further risk.
- 3) Severe and obvious cases of abuse should be reported directly to the local Children's Social Care Department in respect of adults, or to children's social care in the case of children, who will take responsibility for further actions

Appendix A

(To be read by all members)

Introduction to Richmond Sub Aqua Welfare Policy

These guidelines have been produced by RSAC to enable children and vulnerable adults to enjoy the sports of club scuba diving and snorkelling in a safe environment. 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. All members of the Club should follow the good practice guidelines in this document.

Anyone who is concerned about a young member's welfare, either outside the sport or within the Club, should inform the designated Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence.

Any member of the club failing to comply with the Child Protection policy and any relevant Codes of Conduct may be asked to withdraw from participating in club activities and from their membership of the club.

We will

- Treat all children and vulnerable adults with respect and celebrate their achievements.
- Carefully recruit and select all instructors, committee members, volunteers and those charged with supporting the skill development of children and vulnerable adults.
- Respond swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected or actual child abuse.

Outline of Terms

'Child' refers to any young person under the age of 18 (in accordance with the Children Act 1989).

'vulnerable adults', such as people with learning disabilities, or who have difficulty communicating, or who rely on others to provide personal care.

'Safeguarding' refers to protecting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults both on and off the water.

'Child protection' refers to actions taken in response to a concern or allegation.

Appendix A continued

British Sub Aqua Club

Welfare of Vulnerable People in Scuba Diving and Snorkelling Policy, Procedures and Guidelines

All Coaches, Volunteers and Helpers should make themselves aware of 'Buddyguard' BSAC Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures that is published by the British Sub Aqua Club in conjunction with the NSPCC. A brief summary of the Policy is set out below, however the booklet can be found on the BSAC web site: <http://www.bsac.com/page.asp?section=1307>

- The welfare of vulnerable members, both adults and children, is the first consideration.
- All members have the right to be protected from bad practice, neglect, bullying and all forms of emotional and physical abuse.
- Suspicions and allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- It is the duty of all members suspecting inappropriate behaviour and actions to act on any concern.
- To treat all members fairly, equitably and without prejudice.
- Not to participate in or tolerate behaviour that frightens, degrades, embarrasses, demoralises or negatively affects a members self esteem
- Not to tolerate acts of aggression
- Photography – members should be aware that the recording of photographic images might be inappropriate
- The members of the British Sub Aqua Club should not discriminate on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, colour, disability, sexuality, age, occupation, religion or political opinion.
- Branch Officers and Instructors will be made aware of good practice and hold a DBS certificate where appropriate, alongside training and support from HQ, to ensure that Branches are able to implement the Welfare Policy.

Awareness of these issues, and the adherence to these simple guidelines, will help maintain professionalism and safeguard good practice, secure the protection of both the vulnerable and those responsible for them, from accusations arising from misinterpretation of innocent actions.

It is the duty of care of all involved at RSAC to report any suspicions to the Welfare Officer who will investigate your concerns and follow the reporting procedure as laid down in the above mentioned policy document for which all persons have copies.

Appendix A continued
RSAC Good Practice Guidelines

RSAC fosters a culture where both children and adults feel able to raise concerns, knowing that they will be taken seriously, treated confidentially and will not make the situation worse for themselves or others. Good practice protects everyone – children and club volunteers.

The following good practice guidelines are for all members of RSAC

- Any member of the club should not be in an isolated situation with a child or vulnerable adult.
- A third party must accompany the instructor or other members must be present in the water within view during pool training with a child. This is with the exception of an emergency situation.
- Do not take children alone in a car, however short the journey (with the exception of club instructors who are also the parent of the child)
- Do not take children to your home as part of an RSAC activity
- Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure that they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the Diving Officer or Welfare Officer and 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 item of equipment, the instructor must tell the child how they are going to touch the child / vulnerable adult before doing so.
- Parents / a third party of the same sex as the child must be present during kitting up / dekitting.

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.

If you have any concerns, please contact RSAC's Welfare Officer immediately.

Appendix B

Code of Conduct for Instructors and Volunteers

- Consider the wellbeing and safety of participants before the development of their skills. Develop an appropriate working relationship with participants, based on mutual trust and respect.
- Make sure all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part
- Ensure a full and clear briefing of the activity/ training is given to both the young person and their parent / carer prior to commencing.
- Work in an open environment and avoid any unnecessary physical contact with a child.
- If a child is having difficulty with a wetsuit or item of equipment during kitting up or dekitting, the instructor must tell the child how they are going to touch the child / vulnerable adult before doing so. Always do this when another member of the club / parent is present
- Display consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance.
- Follow all guidelines laid down by BSAC and the club.
- Hold appropriate valid qualifications and insurance cover.
- Encourage and guide participants to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.
- Do not drink alcohol or smoke when working directly with young people
- **Ensure that parents are clear that the activity of scuba diving can be high risk and that in order to avoid high risk situations, your role as instructor may require you to make contact with the young person without prior warning**
- Be aware of any relevant medical information
- Undertake DBS checks if required by RSAC good practice guidelines. Once certificate has been received, please provide original to the Welfare Officer who will take a copy for club records and return the original to you.

Appendix C

Responsibilities of Parents and Young People

Parents play an essential part in their children's participation. Although RSAC has a duty of care to their members, and particularly to young people who cannot take full responsibility for their own safety, parents must be responsible for their children's welfare and behaviour.

When children are attending a pool activity, training or an open water dive, the instructor ultimately has the duty of care for their safety and welfare at all times in the water.

- For children under 16, parents or a designated adult must be present during pool activities. Young people over the age of 16 may attend the club and take part in diving activities without a parent present once permission has been given to the Diving Officer and at the Diving Officer's discretion.
- Parents / a third party of the same sex as the child must be present during kitting up / dekitting at both the pool and open water dives.
- **Diving can be a high risk activity. Parents must be aware that in order to avoid high risk situations, your child's instructor may be require to make contact with them without prior warning**
- **Parents have a responsibility to make themselves aware of the content of all training courses the child may undertake and the physical contact that this will involve. The designated Welfare Officer will ensure this information is available. Physical contact may include mouth to nose rescue breaths, towing, diver shore recovery and first aid procedures, amongst others.**

BSAC - Code of Practice for Parents and Carers

- Encourage your child to learn BSAC Safe Diving
- Help your child to recognise progressive training and skills, not just results
- Never force your child to take part in scuba and snorkelling activities
- Publicly accept judgements of instructors and the diving officer
- Support your child's involvement and help them to enjoy their sport
- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to bring children on time and pick them up promptly
- Encourage and guide your child to accept responsibility for their own conduct and performance
- Use established procedures where there is a genuine concern or dispute
- Inform the club of relevant medical information
- Ensure that your child wears suitable kit and has appropriate food and drink

Appendix C continued

BSAC Behavioural Standards for Children and Young People

General behaviour

- Treat all members of, and persons associated with BSAC with due dignity and respect.
- Treat everyone equally and never discriminate against another person associated with BSAC on any grounds including that of age, sexual orientation, ethnic origin or nationality.
- The use of inappropriate or abusive language, bullying, harassment, or physical violence will not be tolerated and could result in action being taken through the Club disciplinary or child welfare policy.
- Display a high standard of behaviour at all times and always reports any poor behaviour by others to an appropriate Club Officer.
- Recognise and celebrate the good performance and success of fellow Club members.

BSAC Instruction

- Treat your instructor and fellow students with respect.
- Make your instructor aware if you have difficulties in attending sessions.
- Arrive in good time before the sessions start to complete any warm up as directed by your instructor.
- If you arrive late report to your instructor before entering the water.
- Ensure you have all your equipment with you.
- If you need to leave the water for any reason during instruction inform your instructor and buddy before doing so.
- Listen to what your instructor is telling you at all times and obey instructions given.
- Think about what you are doing while under instruction and if you have any problems discuss them with your instructor at an appropriate time.
- If you have any problems with the behaviour of fellow Club members report them at the time to the welfare officer

Appendix D

Consent form for the use of photographs or video for parents and young people

RSAC may wish to take photos of club members and Try Dive participants; these images may be on their website, inclusion in newspaper articles, on the club noticeboard or for training purposes.

In accordance with our safeguarding policy we will not permit photographs, video or other images of young people to be taken without the consent of the parents/carers and children.

RSAC will follow the guidance for the use of photographs. A copy of which is available in the Welfare Policy document (Page 4) or on the RSAC website.

RSAC will take all steps to ensure these images are used solely for the purposes they are intended. If you become aware that these images are being used inappropriately you should inform the welfare officer immediately.

Parental Consent

I (parent/carer) consent to RSAC photographing or videoing my son / daughter (insert name) _____ whilst undertaking club related sporting or social activities.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Child / Young Persons Consent

I, (insert name) _____ consent to RSAC photographing or videoing my involvement in club related sporting or social activities.

Signature _____

Date _____

Please return this form to the club Welfare Officer:

(Insert name) _____

Appendix E
What is child abuse?

(Based on the statutory guidance ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ March 2010, Revised 2010)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. 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.

Physical abuse may involve adults or other children causing physical harm:

- * by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning
- * giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison
- * attempting to suffocate or drown children
- * in sport situations, physical abuse might also occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child’s immature and growing body.

Neglect 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. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- * provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- * protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- * ensure adequate supervision
- * ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- * respond to a child’s basic emotional needs
- * neglect in a sailing situation might occur if an instructor or coach fails to ensure that children are safe, or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury.

Sexual abuse. Sexual abuse involves an individual forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, to meet their own sexual needs. The activities may involve:

- * physical contact (eg. full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, fondling)
- * showing children pornographic books, photographs, videos or online images
- * taking pictures of children for pornographic purposes
- * encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways

Appendix E continued

* sport situations which involve physical contact (eg. supporting or guiding children) could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Abusive situations may also occur if adults misuse their power over young people.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- * conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate
- * not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- * imposing expectations which are beyond the child's age or developmental capability
- * overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- * preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
- * serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- * the exploitation or corruption of children
- * emotional abuse in sport might also include situations where parents or coaches subject children to constant criticism, bullying or pressure to perform at a level that the child cannot realistically be expected to achieve.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child.

Bullying (including cyberbullying) may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated or sustained over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The bully may often be another young person. Although anyone can be the target of bullying, victims are typically shy, sensitive and perhaps anxious or insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons – being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

Recognising Abuse

It is not always easy, even for the most experienced carers, to spot when a child has been abused. However, some of the more typical symptoms which should trigger your suspicions would include:

- * unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- * sexually explicit language or actions
- * a sudden change in behaviour (eg. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper)

Appendix E continued

- * the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- * a change observed over a long period of time (eg. the child losing weight or becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt)
- * a general distrust and avoidance of adults, especially those with whom a close relationship would be expected
- * an unexpected reaction to normal physical contact
- * difficulty in making friends or abnormal restrictions on socialising with others.

It is important to note that a child could be displaying some or all of these signs, or behaving in a way which is worrying, without this necessarily meaning that the child is being abused. Similarly, there may not be any signs, but you may just feel that something is wrong. If you have noticed a change in the child's behaviour, first talk to the parents or carers. It may be that something has happened, such as a bereavement, which has caused the child to be unhappy.

If you are concerned

If there are concerns about sexual abuse or violence in the home, talking to the parents or carers might put the child at greater risk. If you cannot talk to the parents/carers, consult RSAC's designated Child Protection/Welfare Officer or the person in charge. It is this person's responsibility to make the decision to contact Children's Social Care Services or the Police. It is NOT their responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place, BUT it is their responsibility to act on your concerns.

Child Welfare Information

RSAC Club Welfare Officer :

Gemma Powell

Tel: 07843-959775

Email: contact.rsac@gmail.com

Local Authority Services Children's Social Care Team

Richmond Upon Thames- Single Point Access Team

Tel: 020 8891 7969

Out of Hours: 020 8744 2442.(Duty Social Worker)

Richmond Police Station- Sovereign Gate

Tel: 101

National Governing Body : Lead Officer for Child Safeguarding BSAC

Name: Mary Tetley

Tel: 0151 350 6220

Email: safeguarding@bsac.com

NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

Tel: 0116 234 7278

E-mail: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk

NSPCC Helpline Tel: 0808 800 5000

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

ChildLine Tel: 0800 1111

Website: www.childline.org.uk

Kidscape

Website: www.kidscape.org.uk