



Baltimore Sailing Club

## **Child Protection Policy**

### **Contents:**

1. Policy Statement
2. Principles
3. The Children's Officer and Designated Liaison Person
4. Procedures for reporting child protection concerns

Appendix 1: Responsibility to Report

Appendix 2: Good Practice Guidelines for Instructors, Volunteers and Staff

Appendix 3: Recording allegations or suspicion of abuse checklist

### **1. POLICY STATEMENT**

Baltimore Sailing Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members. Every individual in the Club should at all times, show respect and understanding for the rights, safety, and welfare of members, and conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the principles of the Club and the guidelines contained in the "The Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland".

Copies of the Code of Ethics Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland are available online from Irish Sports Council website

[www.irishsportsCouncil.ie](http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie)

## **2. PRINCIPLES**

Baltimore Sailing Club has adopted “The Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport in Ireland” (with reference to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and are in accordance with government guidelines in the documents Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (IRL) and Our Duty to Care (N.I.). ) and endeavours to promote good practice by everyone involved in the Club, and to provide a safe, healthy, enjoyable environment for young members.

Adults interacting with children in sailing are in a position of trust and influence. They should always ensure that they treat children with integrity and respect and that the self-esteem of children is enhanced. The trust implicit in adult-child relationships in sailing places a duty of care on all adults, voluntary or professional, to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the child while engaged in their sailing activity. All adult actions in sailing will be guided by what is best for the child and carried out in the context of respectful and open relationships.

The following principles apply within the Club:

- Children’s involvement in sailing should be an enjoyable experience.
- The safety of children should always be the paramount concern of those adults responsible for providing sailing opportunities at whatever level an individual adult is involved.
- All adults have a responsibility to be aware of child protection as an issue.
- Instructors / volunteers will be properly recruited and managed and appropriate training will be made available to them.
- Verbal, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any kind or threat of such abuse is totally unacceptable.

### **3. THE CHILDREN'S OFFICER AND DESIGNATED LIASON PERSON**

The Children's Officer acts as a first point of contact and resource for all members of Baltimore Sailing Club with regard to children's issues.

#### **Details of Children's Officer:**

Name: Dee Griffiths

Tel: 087 9260393

Email: autumn.cottage77@gmail.com

The role of the Children's Officer in Baltimore Sailing Club is to:

- Promote awareness of the "Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland" within the club and particularly among the children and their parents/guardians.
- Ensure that children have a voice in the running of their club and can talk freely about their experiences in their sailing activities.
- See that children know how to make their concerns known to instructors/volunteers or members, adults or agencies.
- Encourage the involvement of parents/guardians in the club activities.
- Report as required to the Main Committee of Baltimore Sailing Club.

The Designated Liaison Person acts as a first point of contact and resource for the Children's Officer with regard to child protection concerns and safeguarding issues and has a duty to report concerns to the relevant authorities.

**Details of Designated Liaison Person :**

Name: Odharnait Collins

Tel: 085 8468330

The role of the Designated Liaison Person in Baltimore Sailing Club is to:

- Promote awareness of the Safeguarding and Child Protection within the club.
- Report any child protection concerns to the relevant authorities.
- Report as required to the Main Committee of Baltimore Sailing Club.

The Designated Liaison Person does not have the responsibility of investigating or validating child protection concerns within the club and has no counselling or therapeutic role. These roles are filled by the Statutory Authorities, the Department of Health and Children and the Gardáí, as outlined in Children First. It is, however, possible that child protection concerns will be brought to the attention of the Designated Liaison Person. In this event, it is essential that any allegations or complaints are reported to the DLP within Baltimore Sailing Club, whose responsibility it is, to refer on such allegations or complaints to the Statutory Authorities (for further information refer to Appendix 1 of this document).

#### **4. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS**

It is the policy of Baltimore Sailing Club to recognise, like any other Club or organisation that includes children among its members, that there is a potential risk of incidents of child abuse.

Baltimore Sailing Club undertakes to have agreed procedures to be followed in cases of alleged abuse.

Sources of Child Abuse:

Children may be subjected to abuse by parents/guardians or other family members, persons outside their family, other children, or those who have responsibility for their care for one reason or another for short or long periods of time.

Coaches, instructors, volunteers and parents involved in the work of the Club should be familiar with the signs and behaviours that may be indicative of child abuse. Though a child may be subjected to more than one type of harm, abuse is normally categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse.

The possibility of child abuse should be considered if there are reasonable grounds for concern, e.g. a specific indication from the child, a statement from a person who witnessed abuse, an illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse.

## **Procedure if abuse by child's parent or carer is suspected:**

1. The matter should be reported to the Children's Officer in the first instance. The Children's Officer will inform the 'designated person'.
2. The "Recording Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse Checklist" should be completed and the Commodore or nominated Flag Officer informed.
3. If reasonable grounds exist that the child has been abused or is at risk of abuse the health board/social services (TUSLA) that have statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected or actual child abuse should be contacted and a formal report submitted.

Contact details are available in the publication "Guidelines for the implementation of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland" May 2000.

4. If the 'designated person' is unsure whether reasonable grounds for concern exist or not, the ISA Code of Ethics Officer or the local health board/social services can be informally consulted to establish if the matter requires a formal report.
5. The 'designated person' reporting suspected or actual child abuse to the Statutory Authorities should first inform the family of their intentions to make such a report, unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation.
6. In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the 'designated person' is unable to contact a duty social worker, the Garda Siochana should be contacted.

## **Procedure if abuse by a coach, instructor, volunteer, or other parent is suspected:**

1. The “Recording Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse Checklist” should be completed and the Children’s Officer informed.
2. The Commodore, or in his absence, the most senior Flag Officer available should be informed and a decision should be made as to whether the allegation has arisen from poor practice or actual abuse.
3. In the case of misconduct the ISA Code of Ethics Officer should be consulted.
4. In the case of abuse the local health board/social services should be consulted for advice and the standard reporting procedure followed.
5. The individual concerned should be asked to stand aside from responsibilities pending the outcome of any investigation by the Statutory Authorities. The individual should be advised that an allegation has been made against them and the nature of the allegation.

The individual should be afforded an opportunity to respond and this response should be noted and passed on to the health board/social services personnel.

All persons involved in a child protection process (the child, his/her parents/guardians, the alleged offender, his/her family, coaches, volunteers etc.) should be afforded appropriate respect, fairness, support and confidentiality at all stages of the procedure.

## **Appendix 1:**

### **Responsibility to Report**

Any person, who suspects that a child is being abused, or is at risk of abuse, has a responsibility to report their concerns to the health board. This responsibility is particularly relevant to professionals such as teachers, child care workers and health professionals who have regular contact with children in the course of their work. It is also an important responsibility for staff and volunteers involved in sports clubs, parish activities, youth clubs and other organizations catering for children.

#### Recording Allegations or Suspicions

The following is a list of what should be recorded:

1. Details of Child.
2. Details of concern(s), allegation(s) or incident(s) dates, times, who was present, description of any observed injuries, parent's view(s), child's view(s) if known.
3. Details of person(s) allegedly causing concern in relation to the child.
4. Name and Address of other personnel or agencies involved with this child.
5. Are Parents/Legal Guardians aware of this referral to the Social Work Department?
6. Details of Person reporting concerns.
7. Details of Person compiling the complaint.

Child Protection and/or Welfare Concerns should be reported to:

Child Care Manager Department, Tobartaoscain, Ennis, Co. Clare Phone: 065 – 682392; Fax: 065 - 6823926

If you are unsure if you should report your concerns, please telephone the duty social worker and discuss your concerns with him/her.

In case of Emergency or outside Health Board hours contact should be made with An Garda Síochána



## **Appendix 2:**

### **Good Practice Guidelines for Instructors, Volunteers and Staff**

Based on ISA Policies and Procedures Manual (2005), p36.

The following guidelines are intended to promote best practice and in turn to reduce the potential for participants or staff to feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

Be aware of situations that can generate the potential for misunderstandings and lead to allegations of abusive behaviour. One-to-one discussions should be conducted in a relatively open place, in view of others. Where the discussion is of a sensitive nature, a third party should be made aware beforehand of the nature of the discussion, and if possible be in attendance. Disciplinary matters should be dealt with according to a pre-determined code of discipline, not addressed in the heat of the moment.

Be aware of the potential for teasing, intimidation and bullying within any group. Participants on the summer training program will range from 8 years to older teenagers, and there may be a wide mix of ages within each level. Those participants who are shy could be overwhelmed by more assertive individuals. There may be pre-existing tensions among participants that could flare up in a new setting. Ensuring that participants are busy and occupied will minimize the opportunity for overt physical intimidation. Where instructors, staff and volunteers interact in a respectful way when dealing with each other and with participants, this will encourage the participants to behave in a similar manner towards each other.

The use of sexually suggestive language should be regarded as inappropriate at all times, both from a child protection perspective and an equality perspective. References to race, sexual orientation or other differentiating features should not be tolerated.

Where it is necessary to have physical contact with participants, e.g. pulling them into a rescue boat, be aware of how that contact could be misinterpreted by a worried parent later that evening. It may be advisable to tell the parent of the incident when they collect their child. For some participants, changing in and out of sailing gear in a communal changing room may be a source of tension, and it is imperative that males do not enter the female changing room or vice versa.

**Appendix 3**



**Baltimore Sailing Club**

**RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE CHECKLIST**

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Any special factors: YES/NO

Parents'/guardians' names: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else?

If so, record details. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What has prompted these concerns? Include dates and times of any specific incidents

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Any physical signs, behavioural signs or indirect signs? YES / NO

Has the child been spoken to? If so what was said?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have the parents/guardians been contacted? If YES, what has been said?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Has anyone else been alleged to be the abuser? If YES, record details.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Has anyone else been consulted? If YES record details.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_