



***International Optimist
Class Association (UK)***



Safeguarding Policy

Updated 9 March 2026	Review date December 2026

Part 1: Safeguarding Policy Statement for

International Optimist Class Association UK

England and Wales: This policy refers to a child as anyone under the age of 18 as defined by [the Children Act 1989](#) and an Adult at Risk as anyone aged 18 or over, who is in need of care or support, and who, because of those needs, is unable to always safeguard themselves as defined by [the Care Act 2014](#).

IOCA UK is committed to safeguarding all children, young people and adults at risk taking part in its activities from abuse and harm and ensuring their wellbeing. IOCA UK recognises that the safety, welfare and needs of children, young people and adults at risk are paramount and that any person, irrespective of their age, disability, race, religion or belief, marital status, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or social status, has a right to protection from discrimination, victimisation and abuse.

IOCA UK takes all reasonable steps to ensure that, through safe recruitment, appropriate operating procedures, and training, it offers a safe and fun environment to everyone taking part in IOCA UK events and activities. IOCA UK recognises that it has a legal duty of care¹ to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk.

IOCA UK is committed to minimising risk and supporting venues, programmes, events and individuals to deliver a safe, positive and fun boating experience for everyone by creating a welcoming environment, both on and off the water, where everyone can have fun and develop their skills and confidence. IOCA UK will treat everyone with respect, celebrate their achievements, listen to their views and experiences and provide opportunities for everyone to fulfil their potential and be their authentic selves.

IOCA UK will:

- o Ensure that all individuals who work or volunteer with children, young people and adults at risk provide a positive, safe and enjoyable experience.
- o Ensure that there is an RYA registered, Club Welfare Officer with the necessary skills and training who will take the lead in dealing with all safeguarding concerns with support from the RYA Safeguarding Team
- o Ensure that the Club Welfare Officer name and contact details are known to all employees, volunteers, members and participants

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

- o Respond swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected abuse, referring to the RYA and external agencies as necessary
- o Ensure that all information regarding safeguarding referrals is stored securely and confidentially
- o Ensure that all those who work or volunteer with at risk groups have been recruited using safe recruitment practices and includes the appropriate criminal records disclosure checks
- o Report any concerns raised involving RYA staff, volunteers and credential holders to the RYA Safeguarding Team
- o Regularly review its safeguarding procedures and practices in the light of experience, to take account of legislative, social or technological changes or where there is a change of management as required.
- o Cooperate where necessary with multi-agency investigations and enquiries relating to serious case reviews involving children, young people and adults at risk, if there is an association with the sport and or recreation

This policy will be reviewed by the IOCA UK committee at least every three years, or sooner if there are relevant changes to legislation or management.

IOCA UK recognises that **EVERYONE** has the right to be safeguarded and we must **ALL** take responsibility to ensure it.

Part 2: Safeguarding Guidance

Types of Abuse

1. Children and Young People²

Neglect: Neglect is not meeting a child's basic physical or psychological needs. It can have a long-lasting impact on a child's health or development. In sport, examples of neglect could include a coach or supervisor repeatedly:

- o failing to ensure children are safe
- o exposing children to undue cold, heat or extreme weather conditions without ensuring adequate clothing or hydration
- o exposing children to unnecessary risk of injury by ignoring safe practice guidelines
- o failing to ensure the use of safety equipment
- o requiring young people to participate when injured or unwell

Physical Abuse: When someone deliberately hurts a child causing physical harm it is called physical abuse. It may involve hitting, kicking, shaking, pushing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, drowning or any other method of causing non-accidental harm.

In sport, physical abuse may occur:

- o if the nature and intensity of training or competition exceeds the capacity of the child's immature growing body
- o where coaches encourage the use of drugs or harmful substances to enhance performance or delay puberty
- o if athletes are required to participate when injured
- o if the sanctions used by coaches involve inflicting pain

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse is when a child is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This may involve physical contact or non-contact activities and can happen online or offline. Children and young people may not always understand that they are being sexually abused.

In sport, coaching techniques which involve physical contact with children can create situations where sexual abuse can be disguised. An abusive situation can

² The definitions of harm were obtained from the Child Protection in Sport Unit Website: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/introduction-to-safeguarding/child-abuse-in-a-sports-setting/>

also develop if a person in a position of authority, such as a coach, was to misuse their power.

Contacts made within sport and pursued through other routes, such as social media, have been used to groom children for abuse. Sexual abusers can also groom protective adults and organisations to create opportunities for abuse to take place.

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. When a child or young person is exploited, they're given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status and affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities. Children and young people are often tricked into believing they're in a loving and consensual relationship. This is called grooming. They may trust their abuser and not understand that they're being abused.

Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse is the emotional maltreatment of a child, which has a severe and persistent negative effect on the child's emotional development. In sport, emotional abuse may occur if:

- o children are subjected to repeated criticism, sarcasm, name-calling or racism
- o a child is ignored or excluded
- o children feel pressure to perform to unrealistically high expectations
- o children are made to feel like their value or worth is dependent on their sporting success

Bullying: Bullying is when individuals or groups seek to harm, intimidate or coerce someone who is perceived to be vulnerable. It can involve people of any age and can happen anywhere, including at home, school, sports clubs or online.

Bullying encompasses a range of behaviours which are often combined. It might include physical, verbal or emotional abuse, or online cyberbullying.

In sport, bullying can occur based on a young person's sporting ability, body size or shape. It might include name-calling, offensive hand gestures, physical assault or exclusion from team activities.

2. Adults

The Care Act recognises 10 categories of abuse that may be experienced by adults.

Self-neglect: This covers a wide range of behaviour, but it can be broadly defined as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health, or surroundings. An example of self-neglect is behaviour such as hoarding.

Modern Slavery: This encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, and domestic servitude.

Domestic Abuse: This includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse perpetrated by anyone within a person's family. It also includes so-called "honour" based violence.

Discriminatory Abuse: Discrimination is abuse that centres on a difference or perceived difference, particularly with respect to race, gender, disability, or any of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act.

Organisational Abuse: This includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting, such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. Organisational abuse can range from one off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice because of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Physical Abuse: This includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, restraint, and misuse of medication. It can also include inappropriate sanctions.

Sexual Abuse: This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Financial or Material Abuse: This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, and coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions. It can also include the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Neglect and Acts of Omission: This includes ignoring medical or physical care needs and failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services. It also includes the withdrawing of the necessities of life, including medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.

Emotional or Psychological Abuse: This includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Four Additional Types of Adult Harm:

There are four additional types of harm that are not included in The Care Act, but they are also relevant to safeguarding adults.

Cyber Bullying: Cyber bullying occurs when someone repeatedly makes fun of another person online, or repeatedly picks on another person through emails or text messages. It can also involve using online forums with the intention of harming, damaging, humiliating, or isolating another person. It includes various types of bullying, including racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to special education needs and disabilities. The main difference is that, instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying face-to-face, they use technology to do it.

Forced Marriage: This is a term used to describe a marriage in which one or both of the parties are married without their consent or against their will. A forced marriage differs from an arranged marriage, in which both parties' consent to the assistance of a third party in identifying a spouse. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry.

Mate Crime: A "mate crime" is when "vulnerable people are befriending by members of the community who go on to exploit and take advantage of them" (Safety Network Project, ARC). It may not be an illegal act, but it still has a negative effect on the individual. A mate crime is carried out by someone the adult knows, and it often happens in private. In recent years there have been several Serious Care Reviews relating to people with a learning disability who were seriously harmed, or even murdered, by people who purported to be their friend.

Radicalisation: The aim of radicalisation is to inspire new recruits, embed extreme views and persuade vulnerable individuals to the legitimacy of a cause. This may be direct through a relationship, or through social media.

Other Safeguarding Considerations

Domestic Abuse:

Domestic abuse is any incident or pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading or violent behaviour, including sexual violence. It is most often perpetrated by a partner or ex-partner, but can also be carried out by a family member or carer. It can affect people of all genders, ages, sexualities, and backgrounds.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the serious impact of domestic abuse on victims and their families. It places a duty on statutory agencies to raise awareness, improve protection for victims, hold perpetrators to account, and strengthen support services.

Impact on children and young people:

Children may experience domestic abuse directly (being abused themselves) or indirectly (witnessing the abuse of a parent or family member). Both are harmful and are recognised in law as forms of child abuse.

Extremism: Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. (HM Government Prevent Strategy 2011³).

Non-recent Abuse: Abuse that occurred a period of time ago is sometimes referred to as non-recent. For example, an adult might speak about abuse that took place in their childhood.

Self-Harm: Self-harm is when someone deliberately hurts themselves. It can include cutting, burning, hitting or bruising, poisoning, scratching, hair-pulling or overdosing. Adults who self-harm aren't usually trying to commit suicide or looking for attention (although self-harming can result in accidental death). Often, it is a way for the person to deal with overwhelming or distressing feelings and emotions. Self-harming can be an indication of abuse, as some people use self-harm to cope with anxiety, stress and overwhelming emotions.

Gangs & County Lines: County lines is a form of criminal exploitation where urban gangs persuade, coerce or force children and young people to store drugs and money and/or transport them to suburban areas, market towns and coastal towns (Home Office, 2018). It can happen in any part of the UK and is against the law and a form of child abuse. Children and young people may be criminally exploited in multiple ways. Other forms of criminal exploitation include child sexual exploitation, trafficking, gang and knife crime.

Forced Marriage: A forced marriage is where one or both people do not or cannot consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to force them into the marriage. Forced marriage is illegal in the UK and is a form of domestic abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

3

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)⁴: FGM is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It's also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting' but has many other names. In the UK, this practice is illegal, but sadly still occurs and religious, social and cultural reasons are given to justify this practice.

Glossary of Terms

Abuse: abuse covers every form of 'abuse', which differs between adults and children. Adult forms of abuse are sexual, emotional, psychological, material, financial, physical, discriminatory, organisational abuse and any acts of omission.

Adult at Risk England: any person aged 18 years and over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health issues, learning or physical disability, sensory impairment, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

Case Management Group (CMG): the Case Management Group is responsible for ensuring that all allegations, incidents, or referrals related to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk are dealt with fairly and equitably within appropriate timescales. For the RYA the CMG consists of the Safeguarding and Equality Manager, Safeguarding Officer, relevant departmental manager/s representative from the legal team and the Independent Safeguarding Chair.

Club Welfare Officer: the designated individual within an affiliated club, recognised training centre or class association who holds the lead responsibility for safeguarding within their setting.

Consent: this is a term generally relating to adult safeguarding. Adults have a general right to independence, choice and self-determination including control over information about themselves. These rights can be overridden in certain circumstances, some examples include if a person lacks mental capacity, a crime has been committed, other people may be at risk, or the risk is unreasonably high.

Disclosure: disclosure is the process by which a child or adult at risk will let someone know that abuse is taking place. This may not happen all in one go and may be a slow process that takes place over a long period of time.

⁴ Definition taken from the NSPCC Website

Duty of Care: the duty that rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of any person involved in an activity for which that individual or organisation is responsible.

LADO: a Local Authority Designated Officer is the designated person within every Local Authority who is responsible for co-ordinating the response to concerns that an adult who works with children may have caused them or could cause them harm.

Multi-Agency Meeting: a multi-agency meeting may take place when a referral has been made to the Police or LADO regarding a child or adult at risk and is a key part of the investigation process.

Position of Trust: an adult is in a position of trust where a young person in their care has some dependency on them and there is an element of vulnerability involved.

Referral: a request for help from and/or for an individual from a public body.

Referrer: the person who refers a safeguarding concern to the safeguarding lead, police, LADO or Local Authority.

Risk: the probability of something (e.g., harm to a child) happening. The harsher the damage caused by it happening and the more likely the event, the greater the overall risk.

Significant Harm: the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children. Whether harm or likely harm suffered by a child is significant is determined by comparing the child's health or development with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.

Subject of Concern (SoC): a person who is believed to have acted in a way that has caused harm to a child, young person or adult at risk.

Wellbeing: Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires local authorities and other specified agencies to co-operate with a view to improving the wellbeing of children in relation to the five outcomes first set out in "Every Child Matters".

Young Person: a young person is a term used to describe the interim period between childhood and adult, typically between the ages of 14 and 17.

Safeguarding Legislation and Associated Policies

Safeguarding is governed by several different legislations and guidance. This will vary depending on the country within the UK. The following table outlines the different legislation and guidance (with links) for each Home Country.

	Key Legislation for Adults at Risk	Key Legislation for Children and Young People
England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Care Act 2014 o Care and Support Statutory Guidance (especially chapter 14) 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Children Act 1989 o Keeping children safe in education 2025 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf o Working together to Safeguard children https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6849a7b67cba25f610c7db3f/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_statutory_guidance.pdf o Children and Families Act 2014 o The United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child 1992

Relevant policies have been outlined below

*In addition to the policies and guidance listed above, IOCA expects all children and young people, their parents and carers, as well as all staff and volunteers, to follow the **IOCA UK Code of Conduct**. This sets clear standards of behaviour to ensure that everyone involved in our sport is treated with respect, feels safe, and can enjoy taking part in a positive environment.*

Useful Contacts

Child Welfare Officer	Sarah Renard Tel: 07833253903 E-mail: childwelfare@optimist.org.uk
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	John Perham Tel 07871 198163 E-mail: admin@optimist.org.uk
RYA HQ Safeguarding Team	Tel: 02380 012796 Ext 1 E-mail: safeguarding@rya.org.uk
RYA Cymru Wales – James Stuart	Tel: 02380 012796 Ext 1 E-mail: safeguarding@rya.org.uk
RYA Northern Ireland – Greg Yarnell	Tel: 02380 012796 Ext 1 E-mail: safeguarding@rya.org.uk
RYA Scotland –Finlo Cottier	Tel: 0131 317 7388 Mob:07770 604234 E-mail: finlo.cottier@ryascotland.org.uk

External Organisations:

NSPCC	https://www.nspcc.org.uk/
NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line	0800 028 0285 / help@nspcc.org.uk
CPSU	https://thecpsu.org.uk/
Ann Craft Trust	https://www.anncrafttrust.org/
MIND	https://www.mind.org.uk/
Young Minds	https://www.youngminds.org.uk/
Children 1st	https://www.children1st.org.uk/
Samaritans	https://www.samaritans.org/
Child Protection Scotland	https://www.childprotection.scot/
Emergency Services	999
Police non-emergency	101
NHS – non-emergency	111
NIAMH	https://www.communityni.org/node/45757
SAMH Scotland	https://www.samh.org.uk/

Criminal Records Disclosure Checks As part of its safe recruitment practices, IOCA UK carries out criminal records disclosure checks using the RYA as an umbrella body on all staff and volunteers aged 16 or over who are deemed to be in regulated activity. If a person is deemed to be in regulated activity, the IOCA UK Administrator will initiate and carry out the required level of check.

In line with Scottish safeguarding legislation, IOCA UK will also ensure that all individuals in Scotland who carry out regulated roles with children or protected adults (this includes committee members, coaches, and only those volunteers whose duties meet the criteria for a regulated role) are members of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme before they commence their role. This includes any position where the individual's normal duties involve activities such as teaching, training, supervising, being in sole charge of children, or otherwise holding a position of responsibility that involves direct contact, power, or influence over children or protected adults.

Further Signposting to RYA and other Guidance

Changing Rooms:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/media/445544/safe-use-of-changing-facilities-lg-july-2020.pdf>

RYA Changing Room Guidance – please email safeguarrding@rya.org.uk for a copy

Media and Communications:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/online-safety/>

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/online-safety/#heading-top>

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/photography-guidance-for-adults/>

Challenging Behaviour:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/managing-challenging-behaviour/>

Information Sharing:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/information-sharing>

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/share-consent-confidentiality-and-information-sharing-in-mental-healthcare-and-suicide-prevention/>

Safe Event Planning and Execution:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/event-management/>

Online Safety:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/online-safety/>

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/how-to-stay-safe-online-guidance-for-adults-and-young-people-with-learning-disabilities/>

Events held in public parks and spaces – additional safeguarding considerations:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/events-held-in-public-parks-and-spaces/>

Event Staff – Your Roles and Responsibilities:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/event-staff-your-roles-and-responsibilities/>

Safeguarding at Events – Weather Considerations:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/safeguarding-at-events-weather-considerations/>

Heatwave Advice:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/heatwave-advice-to-event-organisers/>

Away Trips and Hosting:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/away-trips-and-hosting/>

Transporting Children and Young People in Your Own Car:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/guidelines-on-transporting-a-child-or-young-person-in-your-car/>

Virtual Events and Competitions for Children:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/virtual-events-and-competitions-for-children/>

Physical Contact and Young People in Sport:

<https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/physical-contact-and-young-people-in-sport/>

A Guide to Safeguarding Adults:

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/a-guide-to-safeguarding-adults/>

Capacity – Guidance on Making Decisions:

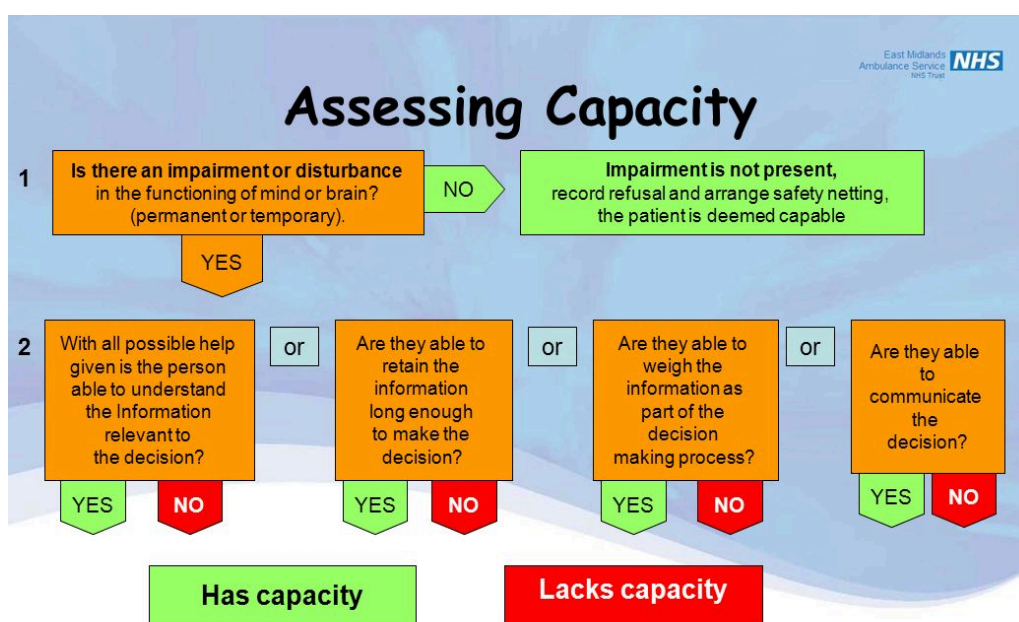
<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/capacity-making-decisions/>

RYA Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Guidance Documents

- Modern Day Manners – An RYA Guide to Inclusive Language
- RYA Guide to hate Crimes
- RYA Guide to Trans and Non-Binary Inclusion
- RYA Guide to Culture, Religion and Faith
- RYA Community Engagement Guide – A Toolkit to enable Inclusion

Please use the following [link](#) and scroll to the bottom of the page where you can then sign up to receive the EDI resources. Additional RYA Legal Team guidance notes can also be found in Club Zone on the following [link](#).

Assessing Capacity



If the answer to 1. Is YES and the answer to any of 2. Is NO, then the person lacks capacity under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

If the victim is not able to consent or refuse treatment, there is a duty to make a best interest decision about whether to treat the patient.

You must:

- o Involve the person who lacks capacity to the fullest extent possible
- o Have regard for past and present wishes and feelings, especially written statements
- o Consult with others who are involved in the person’s care
- o Not be discriminatory
- o Choose or decide on the least restrictive option
- o Take into consideration the benefits and burdens to the person

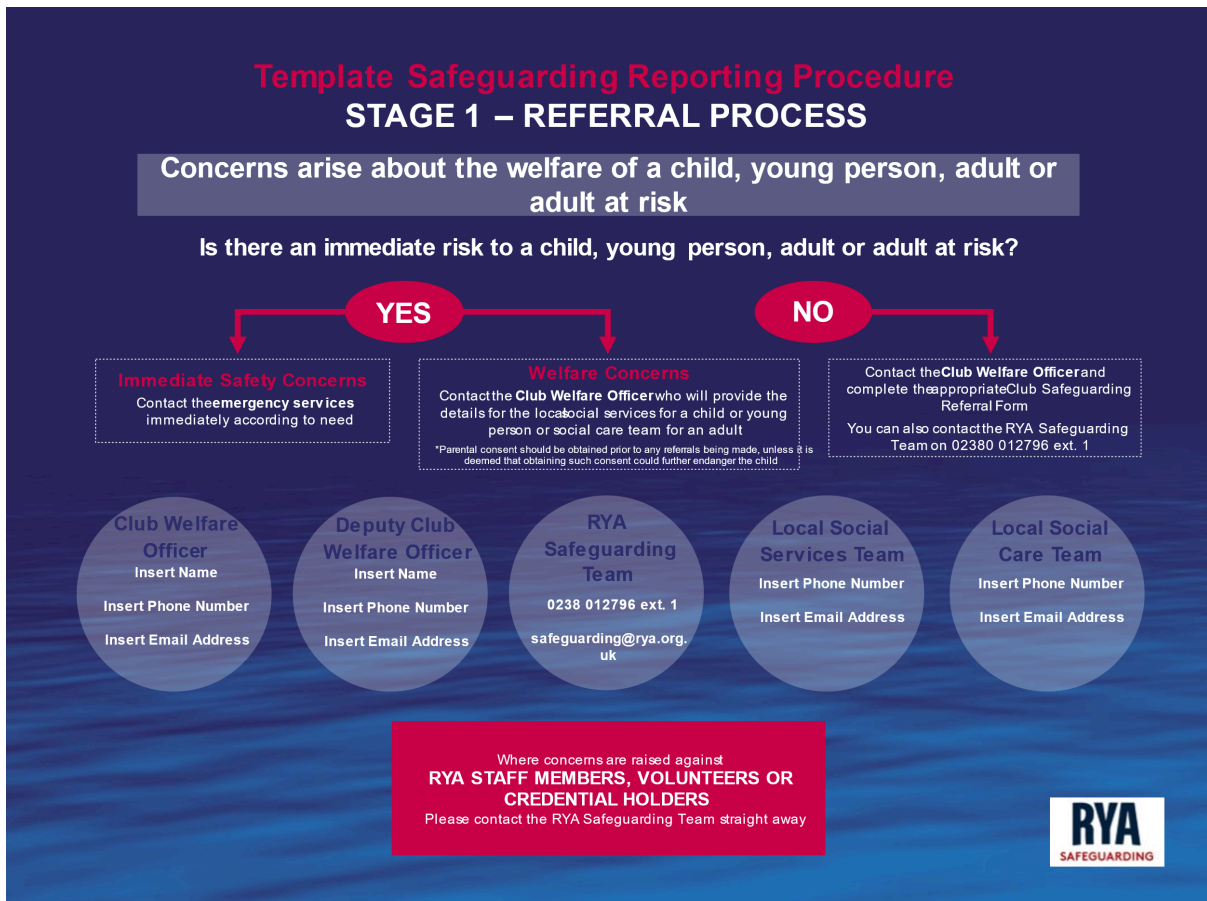
Part 3: Safeguarding Procedures

1. Safeguarding and Welfare Team Contact Details

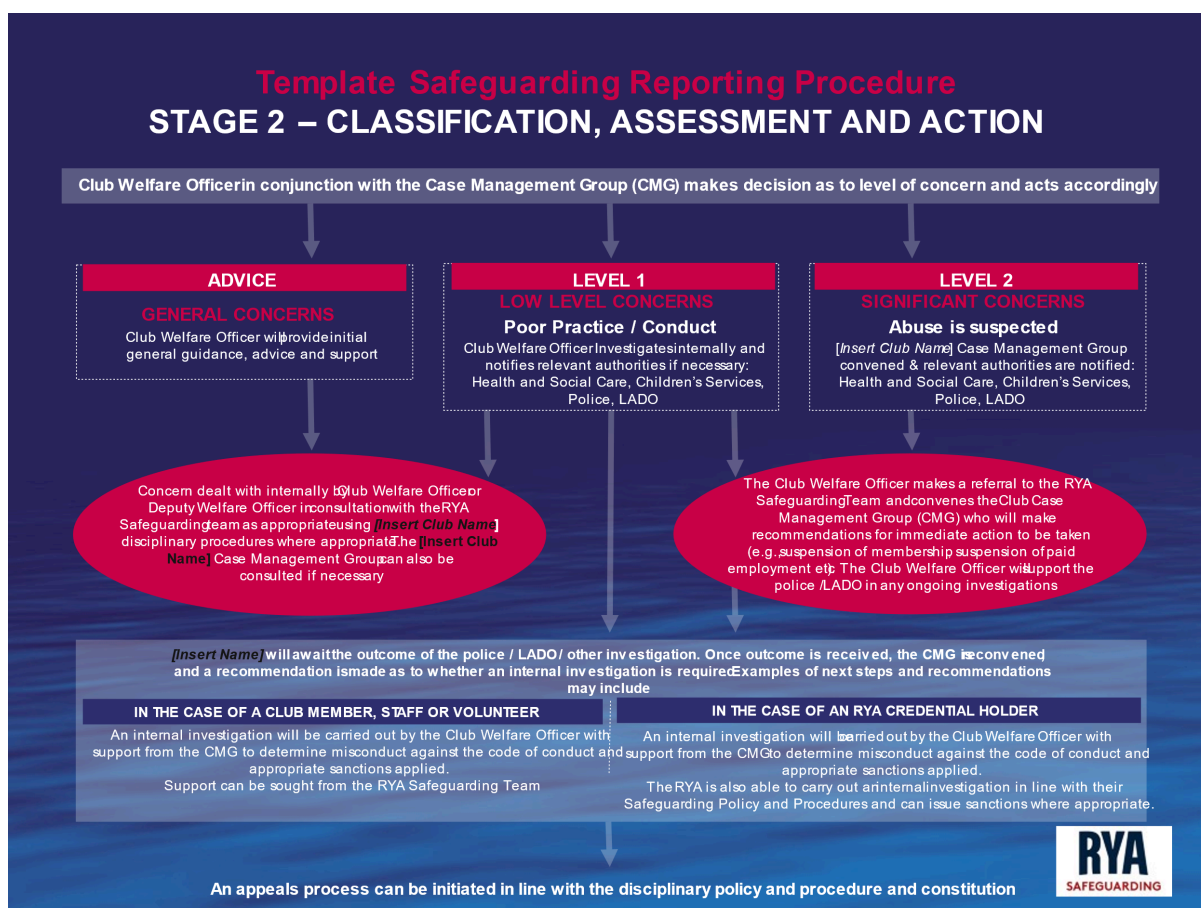
Club Welfare Officer	Name: Sarah Renard 07833253903 childwelfare@optimist.org.uk
Deputy Welfare Officer	Name: John Perham 07871 198163 admin@optimist.org.uk
Police Emergency	Number: 999
Police Non-Emergency	Number: 101
RYA Safeguarding Team Office Opening hours: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 09:00-17:00 Monday to Friday Out of Hours Service (Urgent enquiries which cannot wait) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 17:00-22:00 Monday to Friday ● 09:00-22:00 Bank Holidays 	Number: 02380 012796 (Choose option 1 for Safeguarding and Option 3 for out of hours service) Email: safegaurding@rya.org.uk
RYA Legal Team	Number:

2. IOCA UK Safeguarding Reporting Procedure

Stage 1 – Referral Process



Stage 2 – Classification, Assessment and Action



3. Breaches of the Safeguarding Policy

Where there are concerns that this safeguarding policy has not been followed, or there is a safeguarding concern, all members, volunteers, staff and participants

are encouraged in the first instance, to contact the IOCA UK Welfare Officer by email childwelfare@optimist.org.uk. If further support or guidance are required, The RYA Safeguarding Team can be contacted on 02380 012796 / safeguarding@rya.org.uk. Alternatively the NSPCC Whistleblowing advice line can be contacted on 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk

4. Implementation, Review and Reporting

IOCA UK have overall accountability for this Policy and for its implementation

The IOCAUK Welfare Officer is responsible for updating this Policy in line with legislative and organisational developments.

The IOCA UK **Safeguarding Case Management Group** is responsible for advising and making recommendations on safeguarding cases, in line with this Policy.

All staff, volunteers, members and participants are responsible for raising safeguarding concerns /disclosures with the IOCA UK Welfare Officer as outlined in the Reporting a Safeguarding Concern Procedure.

The IOCA UK Welfare Officer with support from the IOCA UK Committee is responsible for ensuring appropriate safeguarding training is put in place, specifically for those deemed to be in regulated activity with vulnerable groups and kept up to date with any safeguarding developments.

Where there is a safeguarding concern/disclosure:

The individual who is told about, hears, or is made aware of the concern/disclosure is responsible for following the Reporting a Safeguarding Concern Procedure.

The IOCA UK Welfare Officer is responsible for assessing all safeguarding concerns /disclosures that are reported to them and collaborating with the RYA Safeguarding Team to follow up as appropriate on a case-by-case basis, always prioritising the well-being of all those involved in the disclosure. Dependent on the concern/disclosure, a referral may be made to:

- o The police in an emergency (999)
- o Local Authority Children's Social Care Services for concerns/disclosures about a child

- o For referrals involving adults at risk - Local Authority Adult Social Care Services for concerns/disclosures about an adult at risk
- o For referrals involving children and young people - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (England; Wales); and the Criminal Records Disclosure Service⁵ for concerns/disclosures about a member of staff, consultant, coach, official or volunteer in a Position of Trust.
- o The RYA Safeguarding Team for all Level 1 and Level 2 categorised concerns.

5. Implementation, Review and Reporting

5.1 Case Management

All safeguarding records are categorised to a level accordingly:

- Advice** Any concern which does not meet the threshold for Levels 1 or 2 and involves seeking support or guidance for a specific matter. Advice cases can often escalate depending on the situation.
- Level 1** Any concern about an adult or child's behaviour towards a child or adult at risk that does not meet the allegation threshold or is not otherwise serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO or Adult Services. Concerns may arise from both within the sport and outside of it.
- Level 2** Any concern that meets the threshold for a referral to the Police, LADO, and or Children or Adult Services of a Local Authority. Alongside this an internal rating system can also be used of Low, Medium and High.

The threshold criteria outlined above is underpinned by guidance provided by the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU).

Highly sensitive information contained within safeguarding case records are restricted to the IOCA UK Welfare Officer and the IOCA UK Deputy Welfare Officer. If the Case Management Group is convened, information pertaining to the concern will be shared securely and confidentially.

⁵ Criminal Records Disclosure Service providers: England and Wales - Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Scotland - Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) & Northern Ireland - AccessNI

5.2 Data Storage

All case records are stored in line with the IOCA UK **Data Storage and Privacy Policies** and relevant national legislation and guidance.

Advice All advice case data is stored for **5 years** from the date the referral was received.

Level 1 All level 1 case data is stored for **10 years** from the date the referral was received.

Level 2 All level 2 case data is stored for **90 years** from the date of birth of the subject of concern.

Case records are deleted / destroyed after the retention period set out above, unless the Club Welfare Officer decides that there is a reason to retain the information for a longer period.

5.3 Case Management Group

The IOCA UK Case Management Group (CMG) is convened when a Level 2 referral is received. The group can also be convened if a Level 1 referral is serious enough in nature. The group can consist of any of the following members depending on where the referral originates from.

Name	Role / Position
John Perham	IOCA UK Administrator & Events Manager
Richard Stephens	IOCA UK - Chair
Sarah Renard	IOCA Welfare Officer

The CMG is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all allegations, incidents, or referrals related to the safeguarding of children and adults are dealt with in accordance with IOCA UK policies with appropriate timescales.
- Making recommendations to the appropriate decision-making body regarding the appropriate steps to be taken.

5.4 External Assistance

The IOCA UK CMG may choose to appoint an external independent body to assist in any investigations where the following criteria is met:

- IOCA UK does not have the expertise or skill set required to undertake the investigation
- IOCA UK is under a conflict of interest
- The case is so complex by nature that a third party would be necessary to support/undertake the investigation

In the case where the CMG chooses to instruct an independent body, it reserves the right to choose whichever independent body it deems most suitable given the circumstances. The IOCA UK CMG will make such a decision on a case-by-case basis.

6. Safe Recruitment & Criminal Records Disclosure

Checks

IOCA UK is committed to ensuring that only those with the right motivations and suitability are recruited into positions involving regular contact with children, young people and adults at risk within its work and volunteer force. IOCA UK understands its legal responsibility within the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, to ensure that all its staff and volunteer recruitment practices are safe, fair and equal and allows it to identify, deter and reject staff or volunteers who may be at risk of abusing vulnerable groups.

IOCA UK will:

Ensure the best possible staff and volunteers are recruited based on their merits, abilities and suitability for the position.

Ensure that all applicants are considered equally and consistently, and that no applicant is treated unfairly based on any protected characteristics in compliance with the Equality Act 2010⁶.

Comply with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance including the statutory guidance published by the DfE (keeping children safe in education, the PREVENT Duty guidance) and any codes of practice published by any of the disclosure service providers.

⁶ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Meet its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.

IOCA UK uses the following safe recruitment practices when recruiting staff and volunteers:

Advertisements will make clear IOCA UK commitment to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk.

- o For paid roles, applicants who are offered the position will be required to supply proof of their ID in the form of original documents and confirm their right to work within the UK.
- o Where any position amounts to "regulated activity⁷" with children and or adults at risk an appropriate disclosure check will be carried out which will include the Adults Barred List and Children's Barred List where appropriate, and an original certificate will be seen by the recruiting manager or HR personnel prior to the applicant commencing the role. Further information on Criminal Records Disclosures can be found in Part 4.
- o Successful applicants in England and Wales will be required to register with the DBS Update Service.

7. Dealing with a Safeguarding Disclosure & Information Sharing

Being the recipient of a safeguarding disclosure can be incredibly difficult, especially if the recipient is not a Safeguarding Lead. However, choosing not to respond to a disclosure can **never** happen, regardless of how uncomfortable the recipient is. The referral flowchart in section 2 acts as a guide to the physical steps that can be taken if a referral or disclosure is received. Below is a list of dos and don'ts to support anyone if they receive a disclosure.

Dos

- o Keep calm and remain receptive and approachable
- o Assess the situation, has a crime been committed? Do you need to contact the emergency services?

⁷ Regulated activity with adults: [ES573375_CCS156_CCS0318265556-1_NHS Eligibility Roles Leaflet Adults v2 EB.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Regulated Activity with Children: [ES573374_CCS156_CCS0318265556-1_NHS Eligibility Roles Leaflet Children v3 EB.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

- o Listen carefully and patiently without interrupting if possible and let the victim recount the details in their own time
- o Use the victim's own words if you need to seek clarification
- o If you need more information, use TED: Tell me... Explain to me... Describe to me...
- o Acknowledge how difficult it must have been to disclose
- o Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you and they are not to blame
- o Let them know that you will do everything you can to help them
- o Advise the victim what will happen next
- o Make a written record as soon as you can
- o Report the disclosure to the Club Welfare Officer or the RYA Safeguarding Team
- o **Adults:** Gain consent from the victim to share the information⁸ - If you feel that the adult does not have sufficient capacity to make a decision about sharing information, you should consider if breaking confidentiality is in the best interests of the victim⁹ - see Part 3 "Assessing Capacity" - a flow chart created by the NHS
- o **Children and Young People:** Gain consent from the parent / carer to share the information - Only speak with the parents / caregivers of the victim if this does not pose a risk to the child

Don'ts

- o Don't make a promise to keep secrets
- o Don't ask leading questions or put words in the mouth of the victim
- o Don't repeatedly ask the victim to repeat their disclosure
- o Don't discuss the referral with anyone who does not need to know
- o Don't be judgmental
- o Never ignore what you have been told - **you must pass it on**
- o Don't confront or contact the Subject of Concern¹⁰
- o Don't remove or contaminate any evidence that may be present
- o Never dismiss your concerns - even a gut feeling is worth reporting

⁸ Capacity: The ability to understand and make a decision when it needs to be made

⁹ Further reading on mental capacity:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mental-capacity-act-making-decisions>

¹⁰ Subject of Concern - The person to whom the complaint or concern has been raised against

8. Confidentiality:

The sharing of personal information within an organisation is not prevented by law. While appropriate confidentiality should be maintained, it is important to make sure the right people within the organisation are informed if the circumstances require this which is outlined in the IOCA UK Privacy Policy. If you are the recipient of a safeguarding disclosure, contact the IOCA UK Welfare Officer who will advise on the next steps, which may or may not include sharing that information with external agencies, however the following considerations should be taken into account:

8.1 Children and Young People¹¹

Information sharing is essential for effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. It is a key factor identified in many Serious Case Reviews (SCRs), where poor information sharing has resulted in missed opportunities to take action that keeps children and young people safe

There are seven golden rules to confidentiality and Information Sharing:

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and Human Rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could, be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or RYA Data Protection Officer, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, sharing falls within one of the specified lawful basis to do so. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone,

¹¹ Information was taken directly from the HM Government Information Sharing Guidance: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf

be clear on the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared. If you are in any doubt, contact the RYA Data Protection Officer.

5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
6. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

8.2 Confidentiality: Adults

Individuals may not give their consent to the sharing of safeguarding information for several reasons. For example, they may be frightened of reprisals, they may fear losing control, they may not trust social services or other partners, or they may fear that their relationship with the subject of concern will be damaged. Reassurance and appropriate support along with gentle persuasion may help to change their view on whether it is best to share information.

If a person refuses intervention to support them with a safeguarding concern, or requests that information about them is not shared with other safeguarding partners, their wishes should be respected. However, there are several circumstances where the person who has received the disclosure can reasonably override such a decision, including:

- o the person lacks the mental capacity to make that decision – this must be properly explored and recorded in line with the Mental Capacity Act
- o other people are, or may be, at risk, including children
- o sharing the information could prevent a crime
- o the alleged subject of concern has care and support needs and may also be at risk
- o a serious crime has been committed
- o staff are implicated

- o the person has the mental capacity to make that decision, but they may be under duress or being coerced
- o In cases of domestic abuse, if the risk is unreasonably high and meets the criteria for a multi-agency risk assessment referral
- o a court order or other legal authority has requested the information.

If none of the above apply and the decision is not to share safeguarding information with other safeguarding partners, or not to intervene to safeguard the person:

- o support the person to weigh up the risks and benefits of different options
- o ensure they are aware of the level of risk and possible outcomes
- o offer to arrange for them to have an advocate or peer supporter
- o offer support for them to build confidence and self-esteem if necessary
- o agree on and record the level of risk the person is taking
- o record the reasons for not intervening or sharing information
- o regularly review the situation
- o try to build trust and use gentle persuasion to enable the person to better protect themselves.

If it is necessary to share information outside the organisation:

- o explore the reasons for the person's objections – what are they worried about?
- o explain the concern and why you think it is important to share the information
- o tell the person who you would like to share the information with and why
- o explain the benefits, to them or others, of sharing information – could they access better help and support?
- o discuss the consequences of not sharing the information – could someone come to harm?
- o reassure them that the information will not be shared with anyone who does not need to know
- o reassure them that they are not alone, and that support is available to them.

If the person cannot be persuaded to give their consent, then, unless it is considered dangerous to do so, it should be explained to them that the information may be shared without consent in some situations (as set out above). The reasons should be given and recorded. The safeguarding principle of proportionality should underpin decisions about sharing information without consent, and decisions should be on a case-by-case basis.

If it is not clear that information should be shared outside the organisation, a conversation can be had with the Data Protection Officer or the safeguarding partners in the police or local authority without disclosing the identity of the person in the first instance. They can then advise on whether full disclosure is necessary without the consent of the person concerned.

It is very important that the risk of sharing information is also considered. In some cases, such as domestic violence or hate crime, it is possible that sharing information could increase the risk to the individual. Safeguarding partners need to work jointly to provide advice, support and protection to the individual to minimise the possibility of worsening the relationship or triggering retribution from the abuser.

[SafeLives](#) (previously CAADA) provide resources for identifying the risk victims face including a Dash risk checklist, which is a risk assessment tool for practitioners who work with adult victims of domestic abuse. It offers a consistent approach to identifying those who are at high risk of harm and whose cases should be referred to a MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference) meeting to manage their risk. If there are concerns about a risk to a child or children, then a referral to ensure that a full assessment of their safety and welfare needs to be made.