



CHILD PROTECTION

Overview

Stirling & Falkirk Canoe Club (S.F.C.C) aims to promote the well-being and safety of all members engaging in canoeing/kayaking. Within that framework, S.F.C.C is particularly concerned to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in club activities, and to make sure they are well looked after.

S.F.C.C is affiliated to the Scottish Canoe Association (S.C.A), and operates within the framework of the S.C.A Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults. This means that all those involved with S.F.C.C have a duty of care to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact. The S.C.A Guidelines may be downloaded in full from: <http://www.canoescotland.org>

The S.F.C.C. child protection officer is shown on the committee page of this website, and can be contacted at cpo@sfcc.info

S.F.C.C. agrees to implement the S.C.A recommendations for good practice for local canoe clubs in terms of child protection. The remainder of this document outlines these.

Child Protection Guidelines

Members of S.F.C.C. agree to abide by the following rule relating to the safety of children & young people: A trip leader (who will be a qualified coach) will be responsible for the safety and welfare of only those children who are 12 years and over. Children younger than that must be accompanied by an adult who will take full responsibility for their safety and welfare.

S.F.C.C. will appoint a Child protection officer (CPO); this person will receive training in child protection. Their role will be as follows:

- To gain a degree of background knowledge about any coach or helper wishing to be involved with the club.
- To ask all those who coach within the club to become members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme.

- To liaise with the S.C.A Child Protection Officer in relation to new coaches/helpers so that PVG checks can be carried out.
- To ensure coaches and all other persons working with children and young people in the club are fully aware of what is required of them within the protocols of the Code of Good Practice.
- To advise the Club on matters of policy and good practice relating to Child Protection.
- To act as the contact person on matters relating to Child Protection for the S.F.C.C..
- To activate the process if abuse is disclosed or alleged. To take details of the allegation/suspicion/concern and inform the S.C.A Child Protection Officer

Coaches and any designated helpers will have clear roles. These will be made clear to new members and parents.

All coaches and designated helpers have a clear duty to prevent and/or report abuse or suspected abuse. Coaches agree to abide by the British Canoe Union Child Protection Policy with the S.C.A Guidelines.

- All coaches and helpers will be subject to the agreed procedures for protecting children and vulnerable adults. This means they must be willing to undergo a PVG checks and training, as appropriate, in relation to protecting children and vulnerable adults.
- The S.C.A Guidelines on Good Practice Which Can Help Prevent Abuse is appended to the S.F.C.C. guidelines here. (They may also be downloaded as above). All S.F.C.C. coaches and designated helpers will be expected to know and follow these guidelines.
- Written guidelines on what constitutes abuse, and how to recognise it, form part of the S.C.A Guidelines referred to above. Coaches and helpers should familiarise themselves with these.
- Supervision will be used as a means of protecting children.

§ Club activities will be planned so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur. In practical terms this means coaches and helpers are recommended not to meet with children away from the club situation or meeting place without a parent or other adult being present.

§ The person in charge of canoeing activities should ensure that other adults involved in supervising or helping out act in such a way so as to secure children's welfare, physically sexually and emotionally. If they have concerns about this they should talk confidentially to the CPO, and ensure a high level of supervision until their concerns are satisfied.

- Coaches should familiarise themselves with the procedures to be followed if they suspect someone has abused a child. See the appended notes "If A Child Discloses Abuse or If You Suspect Abuse", or the S.C.A website as noted above.

Children and their parents have the right within S.F.C.C. to talk with a person independent of the coaching staff if they have any concerns about the child's welfare and safety. The designated person within S.F.C.C. will be the CPO. Parents and children will be informed of this right when their child joins the club, and will be given the name and contact number of the CPO. Of course, a parent or child may talk with anyone they feel comfortable with.

This Child Protection Policy will be brought to the attention of all existing and new coaches/helpers, as well as parents/guardians and children in a manner and degree appropriate to their age when a child joins S.F.C.C..

These guidelines were approved by the Stirling and Falkirk Canoe Club Committee at their September 2004 meeting.

Appendix 1: Good Practice which can help to prevent abuse

Avoid situations where coach/helper and child are alone. The S.C.A acknowledges that occasionally there may be no alternative, for example, a child may be taken ill and have to be taken home. We would stress however that one to one contact must be avoided if at all possible and should never be allowed to occur on a regular basis. Ascertain the child's and the parent's views about manual support for children who need this kind of help, particularly if they are on the water.

If it is necessary to do things of a personal nature for a young person or vulnerable adult, make sure you have another adult accompanying you. Get their consent if at all possible, and certainly get consent from the parent/carer. Let the child know what you are doing and why.

Ask parents/carers and/or nominated club officials to be responsible for children and vulnerable adults in changing rooms

Get adults to work in pairs if classes or groups of children or vulnerable adults have to be supervised in changing rooms.

Ensure that male and female coaches or helpers, particularly on trips or residential outings, always accompany mixed teams.

Do not allow any physically rough or sexually provocative games, or inappropriate talking or touching by anyone, in any group for which you have responsibility.

At events or competitions look out for people who do not appear to be relatives or friends of children who are participating but, nevertheless seem to spend a lot of time videoing or photographing them. Report these incidents to the organisers.

From S.C.A Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Appendix 2: If a child discloses abuse or if you suspect abuse

Remain calm. Do not display any emotional reaction you may feel.

Listen sympathetically and impartially. It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not abuse has taken place – only to report what the child has said to you. Confine any questioning to clarifying what the child has said. Do not ask the child for explicit details.

Do not promise the child confidentiality. Tell them that if they tell you anything that makes you concerned about their well-being you may have to tell somebody in order to keep them safe.

Write down what the child has said, as near to verbatim as possible. Record anything else relevant (e.g. your observations of the child's behaviour or appearance) and as soon after the disclosure as you can. Sign and date this.

Contact the Club Child Protection Officer. Failing that, contact your local Social Work Department and ask for the Duty Social worker. Seek guidance from them on what to do next. Where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk, and a social worker cannot be contacted, police authorities should be contacted without delay.