

Castle Semple Sailing Club

www.castlesemplesc.co.uk



Operations Manual & Child Protection Policy

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Club House

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1 Introduction

This is the Operations Manual of Castle Semple Sailing Club (CSSC). The manual contains important information about the club's policies and procedures. All members are notified of the existence of this manual and encouraged to read its contents.

The manual includes the results of the club's risk assessment of club activities.

2 CSSC Training

The RYA recognised that there was an absolute need for a national training scheme to make the sport of sailing more accessible and successful. Over a period of years many training courses have been perfected.

Within Clyde Muirshiel Country Park, sailing training courses are run by the Council operated water sports centre, which is an RYA official training centre.

CSSC are affiliated to the RYA but do not offer any of these officially recognised training courses. CSSC offer sailors (helm & crew) the opportunity to expand their sailing experience within a group of like minded individuals.

3 Safety Policy

The following is the Safety Policy of CSSC.

3.1 Aims

The fundamental aims of organised water-based activities at CSSC are:

- That they should promote the aims of the club.
- That they should meet the activity needs of club members.
- That all reasonable actions are taken to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all persons involved.

3.2 Responsibilities

All participating members, or in the case of children under the age of 18 their parents, are responsible for their own safety and insurance. It is the individual's (or parent's) responsibility to ensure the suitability and condition of their own boats and equipment at all times. In the case of club boats the individual is responsible for making sure it is suitable and safe to use before launching.

The committee of CSSC has the overall responsibility for the safety of all adult and junior members and visitors engaged in its organised activities. All participating members will be expected to abide by the decisions of the responsible officers for all CSSC sailing activities.

The safety of a boat and her entire management including insurance shall be the sole responsibility of the owner / person in charge who must ensure that the boat has the proper insurance and crew are adequate to face the conditions that may arise.

CSSC are not responsible for members' safety whilst on water-borne activities not forming part of officially organised club activities.

All persons involved in, on or off the water activities share the responsibility for the safety of the participants.

Therefore:

It is the duty of all members to be vigilant and aware of all circumstances that may affect the safety of both themselves and others.

It is the duty of all members to notify any committee member of any situation or circumstance that concerns them, or that they feel may affect the safety of any person. This must be done as soon as possible, and then confirmed in writing if appropriate.

The nominated leader of all junior activities has the specific responsibility for the safety of all those involved.

For club events, the nominated "Person In Charge " has specific responsibility for the safety of all those involved.

Should an injury be sustained by a Junior, his/her parents are always to be informed. Great care is to be taken with head injuries, however minor.

3.3 Accidents

A first aid kit is located in the CSSC club house. These kits will be inspected periodically by a suitably qualified person to make sure they are properly equipped.

If an accident occurs at any event, full details must be entered, as soon as possible, in the CSSC Accident Folder, which is located in the club House.

It is the duty of all persons to ensure that any accident is reported.

3.4 Organization Of Club Water-based Activities

A full copy of the club's Risk Assessment is attached at Appendix A of this Operations Manual. The assessment covers all appropriate areas of the club's activities. Organisers of club sailing events shall assess the risks associated with running an activity. The race officer or other suitably qualified person shall authorise club related on-water activities, taking into account the following:

- The actual and forecast weather conditions covering the activities.
- The experience of the participants.
- The proposed sailing area of the activity.
- What patrol craft are available, and are they suitable for the activity.
- Are there sufficient people available to put on the activity, and what is the experience of the organising adults and safety boat personnel.
- What equipment is available (eg safety equipment, first aid equipment).
- What means of communication, including radios if deemed appropriate, is available.
- Do any of those involved in the activity have special needs that could affect either

their own safety, or the safety of others and if this is the case have additional measures been taken to minimise the additional risk.

Based on the assessment of all the above factors, the organizer shall have responsibility for deciding whether the event takes place, and who shall be allowed to participate.

For club days where sailing activities will take place, a safety boat should be on the water, with at least two crew available to man the boat, one of whom should hold a suitable qualification or have been deemed competent to operate the boat.

Buoyancy aids must always be used by participants on the water. These should be appropriate for the persons weight and size. It is understood that non-swimmers are particularly at risk and the wearing of a correct life jacket is recommended. It is the responsibility of the participant to ensure that they are wearing a suitable buoyancy aid.

It is recommended that all persons who may have reason to doubt the efficiency of any buoyancy aid or life jacket in a particular circumstance, for example, age, disability or body weight, tests the flotation device under controlled conditions before going on the water.

Attention must be given to young and elderly persons and those who have special needs. For example, they may not be personally aware of the dangers of hypothermia and heat exhaustion, or they may find it difficult to judge their stamina accurately. All members should be alert to these and other potential dangers and advise the "Person in Charge" immediately of any concerns.

3.5 Communication

Communication with sailors is of primary importance. The sailing or operating area should be clearly defined and known to all afloat. A pre-session brief shall be given when appropriate prior to any special event to ensure that all participants know what is intended and are aware of safety matters.

3.6 CSSC Major Incident Procedures

In the event of any serious accident or catastrophe which directly or indirectly concerns or involves CSSC the following procedures must be followed:

- Deal with the incident in an appropriate way or find someone who can.
- Contact the Commodore or "Person in Charge" as soon as possible.

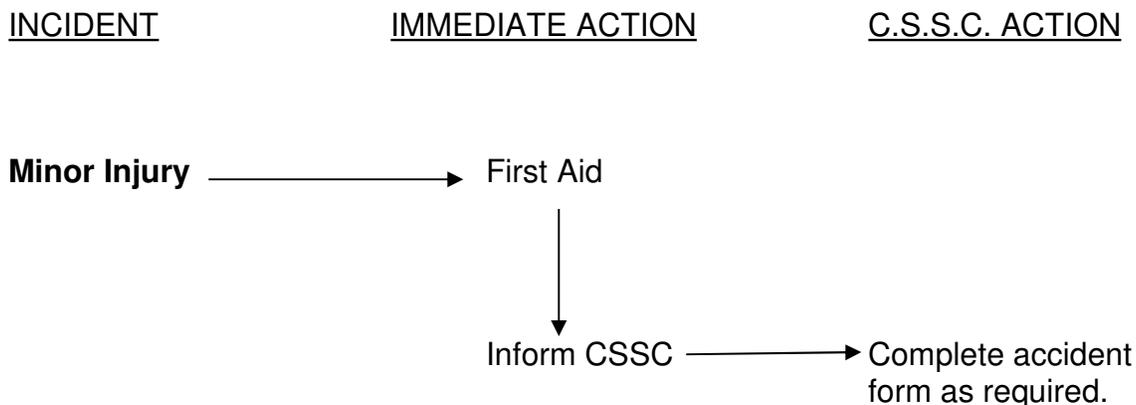
General Conduct

- Do not discuss the incident with anyone or give any opinion unless they are a member of a relevant public service e.g. Police, Ambulance, Fire, Social Services etc. In those circumstances try and avoid “UNOFFICIAL” discussion, and if appropriate have a witness present during “OFFICIAL” discussions.
- Under no circumstances talk to the media.
- The spokesperson for the club is the Commodore or the person designated by the Commodore.

Notes For Spokesperson

- Ensure that the occurrence is reported to the RYA who will take over the handling of any incident if it is extremely serious.
- Issue a written statement to the media after appropriate consultation.
- Only participate in an interview after appropriate consultation.
- Ensure that insurance issues are considered and met.

3.7 CSSC Emergency Plan



INCIDENT

IMMEDIATE ACTION

C.S.S.C. ACTION

Minor illness or injury requiring medical attention.

Transport to doctor/hospital.

Inform CSSC

Complete accident form as required.

INCIDENT

IMMEDIATE ACTION

C.S.S.C. ACTION

Serious illness, Injury or fatality requiring immediate medical attention.

Call ambulance

Seek immediate help from doctor or first aider.
(during normal hours there will normally be a first aider in the Centre.)

Contact CSSC

Maintain contact with interested agencies.

Inform Commadore.
Inform R.Y.A.
Inform next of kin.
Prepare press statement.

Liaise with all interested agencies.

3.8 Medical Information

Any member (or their parent in the case of someone under the age of 18) that has a medical condition that could affect their safety on the water should make sure that their sailing companion is aware of the issues and any action that may have to be taken.

If the member would also like the committee to be aware of the condition they can complete the form below and passed to one of the committee members.

Note, that due to data protection issues the information passed to the committee will not be readily available to ordinary members but would only be passed to someone completing first aid measures if and when required.

Your name.....

Address.....
.....

Date of birth.....

Medical
Notes
.....
.....

Medication or
remedy
.....
.....

Dietary
requirements
.....
.....

It may be necessary to contact someone on your behalf. Please give as many contact telephone numbers as possible.

Name.....

Address.....
.....

Tel..... Mobile.....

Dated.....

3.9 Manual Handling

“Think Back” before lifting. Use lifting equipment where provided and safe to do so i.e. you have the appropriate skills and knowledge to use the equipment.

Where there is a previous history of back pain, please inform the person in charge. If you suspect that a load will be too heavy, large or awkward to lift unaided, ask for assistance. Assess the load.

Beware of possible obstructions or uneven surfaces and steps in your path.

Gloves should be worn if there is a likelihood of hand injury.

Position yourself at the load with your feet approximately hip width apart, one foot pointing in to the direction of the load, the other pointing in the intended direction of travel and arrival – this avoids twisting.

Bend the knees slightly but keep the back naturally straight.

Grip the load securely, keeping your back naturally straight and your arms close to your body. Lift the load letting your leg muscles take the strain.

When lifting to a height, do it in stages, i.e. from floor to knees, knees to waist level etc. Ensure the load does not obstruct your vision.

Move off in the direction your advance foot is pointing, keeping the load closely to your body.

The Hoist should be used when possible by a trained operator for the transfer of sailors with disabilities.

4 Use of Club Boats

4.1 Policy

The committee has determined the following policy for the use of club boats:

All boats that belong to the club are, by definition, the property of the members.

It is expected that boats are used for their prime purpose eg. practise, racing, cruising and patrol or other approved club activity.

Club boats must be kept to a safe standard.

RYA qualifications are recognised by CSSC as an indication of a person’s capability.

The fact that a member of CSSC does not hold a qualification does not necessarily detract in any way from that member’s capability or ability to use any boat.

In the event of damage caused by unreasonable behaviour or abuse, the member may be liable for the full cost of the damage.

Members who have been given permission to use a club boat are expected to fully acquaint themselves with the operation of the boat and check it prior to use. The club cannot be held accountable for any shortcomings.

4.2 Use of Club Power Boats

The committee is responsible for the boat including maintenance, fuelling and it’s allocation for club events.

The power boat can only be used by people with the appropriate experience and approved by a committee member.

The safety boat outboards are fitted with a kill cord and these must be used by the person in control at all times when the boat is in use on the water. The person in control shall also be responsible for ensuring all crew are within the boat and holding on tight during manoeuvres.

The club power boats are not available for personal recreational use. Members wishing to use this boat for other purposes outside club organised events are to obtain permission from the committee or Commadore. Any defects are to be advised to a committee member.

4.3 Use of Club Sailing Boats.

The club owns a variety of sailing dinghies which will be maintained by members. These include:

- Toppers
- Lasers
- GP14's
- 420's
- 505
- Pico
- Optimist

Club sailing dinghies may be used on any club day or club organised event unless otherwise advised. The club boats are not to be used outwith these times unless approved by the committee.

For use of the club boats outwith these times, permission must be obtained from the committee. If permission for use is granted it will be the responsibility of the member to ensure that the boat has the appropriate insurance for the activity (including third party insurance). Should any damage or incident occur during the period the person borrowing the boat will be responsible for any uninsured losses.

When a new member has joined the club he or she must have demonstrated to the committee that they have the appropriate sailing skills before being authorised to use the club boats.

The allocation of the boats currently is on a first come first serve basis but consideration for the wishes/hopes of other members should be accommodated wherever possible. If more than one member wishes to use the same specific boat then a "gentleman's agreement" should be made to share use of the boat during that session. Reference to a committee member should be made when an agreement can not be made. The committee member will decide on priority. The decision will be based on fairness, racing & training considerations and the members who best represent the club.

For club races, in addition to those who may grant permission, the Race Officer may cancel the permission to use the club boat due to weather or other factors on the day such as the level of safety boat cover.

All club equipment must be washed as necessary and returned to its appropriate storage immediately after use.

Any loss of, or damage to club equipment must be reported to a committee member immediately (no later than the day of occurrence).

5 Boat Storage

5.1 General

Boat storage is provided at Castle Semple Sailing Club for dinghies.

Permission to store a dinghy within the club grounds will only be granted after approval by the compound steward.

No boat may be stored at the club without prepayment. Any exception must be authorised by the compound steward, Commodore or committee.

Storage charges will be determined by the committee and published in membership renewal documents.

All boats must be fully insured.

The club does not accept any liability for dinghies stored within the club grounds.

Storage is at the member / owner's own risk.

The club storage compound must be kept locked at all times when not in use.

Safety is paramount, and is the responsibility of every member. If suspect practice or equipment is observed, please notify a committee member as soon as possible

5.2 Dinghy Compound

Please keep the park as tidy as possible, and put spent tape, ropes etc in black dustbin outside the club house.

Ensure boat covers are secure. Ensure all halyards are tied down

Lock the clubhouse and gates before / after you sail or leave the club grounds.

6. Operation of Club Safety Boat(s)

6.1 Attaching the engine

You will need to be an engine locker key holder to access the engine and boat in the container..

Attaching the engine is only to be carried out by people who have been given the

appropriate training on the correct procedure.

Once the engine is secured, ensure the safety line is attached to the eye on the transom. Place the drainage bung in and place the fuel tank into the boat, and attach the fuel line to the engine, and open the air breather screw on the fuel tank filler cap.

6.2 Starting the engine

Use / operation of the engine is only allowed by people who have been given the appropriate training on the correct procedure and are approved by the committee.

7. Action in the Event of a Fire

If you discover a fire or suspect the presence of a Fire.

- Give the alarm by shouting "FIRE".
- On hearing the alarm or if you have given the alarm PROCEED IMMEDIATELY to the nearest available exit and leave the building. Do not stop to collect belongings.
- Summon the Fire Brigade directly by dialing 999 at the first possible moment when it is safe to do so unless you are aware this has already been done.
- All people should proceed to the designated fire assembly point.

THE ASSEMBLY POINT IN THE CASE OF FIRE IS THE COMPOUND GATE

- It is important that you do not remain near the entrances of the building which has been evacuated as this can restrict the evacuation procedure and hinder access for the fire service.
- Do not re-enter the building until you have been informed that it is safe to do so.
- As a rule all fire fighting should be left to the professionals i.e. the fire service.

Any attempt to fight a fire with fire extinguishers should only be made by appropriately trained or experienced people where the fire is of a small nature or impinging on an exit route.

Appendix A: Risk Assessments

CASTLE SEMPLE SAILING CLUB – RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk/Hazard	Who is at Risk?	Measures Taken to Reduce Risk?	What Further Action is Necessary to Control the Risk?
CLUB SAILING EVENT SAFETY			
<p>Hazard: drowning from capsize or falling overboard. Severity: death. Probability: low.</p>	<p>Sailors.</p>	<p>Person in charge to maintain controlled sailing area and adequate safety craft ratio. Everyone on the water to wear adequate personal buoyancy. Responsible person to decide if conditions are suitable for the club event.</p>	<p>None Residual Probability: very low</p>
<p>Hazard: hypothermia from immersion or exposure. Severity: loss of limbs, death. Probability: low.</p>	<p>Sailors.</p>	<p>Person in charge to maintain safety craft ratio. People on water to wear appropriate clothing for the conditions i.e. Wetsuit, Drysuit.</p>	<p>None Residual Probability: very low</p>
<p>Hazard: injury through being struck on the head by boom. Severity: concussion, cuts, bruises. Probability: high for inexperienced sailors.</p>	<p>Inexperienced sailors, i.e. those who have yet to learn the potential hazard that results from an uncontrolled gybe.</p>	<p>Club boats only available to helm's that have demonstrate the appropriate sailing skills.</p>	<p>None. Residual Probability: low-medium</p>

CASTLE SEMPLE SAILING CLUB – RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk/Hazard	Who is at Risk?	Measures Taken to Reduce Risk?	What Further Action is Necessary to Control the Risk?
<p>Hazard: injuries from equipment on boat. Severity: concussion, cuts, bruises. Probability: low rising to medium in strong winds.</p>	<p>Sailors -particularly inexperienced</p>	<p>Person in charge to decide if conditions are suitable for club event –risk higher in strong winds.</p>	<p>Assess level of risk for conditions. Residual Probability: low</p>
<p>Hazard: injuries from boat to boat/pontoon contact. Severity: crushed hands/legs. Probability: low.</p>	<p>Sailors -particularly inexperienced</p>	<p>Club boats only available to helm's that have demonstrated the appropriate sailing skills.</p>	<p>Assess level of risk for conditions. Residual Probability: very low</p>
<p>Hazard: head or eye injuries from contact with booms or masts whilst boats alongside pontoons. Probability: Low.</p>	<p>People who are alongside boats.</p>	<p>The boat helms to keep a good look out.</p>	<p>Ensure boats are unattended for minimum time Residual Probability: very low</p>
<p>Hazard: injuries from tripping/falling off pontoon. Severity: head injuries, breaks, drowning. Probability: drowning low, other medium.</p>	<p>People who use the pontoon.</p>	<p>N/A the pontoon is a public amenity and CSSC has no responsibility or control over its use.</p>	<p>Remove any unnecessary tripping hazards that belong to CSSC from pontoons. Residual Probability: very low</p>

CASTLE SEMPLE SAILING CLUB – RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk/Hazard	Who is at Risk?	Measures Taken to Reduce Risk?	What Further Action is Necessary to Control the Risk?
USE OF BOATS UNDER POWER			
<p>Hazard: drowning – from falling overboard. Severity: death. Probability: low.</p>	<p>Sailors.</p>	<p>Drowning only likely if knocked unconscious. All people to wear lifejacket / buoyancy aid whilst in powerboats. Person in charge to decide if conditions are suitable for launch–risk higher in strong winds. Only approved people to be in control of the boat.</p>	<p>None Residual Probability: low</p>
<p>Hazard: injury from propeller upon falling overboard. Severity: death or serious injury. Probability: low.</p>	<p>Sailors.</p>	<p>Use of kill cord mandatory for all outboard users. People to sit entirely within boat. Boat user to be vigilant. Person in charge to decide if conditions are suitable–risk higher in strong winds. Only approved people to be in control of the boat.</p>	<p>None Residual Probability: low</p>

CASTLE SEMPLE SAILING CLUB – RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk/Hazard	Who is at Risk?	Measures Taken to Reduce Risk?	What Further Action is Necessary to Control the Risk?
<p>Hazard: injuries from boat to boat/pontoon contact. Severity: crushed hands/legs. Probability: low.</p>	<p>Sailors.</p>	<p>Only appropriately skilled people authorised to use boat. The person in charge of the boat to ensure hands/legs in the boat during coming alongside.</p>	<p>None Residual Probability: low</p>
<p>Hazard: injuries resulting from coming alongside manoeuvres. Severity: crush injuries, possibly serious. Probability: low.</p>	<p>Sailors.</p>	<p>Only appropriately skilled people authorised to use boat. The person in charge of boat to keep crew briefed on intended manoeuvres and what is expected of them.</p>	<p>None Residual Probability: low</p>

CASTLE SEMPLAILING CLUB – RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk/Hazard	Who is at Risk?	Measures Taken to Reduce Risk?	What Further Action is Necessary to Control the Risk?
HAZARDS TO CLUB MEMBERS ON PREMISES			
Hazard: falling/tripping. Severity: serious injury. Probability: low.	All club members and guests.	All spillages to be dealt with immediately.	All perceived hazards to be immediately reported to the person in charge. Stairs to be maintained in a safe condition. Residual Probability: very low
Hazard: slipping in changing rooms. Severity: bodily injury, unlikely to be serious. Probability: medium.	All club members and guests.	All spillages to be dealt with immediately.	All perceived hazards to be immediately reported to the person in charge. Drains to be kept clear. Residual Probability: very low
Hazard: tripping in club grounds. Severity: bodily injury, unlikely to be serious. Probability: medium.	All club members and guests.	Grounds levelled as far as possible Children to be told not to run on wet or slippery surfaces.	Specific tripping hazards to be removed by re-levelling. Residual Probability: low

CASTLE SEMPLE SAILING CLUB – RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk/Hazard	Who is at Risk?	Measures Taken to Reduce Risk?	What Further Action is Necessary to Control the Risk?
BOAT LIFT IN/LIFT OUT			
Hazard: boat in transit falling/hitting someone. Severity: bodily injury,unlikely to be serious. Probability: low	All people in area.	All people involved in lifting to be vigilant. Extra care to be taken in strong winds.	None. Residual Probability: very low
Hazard: mast falling on member during stepping. Severity: serious injury. Probability: low-medium with less experienced helpers.	All people in area.	Mast to be controlled preferable with two or more people. Before completing the task make sure that area where the mast could fall is clear and that unauthorised people do not enter the area of the lift.	None. Residual Probability: very low

CASTLE SEMPLE SAILING CLUB – RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk/Hazard	Who is at Risk?	Measures Taken to Reduce Risk?	What Further Action is Necessary to Control the Risk?
SAILING SAFETY - RACING			
<p>Hazard: drowning from capsize or falling overboard. Severity: death. Probability: low.</p>	<p>Sailors.</p>	<p>Those racing are experienced sailors aware of risk. The safety boat must be on the water with helm and crew before a race can take place. All participants are required to wear adequate personal buoyancy. Person in charge to decide if conditions are suitable to hold race. Person in charge empowered to reduce length of course or cancel in severe</p>	<p>None Residual Probability: very low</p>
<p>Hazard: hypothermia from immersion or exposure. Severity: loss of limbs, death. Probability: low.</p>	<p>Sailors.</p>	<p>Safety Boat to be on the water with helm and crew before a race can take place. Person in charge to evaluate if conditions are suitable – risk higher in strong winds and racing in the Winter and early Spring / late Autumn.</p>	<p>Person in charge to have power of veto on participants inappropriately dressed for racing. Residual Probability: very low</p>
<p>Hazard: injury through collision with other water craft. Severity: concussion, cuts, bruises. Probability: medium.</p>	<p>People on the water (sailors, windsurfers etc.).</p>	<p>The Racing Rules of Sailing are mandatory and will be obeyed by all competitors. These are designed to minimise the risk of collision.</p>	<p>None Residual Probability: low</p>

CASTLE SEMPLE SAILING CLUB – RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk/Hazard	Who is at Risk?	Measures Taken to Reduce Risk?	What Further Action is Necessary to Control the Risk?
Hazard: injury through being struck on the head by boom Severity: concussion, cuts, bruises Probability: low.	Sailors	Sailors who have progressed to racing will be aware of this risk.	None. Residual Probability: low
Hazard: injuries- from equipment on boat. Severity: concussion, cuts, bruises. Probability: low.	Sailors	Sailors who have progressed to racing will be aware of this risk. Person in charge to decide if conditions are suitable – risk higher in strong winds.	None. Residual Probability: low

Appendix B: Child Protection Policy & Procedures

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Policy Statement**
- 3. A Code of Practice & Procedures**
 - 3.1 Recruitment (paid staff)**
 - 3.2 Recruitment (volunteers)**
 - 3.3 Prevention of abuse**
 - 3.4 Child Protection Co-ordinator**
 - 3.5 What to do if abuse is suspected/alleged**
 - 3.6 Recording information**
- 4. Recognising abuse**
 - 4.1 Physical abuse**
 - 4.2 Neglect**
 - 4.3 Sexual abuse**
 - 4.4 Emotional abuse**
 - 4.5 Bullying**

1. Introduction

This policy and its associated guidelines has been introduced in response to guidance from the RYA.

2. Policy Statement

The child's welfare is paramount.

All children whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse.

All suspicions and allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately as defined in the Children Act 1989. Anyone under the age of 18 years should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document.

3. A Code of Practice & Procedures

3.1 Recruitment (paid staff)

While CSSC is basically a self-help organisation, if the club should decide in the future to employ a person to train children, the following principles will apply:

Such a person will be required to fill an application form, which will be scrutinised by the committee. The purpose of this reference is to investigate the candidate's past career or experience and to establish any criminal record. Where staff will be working unsupervised or parents are not in attendance, references should be taken up. Normally these should include at least one regarding previous work with children.

Although positive vetting is not specifically required, applicants should signify their consent to checks being made with the Criminal Records Bureau, police or social services, if appropriate. This will be arranged through the RYA.

3.2 Recruitment (volunteers)

The role of volunteers in teaching and organising sailing at CSSC is central. The Operation Policy defines responsibilities, suitable arrangements for sailing, risk assessments, etc.

CSSC has a strong policy on parental involvement. The following principles apply:

The active involvement and co-operation of parents or their nominees is required when their children are sailing. A high degree of direct supervision is therefore ensured. Older children may attend and take part on club days under the supervision of the person in charge and at the discretion of parents.

Recruitment of Volunteers for specific activities shall be the responsibility of the committee. The following principles will apply:

The committee will promote the recruitment of appropriate volunteers to assist in the running of that activity.

Decisions regarding the deployment of volunteers will be taken in the context of this and other CSSC policies.

Where there is any doubt as to the suitability of the recruit, a short probationary period should be linked to close monitoring.

3.3 Prevention of abuse

Good Practice Guide for Club Officers

Child abuse is a very difficult situation for centre principals and club officers. Having the right systems in place can help all concerned. Abusers have great difficulty operating in a well-run organisation with good management and training. The following are our operating principles:

Plan the activities of the club so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children can occur.

Training will be given to staff and volunteers in the prevention of child abuse.

CSSC will give all staff and volunteers clear roles.

CSSC will issue guidelines on how to deal with the discovery of abuse.

If children tell staff about abuse, we will follow agreed procedures.

We can reduce situations for abuse of children and help to protect staff and volunteers from false allegations being made by promoting good practice and some common sense guidelines for everyone within the organisation:

Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.

Do not take children alone in a car on journeys, however short.

Do not take children to your home.

Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the organisation or the child's parents.

Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child.

Do not photograph or video children, or publish their pictures, without the knowledge and consent of their parents.

You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged or unrecorded; always act.
- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves. However, sometimes it may be necessary for staff and volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents or carers. In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help, parents or carers should be fully informed. In such situations, it is important to ensure all are sensitive to the child and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

In addition, medical consent should be obtained in the event where medication or treatment is required to be administered in the absence of the parent/guardian; this includes hospitalisation. Such procedures would cover the organisation from accusations of neglect.

3.4 Child Protection Co-ordinator

The role of the Child Protection Co-ordinator will be appointed by the committee to ensure that CSSC has:

- An up to date policy with procedures to support it.
- That relevant staff and volunteers understand the procedures and put them into practice.
- To receive reports of any concerns or allegations.

The Commodore to decide on the appropriate action to be taken to keep the RYA informed as necessary.

3.5 What to do if abuse is suspected/alleged

What to do if abuse is suspected/alleged to have occurred

3.5.1 Principals/Managers

In the event of an accusation against a member of staff or a volunteer the Child Protection Coordinator should be informed as a matter of urgency.

Although it is a sensitive and difficult issue, child abuse can occur and does occur outside the family setting. Child abuse has occurred within institutions and may occur in other settings. If a child has been abused in a public setting, other children may be involved.

Where there is an allegation of abuse against a member of staff, there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation.
- a child protection investigation.
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and social services investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

It is important to understand that a member of the club reporting a case of child abuse, particularly by a fellow member, may undergo a very high degree of stress, including feelings of guilt for having reported the matter. It is therefore important to ensure that access to appropriate counselling and support is available in such a situation.

3.5.2 Instructors/Volunteers

What should I do if a child tells me s/he is being abused?

Always:

- stay calm - ensure the child is safe and feels safe.
- show and tell the child that you are taking what she/he says seriously.
- reassure the child and stress that she/he is not to blame.
- be honest, explain you will have to tell someone else to help stop the alleged abuse.
- make a note of what the child has said as soon as possible after the event.
- maintain confidentiality - only tell others if it will help protect the child.

Never:

- rush into actions that may be inappropriate.
- make promises you cannot keep.
- ask inappropriate questions, which may jeopardise any impending police investigation.
- take sole responsibility - consult someone else (the person in charge or someone you can trust) so you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself.

If I do something, might it make things worse?

Taking appropriate action if you are worried about abuse is never easy - it takes courage but it protects a young life.

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. The effects of abuse on children can be devastating, especially if children are left unprotected or do not receive help to cope with the abuse. The most serious effect is that children can and do die as a result of abuse. They can develop behavioural difficulties, problems at school, their development can be delayed and they can become depressed and withdrawn. Some of these problems, if left untreated, can persist into adulthood.

3.6 Recording information

When recording information, it is important that you do not carry the process beyond gathering information about the allegation, into beginning an investigation. Unnecessary interviews with child complainants could prejudice the integrity of evidence that may eventually have to be presented in court.

There are particular problems with regard to gaining information from children with limited communication skills. Care should be taken that appropriate means are used to find out what the allegation is about without "leading" the child.

The environment for recording information needs to be considered carefully. Try and

ensure that you are in sight of another adult, but that your conversation won't be overheard. You also need to be careful about physical contact during an interview because it may not be what the child wants. The rule is to let the child initiate any actions and to remain positive and supportive throughout.

4. Recognising abuse

This section explains what child abuse is, how to recognise it and what to do if you have concerns.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse is a term used to describe ways in which children are harmed, usually by adults and often by people they know and trust. It refers to the damage done to a child's physical or mental health. Children can be abused within or outside their family, at school and in a sports or community environment. Child abuse can take many forms:

4.1 Physical abuse

Is where adults or other children:

- physically hurt or injure children (e.g. by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or burning).
- give children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison.
- attempt 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.

4.2 Neglect

Includes situations in which adults:

- fail to meet a child's basic physical needs (e.g. for food, warm clothing, essential medication).
- consistently leave children alone and unsupervised.
- fail or refuse to give children love, affection or attention.
- neglect in a sports situation might also occur if a teacher or coach fails to ensure children are safe or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury.

4.3 Sexual abuse

Boys and girls are sexually abused when adults (male or female) or other young people use them to meet their own sexual needs. This could include:

- full sexual intercourse.
- masturbation.
- oral sex.

- fondling.
- showing children pornographic books, photographs or videos, or taking pictures for pornographic purposes.
- sport situations which involve physical contact (e.g. 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.

4.4 Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse can occur in a number of ways. For example, where:

- there is persistent lack of love or affection.
- there is constant overprotection which prevents children from socialising.
- children are frequently being shouted at or taunted.
- there is neglect, physical or sexual abuse.

Emotional abuse in sport might also include situations where parents or coaches subject children to constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations.

4.5 Bullying

Bullying may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. The bully may often be another young person.

Although anyone can be a 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.

How would I recognise if a child is being abused?

It is not always easy to spot when children have been abused even for the most experienced carers. 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 (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper).
- the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
- a change observed over a long period of time (e.g. the child losing weight or becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt).
- a general distrust and avoidance of adults, especially with whom a close relationship would be expected.

- an unreasonable reaction to normal physical contact.
- difficulty in making friends or abnormal restrictions on socialising with others.

However, 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 - this does not necessarily mean the child is being abused. Similarly, there may not be any signs, you may just feel something is wrong. If you are worried, it is NOT your responsibility to decide if it is abuse BUT it is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it.

What should I do in general if I have concerns?

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, like a bereavement, which has caused the child to be unhappy. However, if your concerns are about sexual abuse or violence, talking to the parents or carers might put the child at greater risk.

If your concerns remain or you cannot talk to the parents/carers, consult CSSC's Child Protection Coordinator. It is the responsibility of this person to make the decision to contact the police.

Where can I get further help?

If you want to talk things through to gain some advice, you can phone the following 24 hour free telephone numbers. You do not have to give your name but it is helpful if you can.

NSPCC helpline:
0808 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk

Child Line:
0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

If you are an instructor and have had an allegation made against you, advice and support can be gained from the following sources:

Local Citizens' Advice Bureau:
Refer to Yellow Pages for contact details

RYA Legal: 023 8060 4223

Sportscoach UK (if a member):
0113 274 4802 www.sportscoachuk.org