

National School Sailing Association Safeguarding Policy

1) NSSA Safeguarding Policy Statement

As defined in the Children Act 1989, for the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child. The policy also applies to vulnerable adults.

It is the policy of the National School Sailing Association (NSSA) to safeguard children and young people taking part in boating from physical, sexual or emotional harm. The NSSA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that, through appropriate procedures and training, children participating in NSSA activities do so in a safe environment. We recognise that the safety and welfare of the child is paramount and that all children, whatever their age, gender, disability, culture, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, social status or sexual identity, have a right to protection from abuse. All events arranged by the NSSA and their agents will operate in accordance with this policy.

The NSSA actively seeks to:

- Create a safe and welcoming environment, both on and off the water, where children can have fun and develop their skills and confidence.
- Support and encourage recognised training centres, affiliated clubs and associations to implement similar policies.
- Recognise that safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone, not just those who work with children.
- Ensure that NSSA-organised training and events are run to the highest possible safety standards.
- Be prepared to review its ways of working to incorporate best practice.
- Comply with all relevant legislation.
- Minimise its impact on the environment by adopting best practice.

We will:

- Treat all children with respect and celebrate their achievements.
- Carefully recruit and select all employees, contractors and volunteers.
- Respond swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected or actual child abuse.
- Require sufficient and suitable risk assessments to be undertaken and documented.
- Uphold and support the RYA Anti Bullying policy

This policy relates to all employees, contractors and volunteers who work with children or vulnerable adults on behalf of the NSSA. It will be kept under periodic review. All relevant concerns, allegations, complaints and their outcome should be notified to the NSSA Safeguarding Officer.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

2) Designated Safeguarding Officer

The NSSA Executive Committee shall appoint a designated NSSA Safeguarding Officer.

The designated NSSA Safeguarding Officer's general terms of reference will include:

- Maintaining up-to-date policy and procedures, compatible with those of the RYA.
- Ensuring that relevant staff and/or volunteers are aware of and follow the procedures.
- Advising the executive, general and sailing committees on safeguarding issues.
- Liaising with the committee responsible for hosting an event on behalf of the NSSA, in order to ensure that the facilities cause no reasonable cause for concern in relation to those safeguarding issues outlined within this policy.
- Maintaining contact details for local Social Services and Police as necessary.

If there is a concern, the NSSA Safeguarding Officer or a suitably qualified and agreed substitute, would:

- Be the first point of contact for any concerns or allegations, from children or adults, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained in all cases.
- Decide on the appropriate action to be taken, in line with the organisation's procedures.
- Keep the RYA informed as necessary (see flowcharts in Section 6).

It is required that each affiliated association appoints a person responsible for issues regarding the protection of children.

RYA designated person

The RYA's Safeguarding Co-ordinator is Jackie Reid, Personnel and Administration Manager, tel. 023 8060 4104, e-mail jackie.reid@rya.org.uk. If Jackie Reid is unavailable and the matter is urgent, contact Jackie Bennetts, RYA Volunteer Development Officer, tel. 023 8060 4199, e-mail jackie.bennetts@rya.org.uk.

3) Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

We will actively encourage all affiliated associations to ensure that all adults, working with or volunteering to work with children, on behalf of the NSSA have enhanced DBS disclosures carried out on behalf of the NSSA (in addition to any other checks an individual may have had) through the RYA Safeguarding Officer.

NSSA Events

As part of the entry procedure for all NSSA Events, Team Managers will be required to sign an agreement to verify that enhanced DBS checks for regulated activity have been carried out on behalf of the NSSA for ALL adults in 'regulated positions' accompanying children in a supervisory role (this does not include parents who are present at the sailing club during the day only, or most safety crews/race management teams). A Regulated Position is a paid or voluntary role which involves working closely with children or vulnerable adults on a frequent (once a week or more), intensive (on four days or more in a single month) or overnight basis. This includes all adults acting in 'loco parentis'. It is recommended that enhanced DBS checks are registered for the DBS Update Service so as to avoid the need for a further check. Volunteer adults must also confirm that they have not been convicted of either any child abuse offence or ever been the subject of any child abuse investigation or enquiry. At all NSSA events team managers are legally

responsible for the protection of their team members. The NSSA is not responsible but endeavours to support team managers in meeting their obligations.

Confidentiality

All personal information should be treated as confidential, stored securely and only shared with those who need to see it in the course of their duties or to protect children.

4) Good Practice Guidelines

It is important for the NSSA to maintain a culture where both children and adults feel able to raise concerns, knowing that they will be taken seriously, treated confidentially and will not make the situation worse for themselves or others.

Good Practice Guidelines for all adults working on behalf of the NSSA can be found in Appendix 1.

Parental responsibility and club liability

Although clubs have a duty of care to their members, and particularly to young people who cannot take full responsibility for their own safety, parents must be responsible for their children's welfare and behaviour, or they must designate another adult to take that responsibility, outside formal club-organised activities.

Changing rooms and showers

It is preferable for adults to stay away from the changing rooms while there are children there. However Health and Safety etc. can be an issue, and a balance should be struck depending on the situation. In general it is essential that one adult is not alone with a minor(s). Extra vigilance may be required if there is public access to the venue. If it is essential, in an emergency situation, for a male to enter a female changing area or vice versa, it is advised that they are accompanied by another adult of the opposite gender. Those responsible for organising NSSA events, including regattas, should ensure that separate showering and changing facilities are provided for adults and children. We accept that there may be instances where it is not possible to provide separate facilities. An acceptable alternative would be to ensure that the facilities are not to be shared by adults and children at the same time. In this event, allocated usage for each group must be clearly signed.

5) Photography

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

There are two key principles to bear in mind:

Before taking photos or video, written consent will be obtained from the child and their parents/carers for their images to be taken and used

- Consent to use photographic images will be obtained via event entry forms.

- All photographers must be approved by the NSSA Safeguarding Officer and the NSSA Official Photographer (if one is being used), prior to being allowed to taking any photographs at NSSA Events. This can be on the day or arranged in advance.
- Any photographer or member of the press or media attending an event must wear identification at all times and should be fully briefed in advance on our expectations regarding his/her behaviour and the issues covered by these guidelines.
- Photographers will not be allowed to have unsupervised access to young people at the event or to arrange photo sessions outside the event.
- Consent should also be obtained for the use of video as a coaching aid. Any other use by a coach will be regarded as a breach of the RYA's Code of Ethics and Conduct.
- Care must be taken in the storage of and access to images.

When publishing images, care will be taken in order to make sure they are appropriate and that no information is included that might enable someone to contact the child

- It is preferable to use a general shot showing participants on the water, or a group shot of the prize winners, without identifying them by name.
- If recognising the achievement of an individual sailor and wishing to publish their name with their photo, no other information should be published (eg. where they live, name of school, other hobbies and interests) that would enable someone to contact, befriend or start to 'groom' the child.
- Ensure that the young people pictured are suitably dressed, to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.

Most sailing activity takes place in areas that are open to the public and it is therefore not possible to control all photography, but any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography, or about the inappropriate use of images, should be reported to the NSSA's Safeguarding Officer and treated in the same way as any other safeguarding concern. Parents and spectators should be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state their purpose for photography/filming.

The use of cameras or camera phones in changing areas should not be permitted in any circumstances.

6) Handling concerns, reports or allegations

An allegation may range from mild verbal bullying to physical or sexual abuse. If you are concerned that a child may be being abused, it is NOT the NSSA's responsibility to investigate further BUT it is the NSSA's responsibility to act on your concerns and report them to the appropriate statutory authorities. For guidance on recognising abuse, see Appendix 3.

Handling an allegation from a child

Always:

- stay calm – ensure that the child is safe and feels safe
- show and tell the child that you are taking what he/she says seriously
- reassure that child and stress that he/she is not to blame
- be careful about physical contact, it may not be what the child wants
- be honest, explain that you will have to tell someone else to help stop the alleged abuse

- make a record of what the child has said as soon as possible after the event
- Follow the procedures as outlined in flowchart 1 of this policy.

Never:

- rush into actions that may be inappropriate
- make promises you cannot keep (e.g. you won't tell anyone)
- ask more questions than are necessary for you to be sure that you need to act
- take sole responsibility – consult the designated NSSA Safeguarding Officer so that you can begin to protect the child and gain support for yourself.

You may be upset about what the child has said or you may worry about the consequences of your actions. Sometimes people worry about children being removed from their families as a result of abuse, but in reality this rarely happens. However, one thing is certain – you cannot ignore it.

Recording and handling information

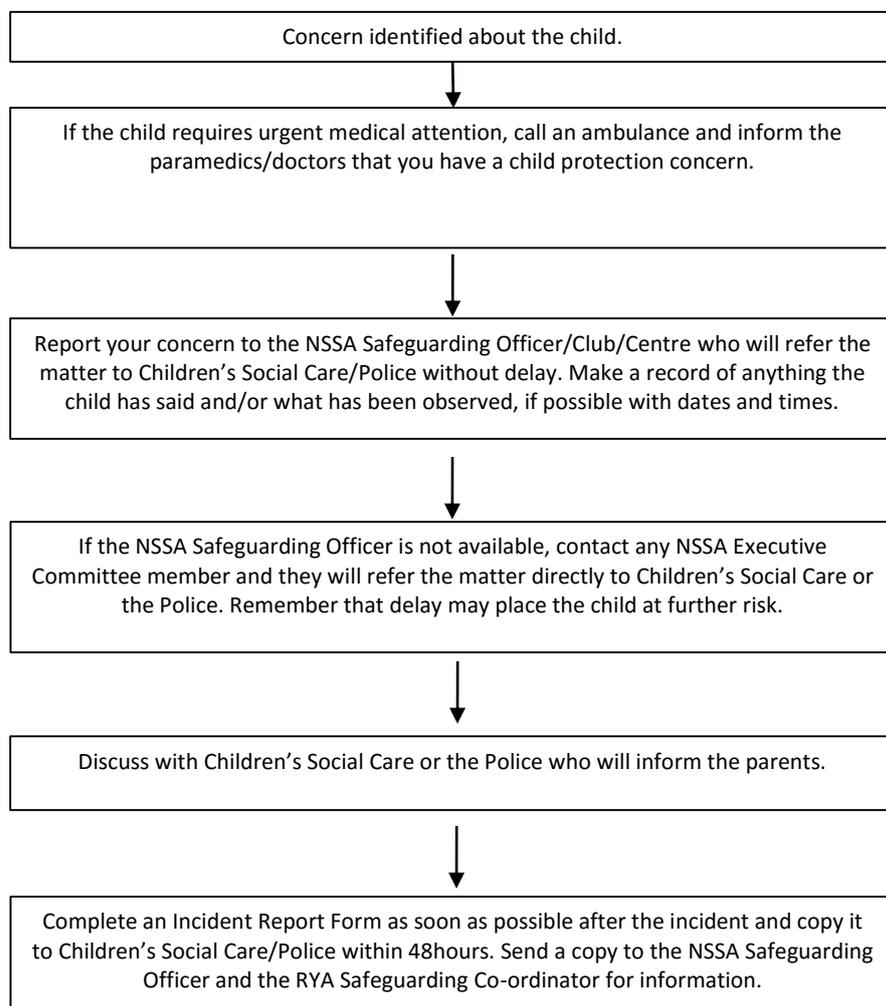
If you suspect that a child may have been the subject of any form of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, the allegation must be referred as soon as possible to Children's Social Care or the Police who have trained experts to handle such cases. Do not start asking questions which may jeopardise any formal investigation. Listen to and keep a record of anything the child tells you or that you have observed and pass the information on to the statutory authorities (see appendix 2 for Incident Report Form).

All information must be treated as confidential, stored securely and only shared with those who need to know. If the allegation or suspicion concerns someone within your club or centre, only the child's parents/carers, the person in charge of the organisation (unless they are the subject of the allegation), the relevant authorities and the RYA Safeguarding Co-ordinator should be informed. If the alleged abuse took place outside the sport, the Police or Children's Social Care will decide who else needs to be informed, including the child's parents/carers. It should not be discussed by anyone within the organisation other than the person who received or initiated the allegation and, if different, the person in charge.

Procedures

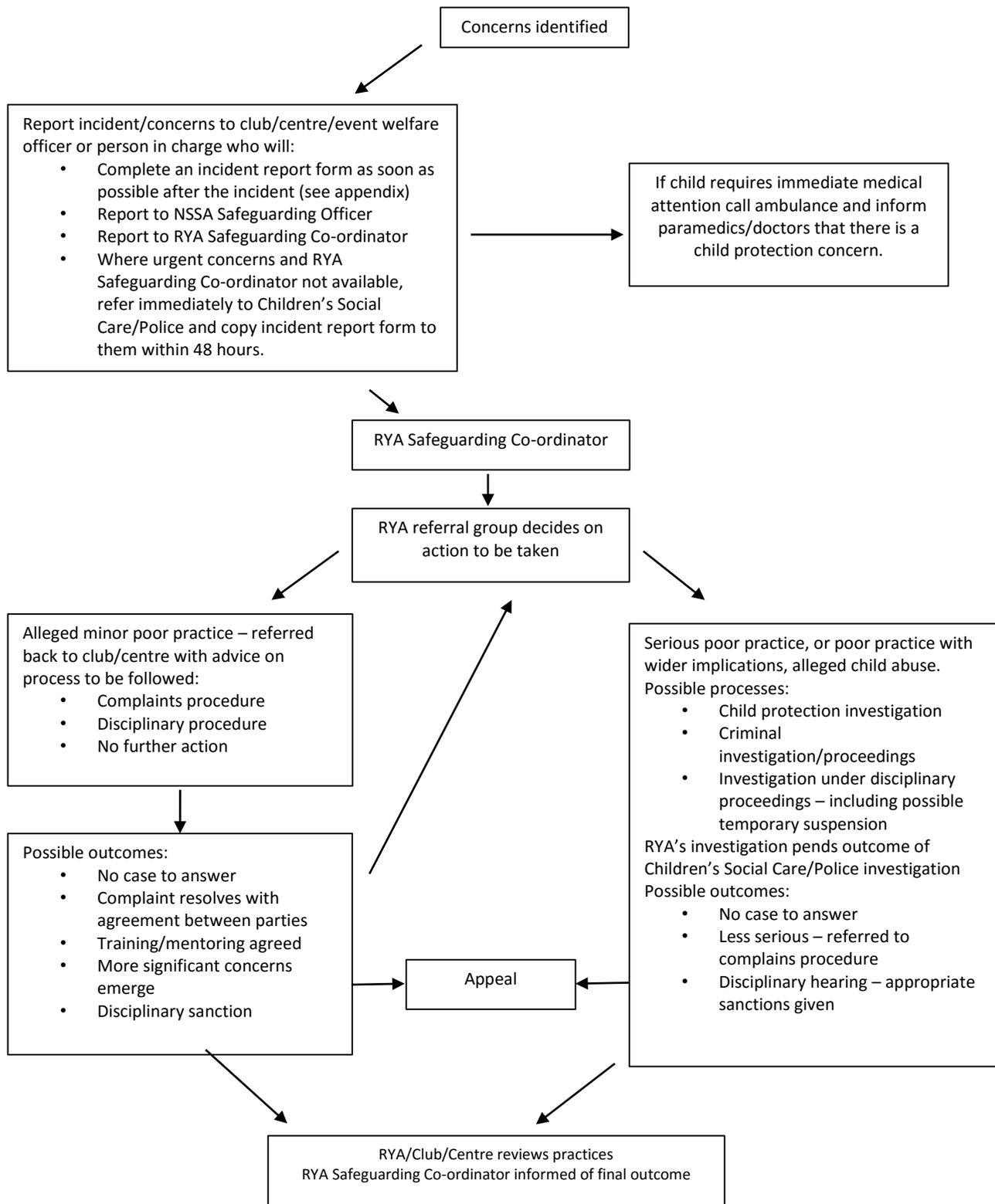
The following procedures are to be followed by anyone concerned about a child's welfare, either outside the sport or within the NSSA (see flowcharts below)

Flowchart 1 – What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused outside the sport’s environment (but the concern is identified through the child’s involvement in the sport)



If you are uncertain what to do at any stage, contact the RYA’s Safeguarding Co-Ordinator on 02380 604104 or the NSPCC free 24 hour helpline for adults concerned about children on 0808 800 5000.

Flowchart 2 - What to do if you are concerned about the behaviour of any member, volunteer, staff, coach or official working for the NSSA.



Handling the media

If there is an incident at your premises which attracts media interest, or if you are contacted by the media with an allegation concerning one of your members or employees, do not say “no comment”. A short statement saying that ‘the matter is under investigation’ is sufficient. The NSSA Executive Committee will provide a fuller formal response, if the incident occurs at an NSSA event. If necessary they will contact the RYA’s Communications department on 023 8060 4215 for professional advice on handling the media.

Appendix 1

Good Practice Guide

This guide only covers the essential points of good practice when working with children and young people. You should also read the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures which are available for reference at all times.

- Avoid spending any significant time working with children in isolation
- Do not take children alone in a car, however short the journey
- Do not take children to your home as part of your organisation's activity
- Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure that they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation or the child's parents
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child

You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged, or use such language yourself when with children
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- fail to respond to an allegation made by a child; always act
- do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary 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 the child (where possible) and their parents/carers. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed. In such situations it is important to ensure that any adult present is sensitive to the child and undertakes personal care tasks with the utmost discretion. It is only acceptable to physically restrain a child when it is absolutely necessary in order to protect themselves or others from injury.

Appendix 2

Incident report form

Date and time of incident	
Name and position of person about whom report, complaint or allegation is made	
Name and age of child involved	
Nature of incident, complaint or allegation (continue on separate page if necessary)	
Action taken (continue on separate page if necessary)	
If Police or Children's Social Care contacted, name, position and telephone number of person handling case	
Name, organisation and position of person completing form	
Contact telephone number	
Signature of person completing form	
Date and time form completed	
Name and position of organisation's safeguarding/welfare officer or person in charge (if different from above)	
Contact telephone number	

This form should be copied, marked 'Private and Confidential', to the NSSA Safeguarding Officer, the RYA Safeguarding Co-ordinator and to the statutory authorities (if they have been informed of the incident) within 48 hours of the incident.

Appendix 3

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 damage done to a child's physical or mental health. Child abuse can take many forms:

Physical abuse 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.

Neglect includes situations in which adults:

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

Sexual abuse. Boys and girls are sexually abused when adults (of the same or opposite sex) 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.

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 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 pressure to perform at a level that the child cannot realistically be expected to achieve.

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

Recognising Abuse

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

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- sexually explicit language or actions
- a sudden change in behaviour (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 those with whom a close relationship would be expected
- an unexpected reaction to normal physical contact
- difficulty in making friends or abnormal restrictions on socialising with others.

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

If you are concerned

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

Appendix 4

Declaration of DBS disclosures

I.....(team manager)

For(team/association name)

declare that the following adults will be accompanying the team in a supervisory role (parents visiting the sailing centre during the day are not included).

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I verify the following:

The above named adults have had DBS enhanced disclosures (including for the barred list) carried out on behalf of the NSSA. I can confirm that none of the volunteer adults is the subject of any enquiry regarding a safeguarding issue. I am aware that in cases where DBS disclosures cannot be verified, the relevant adults may be asked to camp separately to the competitors.

All of the above named adults have seen the NSSA Safeguarding Policy and are aware of the relevant Safeguarding procedures.

Signed:..... Date:.....