



Hinksey Sculling School

Responding to concerns of Poor Practice and Abuse

Key Contacts

Club Welfare Officer: welfare@hinkseysculling.org.uk.

British Rowing Lead Safeguarding Officer: 0208 237 6700.

Key Information

- It is essential that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken.
- It is **not** your responsibility to decide if Child Abuse is taking place
- It **is** your responsibility to report your concerns to the appropriate agencies (see below).
- Not acting is not an option

If you are not sure and want to discuss something please contact the Lead Safeguarding Officer or NSPCC for advice.

Receiving evidence of possible Abuse

You may have concerns about Abuse/poor practice because:

- You see it happening
- You recognise signs
- Someone reports it to you
- A Child approaches you directly.

If a Child says or indicates that they are being abused, or you have concerns about their welfare you should:

- React calmly so as not to frighten them
- Tell them they are not to blame and that it was right to speak up
- Take what they say seriously
- Recognise that there may be inherent difficulties in interpreting what is said by someone who has a speech disability and/or differences in language
- Keep questions to the absolute minimum necessary so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said
- Reassure them, but do not promise to keep the matter secret – explain that to resolve the problem it will be necessary to inform other people as appropriate

- The safety of the Child is paramount - if the Child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a Child Protection issue
- Record all information
- Report to the Club Welfare Officer

Avoid asking leading questions such as ‘Was it X who did this?’ Rather say, ‘Is there anything else you want to tell me?’

Recording information: confidentiality and information sharing

All concerns that you may have or receive should be recorded, ideally using the British Rowing form, Recording Concerns of Abuse (WG 1.2). You are recording this information for:

- Yourself, so you have a record of what happened
- The CWO or other designated welfare person within your club, who will co-ordinate any action that needs to be taken
- The British Rowing Lead Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Case Manager so that they can advise you
- The Police/Children’s Social Care Services if appropriate.

It is not appropriate to share sensitive and confidential information with other people, e.g:

- Your club committee, or members of your club
- Other acquaintances outside rowing

Any information relating to Child Protection should be held under secure conditions and made available on a need-to-know basis.

When completing the form you should:

- Confine yourself to the facts – what you have observed/seen, heard or had reported to you
- Distinguish between what is your own personal knowledge and what you have been told by other people
- Not include your own opinions on the matter. Be clear where you are giving either your own or others’ interpretation of events and the reasons for this (e.g. context, individual’s response to challenge).

British Rowing makes decisions on sharing sensitive and confidential information using the Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers, published by HM Government, 2008. This determines how decisions to share information are made within British Rowing and between British Rowing and other bodies. The full document and a number of concise guides are available to download from www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople; the ‘Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing’ are included in the British Rowing document WG 5.3 available www.britishrowing.org/welfare

Reporting the concern

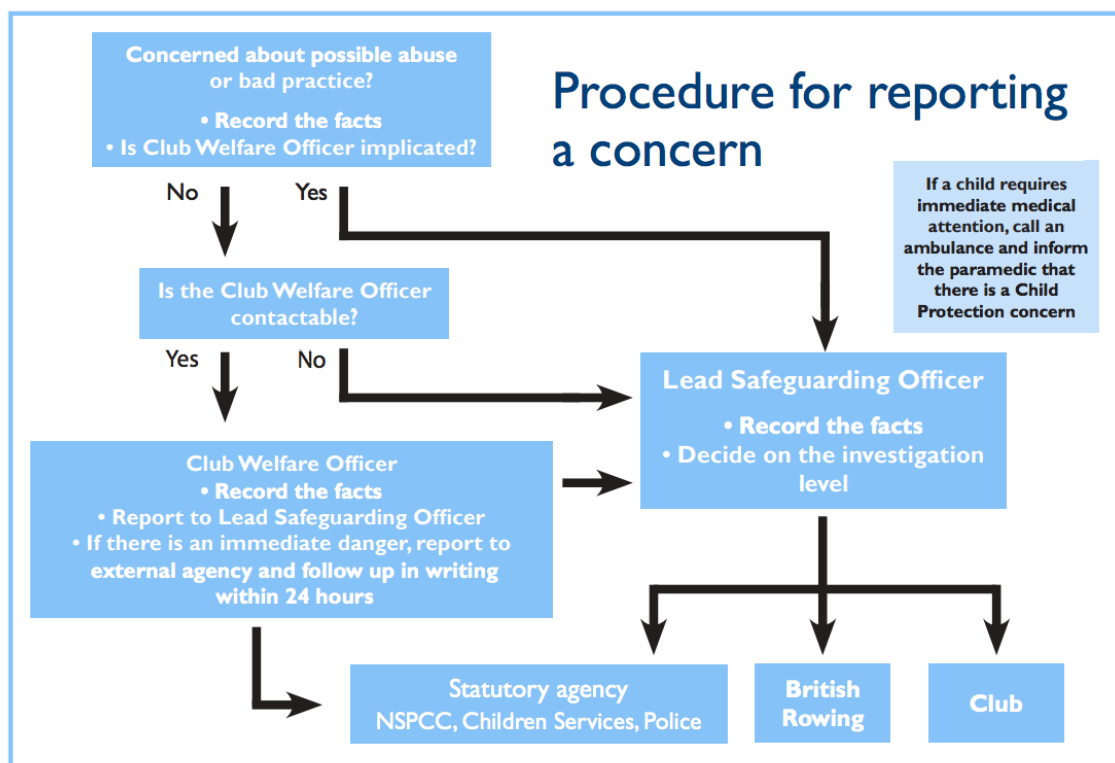
The discovery that someone you know may be abusing a Child will raise feelings and concerns at your club. Although it can be difficult to report such matters, you must remember that:

- The welfare of the Child is paramount
- Being vigilant helps to protect Children
- Everyone has a Duty of Care to report any concerns they have immediately

- A good reporting structure ensures that concerns are dealt with fairly.

If the CWO or LSO is not available and the matter is urgent:

1. Contact a statutory agency directly for advice and
2. Complete the report form and return to the LSO at British Rowing.



Circumstances where reporting to the CWO is not possible

- If the CWO is unavailable or is implicated, talk directly to a senior club officer or go directly to British Rowing's Lead Safeguarding Officer for advice.
- If concerns arise in a setting where there is no CWO, e.g. at a school - inform the head teacher or the member of staff with responsibility for Child Protection or welfare. Always ensure, in these circumstances, that British Rowing's LSO is informed of the referral.
- When with Rowers away from home, inform the person who has responsibility for welfare (Director of Rowing or Head Coach)

Involving Parents or carers

British Rowing is committed to working in partnership with Parents. In most situations, it is important that the CWO or LSO involves Parents to clarify any initial concerns e.g. if a Child seems withdrawn, they may have experienced a recent bereavement.

Where a Parent or carer may be responsible for the Abuse or may not be able to respond to the situation appropriately they should not be involved, as it may place the Child at greater risk.

Involving British Rowing

The LSO will be informed of all allegations of Abuse and persistent poor practice by the CWO as soon as possible in order to decide the following:

- What further action should be taken by the club or British Rowing
- Whether further action, advice or investigation is needed by/from the Police, Children's Social Care Services or the NSPCC.

Passing on this information is important because the matter may be just one of a series of other instances which together cause concern. It enables the Case Management Group and Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Panel to analyse trends and improve existing British Rowing policy and guidance.

Involving Statutory Agencies

In any case of physical or sexual Abuse or where the Child's safety is at risk, you should contact one of the following statutory agencies immediately:

- Your local Police Child Protection Team or in an emergency dial 999.

The police should be involved if the apparent Abuse is of a criminal nature or if the incident involves a person outside the Child's family. A record should be made of the crime reference number.

- Local Authority Children's Social Care Services (formerly known as Social Services).

This body has a statutory duty for the welfare of Children, especially where the alleged person is a member of the Child's family. When a referral is made, its staff has a legal responsibility to investigate. This may involve talking to the Child and family and gathering information from other people who know the Child. In an emergency the Samaritans (08457 909 090) will hold the duty officer's contact number.

- NSPCC (freephone 24 hour helpline 0808 800 5000). You do not have to give your name but it is helpful if you can.

All telephone referrals to any of the above bodies should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. You should record the following:

- Name and job title of the member of staff to whom the concerns were passed
- The time and date of the call
- A summary of the information shared and the response received.

Allegations of previous Abuse

Allegations of Abuse are occasionally made some time after the event, for example by an adult abused as a Child by a member of staff who is still working with Children.

Where such an allegation is made, you should follow the procedures given above and have the matter reported to the police and/or Local Authority Children's Social Care Services and the LSO. This is because other Children, either within the sport or outside it, may be at risk from this person.