



Child Protection Policy

North Somerset Paddlesports Club is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. We believe that every child, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or identity, has the right to protection from abuse and to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.

This policy applies to all members, volunteers, coaches, committee members, and anyone involved in the activities of the club.

1. Policy Statement

- The welfare of children and young people is paramount.
- All children and young people have the right to protection from neglect, bullying, abuse, and exploitation.
- All suspicions, concerns, or allegations of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- The club has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and to work with other agencies as necessary.

2. Responsibilities

- Club Welfare Officer (CWO): Beth Palmer is the first point of contact for all child protection concerns.
- All coaches, leaders, and volunteers must:
 - Recognise and report concerns about a child's welfare.
 - Follow the procedures outlined in this policy.
 - Complete safeguarding training as required.
- The Committee will support the CWO in implementing this policy and ensuring it is adhered to by all members.

3. Good Practice Guidelines

To provide children and young people with the best possible experience and opportunities in paddlesport:

- Always work in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations.
- Treat all young people with dignity and respect.
- Put the welfare of each child first.
- Encourage positive behaviour and challenge inappropriate language or conduct.
- Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of children and avoid excessive training or competition.
- Ensure activities are appropriate to the age and ability of participants.
- Respect the right of children to privacy.

4. Supervision and Parental Involvement

- Children and young people may participate without a parent/guardian present only if:
 - Parental consent has been provided.
 - The child/young person has signed up via WebCollect.
 - Any medical information has been declared and recorded.
 - Pick-up and drop-off arrangements are confirmed on arrival.
- Parents/guardians should be encouraged to take an active role in supporting their child's participation.



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5. Responding to Concerns

- Any concerns about a child's welfare must be reported immediately to the Club Welfare Officer.
- Concerns may relate to:
 - A child disclosing abuse.
 - Signs of physical or emotional harm.
 - Inappropriate behaviour by a member, coach, or volunteer.
- The CWO will:
 - Take concerns seriously.
 - Record details accurately.
 - Report to the appropriate statutory agencies (e.g., police, children's social care, NSPCC) if necessary.
- In emergencies where a child is at immediate risk, contact the police or social services directly, then inform the CWO as soon as possible.

6. Confidentiality

- Information will be handled and stored securely.
- Only those who need to know about a concern will be informed.
- Records of safeguarding concerns will be kept by the Welfare Officer in line with data protection regulations.

7. Recruitment, Training, and Support

- All coaches, leaders, and volunteers who work with children must be appropriately vetted (e.g., DBS checks).
- The club will provide safeguarding training opportunities.
- The Committee will ensure that everyone working with children understands their responsibilities under this policy.

8. Breaches of the Policy

- Any breach of this policy will be taken seriously.
- Depending on the nature, action may include:
 - Advice and guidance.
 - Temporary suspension from activities.
 - Termination of membership or involvement.
 - Referral to external agencies if necessary.

9. Review

- Reviewed: August 2025
- Next Review: April 2026