

Scottish Canoe Association



Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Introduction

This document is designed to be used in conjunction with the BCU Child Protection Policy, but all relevant items are included and it can be used without reference to the BCU document. Separate guidelines have been produced for Scotland to take into account the differences in the law and the Social Work structure.

The SCA has its own Child Protection Officer who can be reached via the Scottish Canoe Association office.

Acknowledgements

This document has been compiled with much assistance from Heather Loudon at **sportscotland**.

In addition we would like to acknowledge the following organisations whose child protection documents we copied or reproduced in parts with their permission.

Scottish Rugby Union

Scouts

Amateur Swimming Association

We have also had help from several members of the SCA both in compiling the contents and proof reading.

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WHAT IS ABUSE?

It is generally acknowledged that there are four main types of abuse:

Physical Emotional Sexual Neglect

Physical Abuse

As the term implies hurting or injuring a young person or vulnerable adult, by, for example, hitting, kicking, biting, squeezing or shaking them.

Physical abuse can occur also if they are forced to train beyond their capabilities; when the nature of training disregards the capacity of the child's immature and growing body; when training involves them in activities for too long; and where the weather and/or water temperature cause pain, physical damage or hypothermia.

Bullying can also be determined as physical abuse, as can giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison and also attempted suffocation or drowning.

Sexual Abuse

Adults who use them to meet their own sexual needs abuse young people or vulnerable adults. It could range from sexually suggestive comments to full intercourse, including fondling, masturbation, oral sex and anal intercourse.

Canoeing or related activities, which might involve physical contact with young person or vulnerable adult, could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Also the power of the coach over young or vulnerable athletes, if misused, may lead to abusive situations developing.

There is also the offence of 'Abuse of Trust' where it is illegal for a person aged 18 or over to engage in sexual activity with a person under that age where they are in a position of trust in relation to that younger person (e.g. coach to athlete).

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse occurs when a young person or vulnerable adult is not given love, help and encouragement and/or are constantly derided or ridiculed or, perhaps even worse, ignored. Other types of emotional abuse are when they are constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted, subjected to unrealistic pressure by the parent or coach, or bullied in order to consistently perform to high expectations.

Conversely it can also occur if a young person or vulnerable adult is over-protected.

Neglect

Neglect usually means failing to meet young person's or vulnerable adult's basic needs such as food, warmth, adequate clothing, medical attention etc.. It can also mean failing to ensure they are safe or exposing them to harm, being constantly left alone unsupervised, exposing canoeists to unsuitable weather conditions, and not ensuring paddlers are wearing suitable clothing.

RECOGNISING ABUSE

This is not always easy, even for experts. The examples listed below are not a complete list and they **are only indicators**, not confirmation. The term 'child' in this context is used to cover children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- The child says that he or she is being abused, or another person says they believe, or actually know, that abuse is occurring.
- The child has an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The child's behaviour changes, either over time or quite suddenly, and he or she becomes aggressive or withdrawn.
- The child appears not to trust adults, e.g. a parent or coach with whom they would be expected to have, or once had, a close relationship, and does not seem to be able to make friends.
- He or she becomes increasingly neglected looking in appearance, or loses or puts on weight for no apparent reason.
- The child shows inappropriate sexual awareness for his / her age and sometimes behaves in a sexually explicit way.
- Bear in mind that disabled children and those with learning difficulties are particularly vulnerable to abuse and may have added difficulties in communicating what is happening to them.

Please remember it is not your responsibility to decide whether a child is being abused, but we are asking you to fulfil your legal requirements and **act on your concerns**.

Make a detailed note of what you've seen or heard but do not delay in passing on the information.

If a child tells you that he or she is being abused:

- Stay calm.
- Don't promise to keep it to yourself.
- Listen to what the child says and, *please*, take it seriously.
- Only ask questions if you need to identify what the child is telling you – don't ask the child about explicit details.
- Make a detailed, signed and dated note of what the child has told you but, please do not delay in passing on the information.

RECOGNISING AND REPORTING SUSPECTED OR ACTUAL ABUSE

The ability to recognise child abuse depends as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on knowledge and information. It is important to note that child abuse is not always readily visible, and may not be as clearly observable as the text book scenarios might suggest. If a sports leader or parent / carer is uneasy or suspicious about a child's safety or welfare the following responses should be made.

Grounds for concern

Consider the possibility of child abuse if there are reasonable grounds for concern. Examples of reasonable grounds are:

- A specific indication from a child that they have been abused.
- A statement from a person who witnessed abuse.
- An illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse.
- A symptom which may not itself be totally consistent with abuse, but which is supported by corroborative evidence of deliberate harm or negligence.
- Consistent signs of neglect over a period of time.

In some cases of child abuse the alleged perpetrator will also be a child and it is important that behaviour of this nature is not ignored. Grounds for concern will exist in cases where there is an age difference and / or a difference in power or status or intellect between the children involved. However, it is also important to distinguish between normal sexual behaviour and abusive behaviour. Persons unsure about whether or not certain behaviours are abusive and therefore reportable, should contact the duty social worker in the local Social Work Department where they will receive advice.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The following process should be followed in reporting child abuse to the Authorities:

- 1) Observe and note dates, times, locations and contexts in which the incident occurred or suspicion was aroused, together with any other relevant information.
- 2) Report the matter as soon as possible to the person designated for reporting child abuse (e.g. the Club Child Protection Co-ordinator). If that person has reasonable grounds for believing that the child has been abused, or is at risk of abuse, they will make a report to the local Social Work Department who have statutory responsibility to investigate and assess suspected, or actual, child abuse.
- 3) In cases of emergency, where a child appears to be at immediate and serious risk and the Child Protection Co-ordinator (CPC) is unable to contact a duty social worker, the Police authorities should be contacted. Under no circumstances should a child be left in a dangerous situation pending intervention by the Statutory Authorities.
- 4) If the CPC is unsure whether reasonable grounds exist or not they should informally consult with the Social Work Department and they will be advised whether or not the matter requires a formal report.
- 5) When the CPC is reporting suspected or actual abuse to the Statutory Authorities they should first inform the families of their intention to make such a report, **unless doing so would endanger the child or undermine an investigation.**
- 6) A report should be given in person or by phone **and** in writing, although it is best to make initial contact in person

RESPONSE TO A YOUNG PERSON OR VULNERABLE ADULT REPORTING ANY FORM OF ABUSE

The following points should be taken in to consideration:

1. It is important to deal with any allegation of abuse in a sensitive and competent way through listening to and facilitating the child to tell about the problem, rather than interviewing the child about details of what happened.
2. It is important to stay calm and not show any extreme reaction to what the child is saying. Listen compassionately, and take what the child is saying seriously.
3. It should be understood that the child has decided to tell something very important and has taken a risk to do so. The experience of telling should be a positive one so that the child will not mind talking to those involved in the investigation.
4. The child should understand that it is not possible that any information will be kept a secret.
5. No judgemental statement should be made against the person against whom the allegation is made.
6. The child should not be questioned unless the nature of what they are saying is unclear. Leading questions must be avoided. Open non-specific questions should be used such as "Can you explain to me what you mean by that?"
7. The child should be given some indication of what happens next, such as informing parents, or the Social Work Department. It should be kept in mind that the child may have been threatened and may feel vulnerable at this stage.

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST SPORTS LEADERS

The following points should be noted:

1. The safety of the child making the allegations and any others who may be at risk should be ensured, and this should take precedence over any other consideration. In this regard the club or organisation should take any immediate steps to protect the children.
2. If a coach or helper is the subject of concern they should be treated with respect and fairness.

Where reasonable grounds for concern exist the following steps should be taken:

1. Advice should be sought from the local Social Work Department Child Protection Team with regard to any action deemed necessary by the Club to protect the child or children at risk.
2. The matter should be reported to the Local Social Work Department following the standard reporting procedure.
3. In the event that the concern is connected to the actions of a coach or helper in the club the person should be asked to stand aside pending the outcome of any investigations.

GOOD PRACTICE WHICH CAN HELP TO PREVENT ABUSE

- Avoid situations where coach / helper and child are alone. The SCA 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 in a regular basis. Ascertain the child's and the parent / carer'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 that you have another adult accompanying you. Get their consent if at all possible, and certainly get consent from the parent or 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 the 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 and 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.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCA

The SCA wishes to safeguard the welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in canoeing and should consider the issues raised by each of the following statements of principle and take action which they deem to be appropriate in the light of their circumstances and structures, and the nature of their activities.

Doing nothing is not an option.

1. Liaise with the British Canoe union and adopt their Child Protection Policy.
2. Appoint a Child Protection Officer for the SCA and ensure that person receives training in Child Protection procedures.
3. Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children.
4. Plan the canoeing opportunities so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.
5. Introduce a system whereby children may talk with an independent person.
6. Apply the agreed procedures for protecting children and vulnerable adults to all coaches and helpers.
7. Give all volunteers and paid staff clear roles.
8. Use supervision as a means of protecting children.
9. Gain a degree of background knowledge about any volunteers and paid staff wishing to be involved with the club.
10. Ask all volunteers and paid staff to agree to a SCRO check.
11. Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or suspicion of abuse.
12. Ensure clubs and key contacts in canoeing know how to find key contacts in education and planning for Child Protection.
13. Disseminate and share information.

SCA CODE OF CONDUCT For Coaching Personnel

A responsible sports coach helps the development of individuals through improving their performance.

This is achieved by:

- Identifying and meeting the needs of individuals.
- Improving performance through a progressive programme of safe, guided practice, measured performance and / or competition.
- Creating an environment in which individuals are motivated to maintain participation and improve performance.

Coaches should comply with the principles of good ethical practice listed below:

- Coaches must abide by the British Canoe Union Child Protection Policy with the Scottish Canoe Association Guidelines.
- Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of the sport.
- Coaches must place the well being and safety of the performer above the development of performance. They should follow all guidelines laid down by the SCA and hold appropriate insurance cover.
- Coaches must develop an appropriate working relationship with performers (especially children and vulnerable adults) based on mutual trust and respect. Coaches must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Coaches must encourage and guide performers to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
- Coaches should hold up to date and nationally recognised governing body coaching qualifications.
- Coaches must ensure that the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual.
- Coaches should, at the outset, clarify with performers (and where appropriate with their parents) exactly what is expected of them and what performers are entitled to expect from their coach. A contract may sometimes be appropriate.
- Coaches should co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g. other coaches, officials, sport scientists, doctors, physiotherapists, etc.) in the best interests of the performer.
- Coaches should always promote the positive aspects of their sport and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
- Coaches must consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.

I agree to abide by the above principles

Signed Date

Print Name

Position

SCA CODE OF CONDUCT

For non coaching volunteers

Volunteers have a duty of care to all those they come in to contact with during their time with paddlers. They should take steps to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of any person involved in any activity for which that individual is responsible.

This is achieved by:

- Identifying and meeting the needs of individuals.
- Creating an environment in which individuals are motivated to maintain participation and improve performance.

Coaches should comply with the principles of good ethical practice listed below:

- Volunteers must abide by the British Canoe Union Child Protection Policy with the Scottish Canoe Association Guidelines.
- Volunteers must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of the sport.
- Volunteers must place the well being and safety of the performer above everything. They should follow all guidelines laid down by the SCA and hold appropriate insurance cover.
- Volunteers must develop an appropriate working relationship with paddlers (especially children and vulnerable adults) based on mutual trust and respect.
- Volunteers must encourage and guide paddlers to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
- Volunteers must ensure that the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual.
- Volunteers should co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g. coaches, officials, sport scientists, doctors, physiotherapists, etc.) in the best interests of the performer.
- Volunteers should always promote the positive aspects of their sport and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
- Volunteers must consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.

I agree to abide by the above principles

Signed Date

Print Name

Position

PADDLER'S WELFARE GUIDELINES

The person with responsibility for Paddlers Welfare within Scottish Canoeing

Characteristics of a Child Protection Officer within a Canoeing Context include:

- An understanding of, and support for, the introduction of a Child Protection Code of Good Practice.
- An understanding of, and appreciation for, the need for confidentiality.
- Experience in liaising with organisations such as Social Work or Police, or experience in representing views clearly to others.
- The ability to follow procedures and to know when to seek advice and not rely solely on own judgement.

The Child Protection Officer is expected to fulfil the following tasks:

- Ensure all persons working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are fully aware of what is required of them within the protocols of the Code of Good Practice.
- Conduct the administrative work associated with processing information on new coaches / organisers.
- Liase closely with club youth coaches, ensuring that agreed procedures for the prevention of risk are followed.
- Counsel / advise the Association on matters of policy relating to Child Protection.
- Act as the contact person on matters relating to Child Protection for the Association.

If abuse is disclosed or alleged:

Child Protection Co-ordinators within Clubs activate the process when abuse is alleged or disclosed.

The Co-ordinator will take details of the allegation / suspicion / concern and inform the SCA Child Protection Officer.

Remember: The task of deciding whether or not abuse has occurred rests with the professional agencies.

The following pages are for the particular use of
Canoe Clubs and Groups

Protection of Young People and Vulnerable Adults in Canoeing

Checklist for Clubs and other organised groups

Every organisation involved with young people and vulnerable adults has a duty of care to towards those people. There are a number of measures that an organisation should put in place to safeguard them from harm. Parents have the right to know that their children are being well looked after, and that before entrusting their children to the care of others that there are safeguards in place.

How ready is your organisation to answer these questions?

Does your organisation have the following?

Code of Conduct	Yes	No	Under discussion
A written code of behaviour which outlines good practice when working with young people and vulnerable adults and promotes an environment where physical abuse, bullying, shouting, racism, or sexism is not acceptable			

Policy and Procedures	Yes	No	Under discussion
A policy statement and procedures laid down for young people's and vulnerable adults welfare both at the Club premises and when away on trips.			
A designated Child Protection Co-ordinator			
A designated person for dealing with concerns or allegations of abuse			
Step by step guidance on procedural implementation in the event of an allegation			

Information and Communication	Yes	No	Under discussion
Information for young people and parents about the Child Protection Policy and where to go for help.			
Ways of making sure that the safeguards that have been out in place are working. This can be through the day-to-day supervision of staff and volunteers and through periodic monitoring and review.			
A protective culture that puts children's and vulnerable adult's interests first. They must feel confident that if they have serious concerns someone will listen to them and take them seriously.			

Recruitment and Selection	Yes	No	Under discussion
A careful recruitment and selection process for both volunteers and paid staff who work with young people, including:			
Interviews			
References			
Checks on qualifications (coaching, driving, first aid, life saving and safety boat driving where applicable)			
Police checks made with the Scottish Criminal Records Office			

Training	Yes	No	Under discussion
Unless all staff have an awareness of cruelty to children and vulnerable adults, the harm it can do and how to act on concerns - policies, however good, will not be acted upon.			
A training programme so all those in contact with young people and vulnerable adults can learn about child protection and health and safety.			
Opportunities to update qualifications (coaching etc.) where Child Protection issues are covered.			

Complaints Procedure	Yes	No	Under discussion
A publicised complaints procedure.			
An open and well-publicised way in which adults and young people can voice concerns about abuse or unethical conduct.			
A user friendly and effective disciplinary process.			

Your organisation should also have policies on bullying and on health and safety.

Organisations that have put these safeguards in place are taking their responsibilities seriously and are doing what they can to minimise the risks of children suffering harm while in their care.

PADDLER'S WELFARE GUIDELINES

The person with responsibility for Paddlers Welfare within Scottish Canoe Clubs.

Characteristics of a Child Protection Co-ordinator within a Canoe Club Include:

- An understanding of, and support for, the introduction of a Child Protection Code of Good Practice.
- An understanding of, and appreciation for, the need for confidentiality.
- Experience in liaising with organisations such as Social Work or Police, or experience in representing views clearly to others.
- The ability to follow procedures and to know when to seek advice and not rely solely on own judgement.

The Child Protection Co-ordinator is expected to fulfil the following tasks:

- Ensure all 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.
- Inform the SCA Child Protection Officer of new coaches / helpers so that SCRO checks can be carried out.
- Liaise closely with club youth coaches, ensuring that agreed procedures for the prevention of risk are followed.
- Counsel / advise the club on matters of policy relating to Child Protection.
- Act as the contact person on matters relating to Child Protection for the Club.

If abuse is disclosed or alleged:

Child Protection Co-ordinators within Clubs activate the process when abuse is alleged or disclosed.

The Co-ordinator will take details of the allegation/suspicion/concern and inform the SCA Child Protection Officer.

Remember: The task of deciding whether or not abuse has occurred rests with the professional agencies.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLUBS

The SCA wishes to safeguard the welfare of the children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in canoe clubs. Club officials should consider the issues raised by each of the following statements of principle, and take action which they deem to be appropriate in the light of their circumstances and structures, and the nature of their activities.

Doing nothing is not an option.

1. Appoint a Child Protection Co-ordinator for the Club and ensure that person receives training in Child Protection procedures.
2. Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children.
3. Plan the sessions at the club so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.
4. Introduce a system whereby children may talk with an independent person.
5. Apply the agreed procedures for protecting children and vulnerable adults to all coaches and helpers.
6. Give all coaches and helpers clear roles.
7. Use supervision as a means of protecting children.
8. Gain a degree of background knowledge about any coach or helper wishing to be involved with the club.
9. Ask all coaches and helpers to agree to a SCRO check.
10. Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or suspicion of abuse.

These recommendations are expanded on the following pages.

Managing the Canoe Club in order to protect children and vulnerable young people

Protecting children and vulnerable adults from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse should be an integral part of the policy and practice of all canoe clubs and centres offering canoeing to children and vulnerable adults.

Recommendation 1:

APPOINT A CHILD PROTECTION CO-ORDINATOR FOR THE CLUB AND ENSURE THAT THAT PERSON RECEIVES TRAINING IN CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES.

The SCA strongly recommends that each Canoe Club where children and vulnerable adults attend should have a Child Protection Co-ordinator. This person will need to attend a relevant training course so that any situation that arises can be dealt with in the correct way. The SCA Child Protection Officer is available to organise training opportunities and to support the Clubs Child Protection Co-ordinators.

Recommendation 2:

ADOPT A POLICY STATEMENT ON SAFEGUARDING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN.

Most organisations and clubs recognise that good management requires that everyone is clear about what they are trying to achieve, and that they agree aims and policy statements for that purpose.

Each canoe club should produce a brief statement setting out its policy on safeguarding the welfare of the children associated with the club. This policy should state clearly the duty of care required of all those employed by, or involved in, the canoe club to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of all children and vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact.

Any such policy statement should be brought to the attention of all existing and any new coaches/helpers. They should be informed of any guidelines or training that will enable them to implement the policy statement. The policy statements and guidelines should also be brought to the attention of parents or guardians.

Recommendation 3:

PLAN THE SESSIONS AT THE CLUB SO AS TO MINIMISE SITUATIONS WHERE THE ABUSE OF CHILDREN MAY OCCUR.

There are people who actively seek to harm or abuse children. Some of these individuals may have no criminal record of abuse. The principles laid out in this code help to reduce their opportunities for access to children and vulnerable adults within a canoeing environment.

Canoe clubs should plan their efforts so as to minimise situations where it may be possible for children to be abused. One way of achieving this would be for canoe clubs to issue guidelines recommending coaches/helpers, whenever possible, not to meet with children away from the canoe club situation or meeting place without a parent or other adult being present

Canoe clubs, to operate effectively, sometimes need to have adult coaches working with individual children to develop individual skills. Clubs should take every step possible to assure themselves that people in such coaching positions have no record of abuse. This may involve such action as an interview before appointments, references and supervision (accessing Scottish Criminal Records Office once Part V of the Police Act 1997 was implemented in April 2002).

Recommendation 4:

INTRODUCE A SYSTEM WHEREBY CHILDREN MAY TALK WITH AN INDEPENDENT PERSON

In recent years a number of organisations working with children have sought to give more rights of expression to the children. Some youth organisations have collectively adopted empowerment as one of their central aims, and childcare organisations have tried to increase the rights and choices of service users. Giving more expression to children also has the important side effect of reducing the potential for undiscovered abuse.

Canoe clubs may wish to build on existing and new systems for increasing the rights of children by introducing ways for children to make representations to an independent club person. For example, children might be given the opportunity to talk with a designated person independent from the team and coaching staff. The club should advise parents and guardians of this right to talk with an independent person, giving the name and contact arrangements.

This process should form part of a general registration process and be linked to explaining the other rights and responsibilities the child may have at the club; it need not be threatening.

In all cases the independent person must be given clear, written guidelines and relevant training as to what immediate action to take should a child disclose abuse. Otherwise inaction may unwittingly permit the abuse to continue.

Recommendation 5:

APPLY THE AGREED PROCEDURES FOR PROTECTING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS TO ALL COACHES AND HELPERS.

There is no defined way of identifying a would-be abuser. There is always the risk that an adult at a club in contact with children and vulnerable adults might abuse for the first time. Canoe clubs should take all reasonable steps to exclude known abusers, and guidelines on this follow. Since it is not safe to assume that anyone can automatically be excluded from being a potential abuser, any procedures for the protection of children and vulnerable adults should apply to all. This is not the same as treating each person working with children with suspicion, which might negatively affect coach recruitment. It involves taking pragmatic steps to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse; these steps being observed by all.

Recommendation 6:

GIVE ALL COACHES AND HELPERS CLEAR ROLES.

Where there is confusion amongst adults over roles, responsibilities and accountability, the abuse of children and vulnerable adults can be easily concealed, and therefore perpetuated.

Each adult who comes into contact with children at a canoe club should have a clear idea of his/her role. One method is to provide each adult with a written description of the work he/she is expected to do.

Recommendation 7:

USE SUPERVISION AS A MEANS OF PROTECTING CHILDREN.

Good supervision is a useful way for a canoe club to ensure that all adult support is working effectively. Clubs should ensure that those responsible for the adults dealing with children and vulnerable adults use sound supervisory procedures.

If any child appears to be receiving exceptional treatment either being highly favoured or being treated unduly harshly, the person in charge should draw this to the attention of the adult involved. If talking with the adult does not convince the person in charge that the child's welfare is secure, s/he should talk confidentially with the Club Child Protection Co-ordinator. The person in charge should not drop the issue until s/he is reassured that there is no potential for abuse. Supervisors should also take/create opportunities for observing the adult whilst s/he is working with the children.

Recommendation 8:

GAIN A DEGREE OF BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ANY COACH OR HELPER WISHING TO BE INVOLVED WITH THE CLUB.

Before accepting new volunteer (or paid) coaches and helpers, canoe clubs should consider speaking to at least one person who has first-hand experience of his/her work or voluntary contact with children and vulnerable adults.

Where a coach has no experience of voluntary (or paid) contact with children, a reference should be sought from a reputable person (not a relative) who can comment on the applicant's character and relationships with others. When contacting such a reputable person the club should state the nature of the (potential) coach's involvement at the Club.

The reference provided may sometimes be vague or ambiguous. This could be for a variety of reasons; but it could also be the referee trying to give a coded message. If anything in the reference causes the organisation to have any doubts about the applicant's suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults the reputable person should be contacted in person or by telephone to discuss the matter further. On receipt of information regarding a coach working with or intending to work with children and vulnerable adults, canoe clubs should be aware that they must avoid unfair or unlawful discrimination.

Recommendation 9:

ASK ALL VOLUNTEERS AND PAID STAFF TO AGREE TO A SCRO CHECK

SCRO checks are available free of charge to organisations working with children and vulnerable adults. Although this does not indicate if a person has criminal tendencies it does give a record of all criminal convictions. Persons who have a record of child abuse and other serious crimes can thus be recognised and prevented from working with children and vulnerable adults in a canoe environment.

Recommendation 10:

ISSUE GUIDELINES ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THE DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE.

Coaches and helpers at canoe clubs may gain the trust of children and young people to such an extent that it is to them that a child may turn when wanting to share unhappiness about being abused, whether at the club, at home or elsewhere. Coaches and helpers may not know how to deal with this disclosure or suspicion.

Canoe clubs are advised to prepare and issue to all coaches and helpers brief written guidelines setting out the steps they must take if a child discloses details of abuse to them, or if they suspect that abuse may have taken place.

The guidelines should contain:-

- A reminder of the coaches/helpers duty to prevent abuse, including the duty to report any abuse discovered or suspected.
- Guidance on what constitutes abuse and how to recognise it.
- Specific instructions whom to inform if abuse is disclosed or suspected i.e. the Club Child Protection Co-ordinator.
- The name and contact address of the independent person (see guidelines) and the address and telephone number of the local Social Work Department and police station.
- Guidance on procedures to be followed if it is suspected that someone in the club has abused a child or vulnerable adult.
- Some reasonable indication as to what happens next.
- Guidance on how to support the child or vulnerable adult who has been abused.

Where there is any doubt as to the process canoe clubs should seek guidance from the SCA Child Protection Officer or their local Social Work Department's Child Protection Team in drawing up the guidelines for their club.

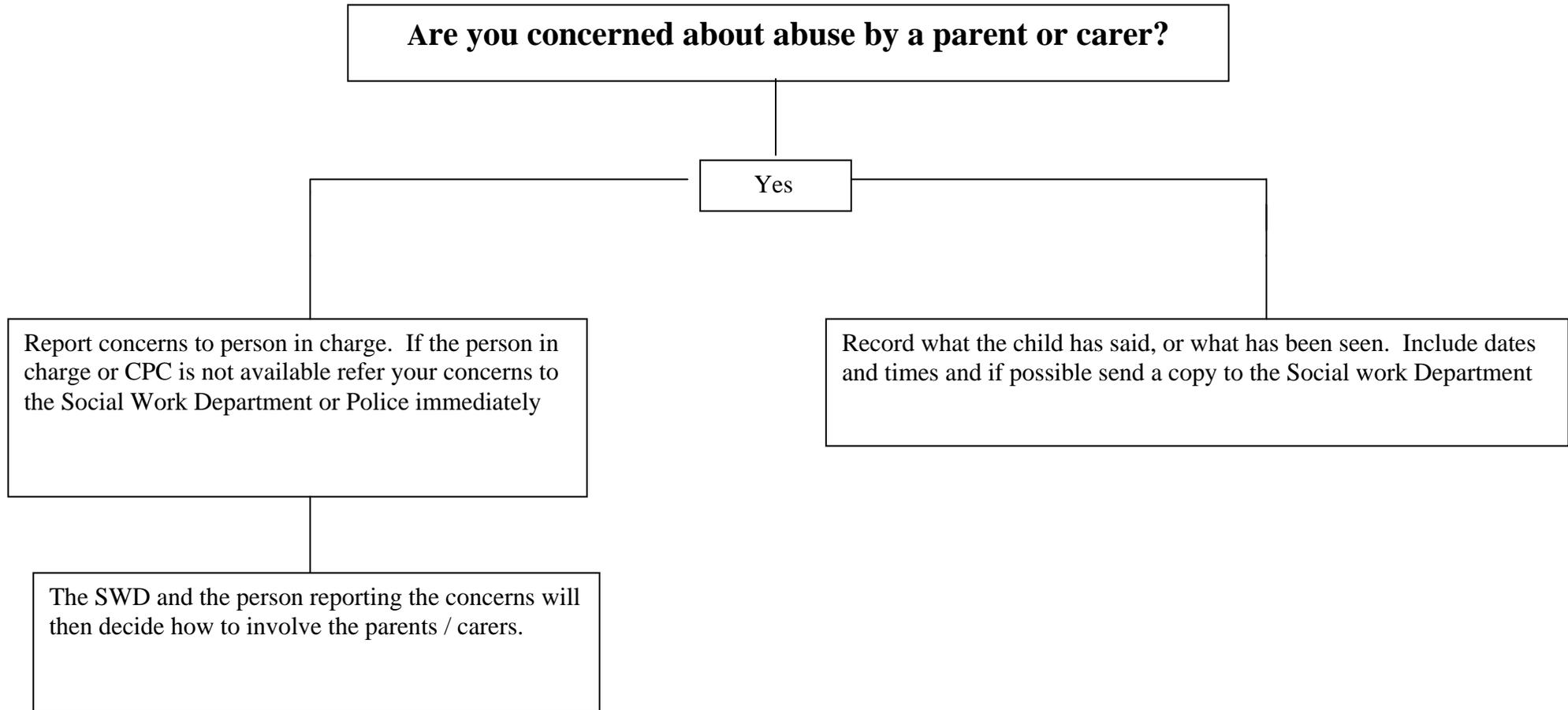
APPENDICES

**The following pages contain useful forms to simplify the use of the SCA
Child Protection Guidelines**

They are photocopyable for your use

- i. 'Alleged abuse by parent or carer' flowchart
- ii. 'Alleged abuse by staff or volunteer' flowchart
- iii. Volunteer Reference form
- iv. Registration form for coaches / helpers
- v. Self declaration form
- vi. Recording allegations or suspicions of abuse

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



Are you concerned about abuse by a member of staff or a volunteer?		
If 'Yes' is it		
Poor practice?	Abuse?	
Report concerns to person in charge	Report concern to Club Child Protection Co-ordinator	Unless the allegation relates to the CPC
Person in charge deals with it as a misconduct issue	Person in charge must ensure safety of child and other children	Is so refer directly to SCA Child Protection Officer
If concerns remain report to a Director of the SCA for a Board decision on how to handle the issue.	Refer concerns to Social Work Department who may involve the Police	
	Arrange contact with parent or carer after advice from Social Work Department	
	Report to SCA Child Protection Officer	
	The SCA then decides whether to suspend the person pending enquiries.	
	The SCA CPO will handle any media interest.	
	The Board will decide if disciplinary or misconduct proceedings should be initiated.	

Navigating for the Future

VOLUNTEER REFERENCE FORM

_____ has expressed an interest in becoming a volunteer and has given your name as a reference. This post involves _____

The information you give will be treated in the utmost confidence and will only be shared with the applicant's immediate supervisor if they are offered a volunteer position. We would appreciate you being extremely honest in your evaluation of this person.

- How long have you known this person? _____
- In what capacity? _____
- What attributes does this person have that would make them a suitable volunteer?

- How would you describe their personality?

- Please rate this person on the following:

	Poor	Average	Good	Very good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Maturity					
Self motivation					
Can motivate others					
Commitment					
Energy / Health					
Trustworthiness					
Reliability					

This post involves substantial access to children We are anxious to know if you have reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children and vulnerable adults YES / NO If you have answered 'yes' we will contact you in confidence.

Signed _____ Date _____

REGISTRATION FORM FOR COACHES / HELPERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

------(Name of Club)----- is responsible for the acceptance of all coaches who are working with children and vulnerable adults on behalf of the Club. All coaches and regular helpers must fill in a copy of this form, which should be returned to the Club Child Protection Co-ordinator:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

COACH / HELPER DETAILS

Full Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Date of Birth _____

Telephone (Day) _____ Evening _____

E-mail address _____

Occupation _____

Please outline details of previous experience of looking after or working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Please outline details of any relevant qualifications or appropriate training:

Are you prepared to take appropriate training as required e.g.(BCU Coaching Courses, RYA Boat Driving, First Aid etc.)?

Are you willing for your name to be sent to the Central Registration Body in Scotland for a criminal record disclosure (police check)?

YES / NO

I understand the nature of the work I will undertake with children and / or vulnerable adults. I have read the SCA Paddler's Code of Conduct (see Page 9 of SCA Guidelines) for the safeguarding of young people in a canoeing context. I also understand that it is my duty to protect the young people with whom I come in to contact. I know what action to take if abuse is discovered or disclosed.

Signed: _____ Date _____

Navigating for the Future

SELF DECLARATION FORM

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of Caution or a Bound over order YES / NO

If Yes please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s).

Signed Date
.....

Name (please print)

Maiden name

Any other surname known by previously

Address

.....

.....

Post Code

Date of Birth

National Insurance Number

You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974(Exceptions) (Amendments) Order 1986 you should declare all convictions, including 'spent' convictions)

Navigating for the Future

RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

CHECKLIST

The following is a checklist of what should be recorded:

Name of Person _____

Date of Birth or Age _____

Any special factors _____

Name of Parent or Guardian _____

Home address and telephone _____

Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or passing on those of somebody else ? _____

If for somebody else record their details _____

What has prompted these concerns? _____

Continued over -

- Are there any
- physical signs? _____
 - behavioural signs _____
 - indirect signs _____

Has the child / vulnerable adult been spoken to? YES / NO
 If yes please record what was said and by whom on a separate sheet.

Have the parents / guardians been contacted? YES / NO
 If yes please record what was said and by whom on separate sheet.

Has the suspected abuser been identified? YES / NO
 If yes please record details on separate sheet.

Has anyone else been consulted? YES / NO

Signed _____ Date and time _____

Designation _____

All details as outlined above, plus any other relevant information should be recorded on a separate sheet of paper, which should also be signed and dated and attached to this form.

It is advisable for you to keep a copy of this referral for your own information if needed at a later date.

The completed paperwork should then be given to your Child Protection Co-ordinator immediately.