Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Hemingfords' Regatta

May 2024

Contents

1 Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy

1.1 General principles…….3

1.2 Scope……3

1.3 Why these policies are needed……..3

1.4 Policy statement……..…….3

2 Good practice, poor practice and abuse

2.1 Introduction……..…….3

2.2 Good practice……..…….4

2.3 Poor practice……..…….4

2.4 Abuse……..……..……5

2.4.1 Indicators of Abuse……..……..…….5

2.4.2 Neglect……..……..……5

2.4.3 Physical Abuse……..……..……6

2.4.4 Sexual Abuse……..……..……6

2.4.5 Emotional Abuse……..……..……..6

2.5 Bullying……..…….……6

2.5.1 Anti-Bullying Policy……..…….…….7

3 Responding to suspicions and allegations of poor practice and abuse

3.1 Introduction……..…….……...7

3.2 Receiving evidence of possible abuse……..…….……..7

3.3 Reporting the concern……..…….……..8

4 Contact details……..…….…….8

5 Policy Review……..…….…….8

1 Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy

1.1 General principles

• Everyone who participates in rowing and coxing is entitled to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.

• Hemingfords' Regatta is committed to helping everyone in rowing accept their responsibility to safeguard children from harm and abuse and support them to do so.

• This document sets out the procedures you need to follow to protect children and what you need to do if you have any concerns.

1.2 Scope

These policies apply to all rowers, committee members, volunteers and anyone involved in Hemingfords' Regatta. All these people have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and prevent their abuse.

1.3 Why these policies are needed

Abuse can occur in many situations. We know that some individuals will actively seek access to children through sport in order to harm them.

1.4 Policy statement

Hemingfords' Regatta is committed to:

• making the welfare of children paramount. This means that the need to ensure that children are protected is a primary consideration and may override the rights and needs of those adults working with them

• enabling everyone whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity to participate in rowing in a fun and safe environment

• taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment and to respect their rights, wishes and feelings

• taking seriously all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse and responding swiftly and appropriately to them in accordance with current procedures

• ensuring that all volunteers who work with children are appropriate for that role and responsibilities

• recognising that children and families from minority group backgrounds may face additional barriers to accessing help and reporting concerns in respect of safeguarding issues

2 Good practice, poor practice and abuse

2.1 Introduction

It is not always easy to distinguish poor practice from abuse, whether intentional or accidental. Everyone has a responsibility to:

• identify poor practice and possible abuse

• act if they have concerns, as explained in Section 3.

2.2 Good practice

Everyone should:

• read relevant Risk Assessments before undertaking any rowing related activities

• aim to make the experience of rowing fun and enjoyable

• promote fairness and playing by the rules

• treat all children equally and preserve their dignity; this includes giving more and less talented members of a group similar attention, time and respect.

Those working directly with children should:

• respect the developmental stage of each rower/cox

• ensure that the training intensity is appropriate to the physical, social and emotional stage of the development of the rower/cox

• build relationships based on mutual trust and respect

• maintain an appropriate and open environment, with no secrets

• avoid unnecessary physical contact with Children. Physical contact (touching) can be appropriate so long as: – it is neither intrusive nor disturbing – the reason that it is necessary has been fully explained – the rower's/cox's permission has been openly given – it is delivered in an open environment

• maintain a safe and appropriate relationship with rower/cox

• be an excellent role model by maintaining appropriate standards of behaviour

• gain written parental consent, to act in loco parentis for the administration of emergency First Aid or other medical treatment if the need arises

• be aware of any medical conditions, existing injuries and medicines being taken. Keep a written record of any injury or accident that occurs, together with details of any treatment given

• arrange that someone with appropriate training in and current knowledge of emergency First Aid is available

2.3 Poor practice

The following are regarded as poor practice and should be avoided:

• communicating directly with a child without the parents' knowledge, this includes phoning, texting and emailing

• spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others

• allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form

• using inappropriate language to a child or allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged

• reducing a child to tears as a form of control

• letting allegations made by a child go uninvestigated, unrecorded, or not acted upon

2.4 Abuse

Abuse in all its forms can affect a child at any age. The effects can be so damaging that without appropriate intervention, they may continue to have a very negative impact upon an individual into adulthood.

Children with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as:

• stereotyping

• prejudice

• discrimination, including ethnic or racial

• isolation

• powerlessness to protect themselves

• inability to communicate that abuse has occurred.

2.4.1 Indicators of abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is not the responsibility of committee members and volunteers to decide that child abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns. This policy covers adult on child abuse and peer on peer abuse. Indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

• 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 or an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent

• the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her

• someone else, a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of a child

• unexplained changes in a child's behaviour, e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, displaying sudden outbursts of temper or behaviour changing over time

• inappropriate sexual awareness

• engaging in sexually explicit behaviour

• distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected

• difficulty in making friends

• being prevented from socialising with other children

• displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite

• losing weight for no apparent reason

• becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

Abuse may take a number of forms, and may be classified under the following headings:

2.4.2 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. Some indicators of neglect include: poor language and communication skills, withdrawn or depressed, anxiety, clingy, tiredness, finding it hard to concentrate

2.4.3 Physical Abuse

Physical Abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or induces illness in a child. Some indicators of physical abuse include: bruises, broken bones, burns, cuts (all often in places that can be easily hidden)

2.4.4 Sexual Abuse

Sexual Abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the Child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative

acts such as fondling. It may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Some indicators of sexual abuse include: being afraid and/or avoiding a particular person, withdrawn or overly affectionate, displaying sexualised behaviour

2.4.5 Emotional Abuse

Emotional Abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone. Some indicators of emotional abuse include: lack of confidence and low self-esteem, withdrawn and quiet, mental health issues, struggling to focus and concentrate, displaying aggressive or hostile behaviour, being isolated, having a lack of social skills or few, if any, friends.

2.5 Bullying

"Bullying is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves" Bullying can be:

• Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically),sending hurtful text messages, tormenting (e.g. hiding kit threatening gestures)

• Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

• Racist - racial taunts, graffiti or gestures

• Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

• Homophobic - because of, or focussing on, the issue of sexuality

• Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

2.5.1 Anti-Bullying Policy

Hemingfords' Regatta is committed to fostering a caring, friendly and safe environment for everyone involved in rowing and coxing so they can participate in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Adults should be aware of, and investigate, these possible signs if a child:

• says they are being bullied

• becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence

• feels 'unexpectedly' ill before practice sessions

• has possessions go 'missing'

• is frightened to say what's wrong

These signs and behaviours may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and be investigated.

3 Responding to suspicions and allegations of poor practice and Abuse

3.1 Introduction

Although most cases of child abuse take place within the family setting, Abuse can and does occur in other areas of a child's life. It is essential that all allegations are taken seriously and appropriate action is taken. It is not an individual's responsibility to decide if child abuse is taking place but it is everyones responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate person or agencies. Not acting is not an option. If you are not sure and want to discuss something please contact the Designated Child Protection Leads or NSPCC for advice.

3.2 Receiving evidence of possible Abuse

You may have concerns about abuse/poor practice because:

• you see it happening

• you recognise signs such as those listed in Section 2.4

• 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 and avoid asking leading questions

• 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

• record all information in the child's words and by stating the facts that the child has said. Avoid using your own opinions at all cost (use 'Concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing' form)

• report to the Designated Child Protection Leads

3.3 Reporting the concern

The discovery that someone may be abusing a child will raise feelings and concerns. 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 a child is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, you can share information with appropriate agencies or professionals without the child's or their parent's consent. **If a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999. If a child is not in immediate danger:**

• record the concern and/or conversation as above in Section 3.2

• report this concern to the Designated Child Protection Leads who have a responsibility to contact the relevant services (Local Authority Child Protection Services, Police, NSPCC)

4 Contact details

Designated child protection lead

Name: Richard Allen

Phone/email: rjmallen@hotmail.com

Deputy child protection lead

Name: Hannah Worth

Phone/email: hannahworth1987@hotmail.com

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

5 Policy Review

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. This policy was last reviewed on: 28.5.24

Signed: ……

Date: ……