



## Eastwood and East Kilbride Canoe Club

### Club Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

#### Introduction

This policy document sets out the policy and arrangements for the protection of children and vulnerable adults in Eastwood and East Kilbride Canoe Club (EEKCC).

We take the protection of children and vulnerable adults seriously. When anyone comes to our club we want them to be able to participate in a safe and enjoyable environment. In our club we promote an environment where physical abuse, bullying, shouting, racism, sexism or discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation is not acceptable behaviour.

The Committee will treat any breaches of this policy as a disciplinary matter and will deal with such breaches in accordance with the current club disciplinary policy. Any breaches may be reported to the Scottish Canoe Association and other appropriate bodies, including the Police.

There is a designated Child Protection co-ordinator to whom any issues of a child protection nature should normally be referred in the first instance. *The co-ordinator is Kenny Leinster.* However any Honorary Office Bearer can be advised of a child protection issue.

This document is based on the Scottish Canoe Association Child Protection Guidelines – which are available on the SCA Website – [www.canoescotland.org](http://www.canoescotland.org).

The SCA has its own Child Protection Officer who can be reached via the Scottish Canoe Association office or email to [child.protection@canoescotland.org](mailto:child.protection@canoescotland.org).

Adopted: February 2009

Revised: July 2012

**Note:** In this policy, the term child is generally used but it should be construed as including vulnerable adult where appropriate.

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## 1. Policy

EEKCC is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children in its care. It recognises the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. For the purposes of this policy and associated procedures a child is recognised as someone under the age of 18 years.

Everyone in EEKCC will work together to embrace difference and diversity and respect the rights of children and young people.

This document outlines our commitment to protecting children.

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern;
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse;
- Child protection is everyone's responsibility;
- Children have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so;
- Organisations shall work in partnership together with children and parents/carers to promote the welfare, health and development of children.

EEKCC will:

- Promote the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in canoeing safely;
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children;
- Promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and protect them from abuse;
- Recruit, train, support and supervise its committee, coaches, members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves;
- Require staff, members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this Child Protection Policy and these procedures;
- Respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with this Policy and these procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Observe guidelines issued by local Child Protection Committees for the protection of children.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Policy and these procedures.

Review

This Policy and these Procedures will be regularly reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the protection of children or following any significant changes within EEKCC;
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the protection of children within EEKCC;
- In all other circumstances, at least every three years.

## 2. What is Abuse?

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

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Bullying

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. Bullying can also be determined as physical abuse, as can giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison and also attempted suffocation or drowning. Discretion needs to be exercised to distinguish between normal youthful horseplay and bullying behaviour.

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 a person's or vulnerable adult's basic needs. It can also mean exposing canoeists to unsuitable weather conditions and not ensuring paddlers are wearing suitable clothing.

Bullying - Bullying by adults or other young paddlers can take many forms and is often hard to detect. Sexist, racist bigoted or homophobic remarks about or in the hearing of an individual would be a type of bullying.

### **3. 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 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.

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.

#### **4. 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. 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 EEKCC designated Child Protection Co-ordinator (CPC) or if unavailable any Honorary Office Bearer. 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 CPC or Honorary Office Bearer is unable to contact a duty social worker, the Police 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 or Honorary Office Bearer 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 or Honorary Office Bearer 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. A copy of the report should be kept by the person reporting the abuse.

## **5. 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 EEKCC should take any immediate steps to protect the children.
2. If a coach or helper is the subject of concern they must be treated with respect and fairness.
3. Where reasonable grounds for concern exist the following steps should be taken:
  - a. 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.
  - b. The matter should be reported to the Local Social Work Department following the standard reporting procedure.
  - c. 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. This is not any form of judgement on their conduct and is a non-prejudicial step.
4. The matter should be reported to the SCA Child Protection Officer.



## 6. Good Practice which can help to prevent Abuse

- Avoid situations where coach/helper and child are alone. Occasionally there may be no alternative, for example, a child may be taken ill and have to be taken home. However one to one contact must be avoided if at all possible and should never be allowed to occur on 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 person know what you are doing and why.
- Where possible, overnight trips with participants of mixed gender children will have mixed gender adult supervision.
- 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.

### Actions before taking on any volunteer

All members holding positions of regulated work with children (normally coaches) will be required to have a PVG scheme record or scheme record update. Other volunteer helpers should sign a code of conduct (Appendix 7).

## **7. Resources and References**

1. SCA child protection pages - <http://www.canoescotland.org/InfoAdvice/ChildProtection.aspx>
2. Children 1<sup>st</sup> - <http://www.children1st.org.uk/services/162/10-steps-to-safeguard-children-in-sport>

Alleged abuse by a parent or carer

Are you concerned about abuse by a parent or carer?

Yes –

1. Report concerns to person in charge. If the person in charge or CPC is not available refer your concerns to the Social Work Department or Police immediately;
2. Record what the child has said, or what has been seen. Include dates and times and if possible send a copy to the Social work Department;
3. The SWD and the person reporting the concerns will then decide how to involve the parents or carers.

Alleged abuse by a coach or volunteer helper

Are you concerned about abuse by a coach or volunteer helper?

If 'Yes' is it -

*Poor practice?*

- Report concerns to person in charge;
- Person in charge deals with it as a misconduct issue;
- If concerns remain report to a Director of the SCA for a Board decision on how to handle the issue

*Abuse?*

- Report concern to Club Child Protection Co-ordinator (Unless the allegation relates to the CPC, in which case refer directly to SCA Child Protection Officer);
- Person in charge must ensure safety of child and other children;
- 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 SCA Board will decide if disciplinary or misconduct proceedings should be initiated

### Practical Arrangements in EEKCC

1. All coaches are required to be in possession of valid PVG membership linked to EEKCC.\*
2. EEKCC will arrange for PVG forms to be issued with the SCA office as required to enable coaches and volunteers to benefit from the free checks for volunteers.
3. It is the responsibility of individuals to remember to update their PVG membership as appropriate.
4. Coaches are reminded that a valid disclosure is a requirement of their coaching licence and that if they do not have one their professional indemnity insurance may be affected.
5. If a coach or volunteer is not in possession of a current PVG record their coaching status in EEKCC will be suspended until a current record is exhibited. \*
6. Any other member of EEKCC who wishes to volunteer in the club is required to agree to do so. They are also required to complete the self-declaration form where required (Appendix 6) and to complete the volunteer code of conduct (Appendix 7). EEKCC reserves the right to take up further references (Appendix 8) or to seek advice on the suitability of any volunteer from the SCA Child Protection Co-ordinator. If the volunteering role involves regulated work, a PVG record will be required.
7. Any member of EEKCC who is neither a coach or a registered volunteer may not undertake any work with children or be in sole charge of a child member of EEKCC except where that child is their own child or they are the child's individual legal guardian.
8. All members of EEKCC, irrespective of status will be required to complete a membership registration form on an annual basis. This ensures EEKCC has current and correct details of members, including next of kin and relevant medical information. It is also a requirement of data protection legislation that our records about members are accurate.

\* At the time of writing (July 2012) the PVG scheme is not presently operational for the retrospective checking of people who hold old Disclosure Checks. Until such time as the new PVG scheme is operating (expected November 2012), we will accept disclosure certificates from existing coaches. New coaches will need to obtain PVG scheme membership.

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? YES/NO (If for somebody else record their details)

What has prompted these concerns?

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

If yes please record details on separate sheet.

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.

EEKCC Coaches Code of Conduct



**EEKCC Coaches Code of Conduct**

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.

As a coach in EEKCC, I agree to comply with the principles of good ethical practice listed below:

- To abide by the Scottish Canoe Association and EEKCC Child Protection arrangements;
- To respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of the sport;
- To place the well-being and safety of the student above the development of performance;
- To follow all guidelines laid down by the SCA and hold appropriate insurance cover;
- To develop an appropriate working relationship with students (especially children and vulnerable adults) based on mutual trust and respect. I will not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward;
- I will encourage and guide performers to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance;
- I will hold up to date and nationally recognised governing body coaching qualifications;
- I will ensure that the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual;
- I will agree with my students (and where appropriate with their parents) exactly what is expected of them and what performers are entitled to expect from me;
- I will co-operate fully with others (e.g. other coaches, officials, physiotherapists, etc.) in the best interests of my students;
- I will always promote the positive aspects of canoeing and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances;
- I will display high standards of personal behaviour and appearance.

I agree to abide by the above principles

Signed ..... Date .....

Print Name .....

Volunteer Self-declaration (only for non-regulated work)



**Volunteer Self-declaration Form**

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Police or Procurator Fiscal's Caution or similar? YES / NO

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

Signed:

Date:

Name (please print):

Any other surname you were known by previously (inc. maiden name)

Address:

Post Code:

Date of Birth:



Volunteer Code of Conduct



**Volunteer Code of Conduct**

As a volunteer in EEKCC, I agree to comply with the principles of good ethical practice listed below:

- I will consider the wellbeing and safety of EEKCC members;
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with members, based on mutual trust and respect;
- I will make sure my activities are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part;
- I will promote the positive aspects of the sport (e.g. fair play);
- I will display consistently high standards of personal behaviour and appearance;
- I will follow all guidelines laid down by the SCA and EEKCC;
- I will hold appropriate valid qualifications and insurance cover. If I am transporting members, I will hold the appropriate driving licence and insurance for the vehicle;
- I will not condone rule violations, rough play or the use of prohibited substances;
- I will encourage and guide members to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour
- I agree to abide by the above principles

Signed ..... Date .....

Print Name .....

Volunteer Reference Form**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 confidence and will only be shared with the applicant's immediate supervisor if they are offered a volunteer position. We would appreciate you being honest in your evaluation of this person.

How long have you known this person?

Are you related to them?

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:

Print:

Position: