



BRITISHROWING

Safeguarding Handbook 3

Club, training and
competition guidance



Handbook Guide

Welcome to British Rowing's Safeguarding Handbooks. Within this handbook, you will be able to navigate with ease to find relevant policies, guidance and templates that will support you with your role in rowing.

Welfare in rowing means the safe and enjoyable participation of everyone, including children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

The Contents page will allow you to navigate to the relevant section by clicking on the section header or scrolling down to the corresponding page number.

If you want to print specific sections of this handbook, such as the sample templates we have included, go to your printer options, and specify the page numbers or page range you would like to print.

To save paper, we would encourage you to make the most of this digital version and avoid printing the whole handbook.

We hope you find these handbooks useful in supporting you to create a safe and enjoyable environment for all participants in rowing.

If you have a concern, or have seen, or experienced, something that is not quite right, please report your concerns to your Club Welfare Officer, or use the [British Rowing Report a Concern form available on our Welfare webpage](#), or speak to British Rowing's [Safeguarding & Welfare team](#).

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Definitions

Duty of care: A duty of care is the duty that rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of any person involved in an activity for which that individual or organisation is responsible.

Event Welfare Officer: The Event Welfare Officer is the designated individual at the event who is responsible for welfare duties

Terminology

For the purpose of this handbook, we will be using the following terminology:

Children and young people: A child is anyone under the age of 18 years. A young person is someone who is over 16 and under 18.

Throughout this handbook, we will refer to children and young people using the collective term of 'child'.

Adults at risk: An adult at risk is an adult who has care and support needs; is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect; and because of their care and support needs cannot protect themselves against actual or potential abuse or neglect.

Adults with care and support needs: An adult with care and support needs is an individual, who, due to illness, disability, a mental health issue or an addiction, cannot cope without care and support.

Throughout this handbook, we will refer to both adults at risk, and adults with care and support needs, using the collective term of 'adult with care and support needs'.

Parents, carers and guardians: A **parent** is any person who is the biological father or mother of another person. A **carer** is any person who cares for an individual, who, due to illness, disability, a mental health issue or an addiction, cannot cope without that care and support.

A **guardian** is a person who has been appointed by a court or otherwise has the legal authority to care for the personal and property interests of another person.

Throughout this handbook, we will refer to parents, carers and guardians with the collective term of 'parents/carers'.

Introduction

British Rowing recognises that abuse can take place anywhere, including in a rowing environment and online, and that it is everyone's responsibility to report concerns. Inaction is not an option. Abuse can take place face-to-face and online and perpetrators can be other children or adults, including those in positions of trust.

The purpose of this handbook is to guide clubs, Club Welfare Officers, coaches and volunteers in safely running rowing events, including training at the club, competitions and trips away. In addition to this handbook, we also recommend clubs read the '[Rower Development Guide](#)' and the '[How Much How Often](#)' guidance, which provides key insight into the safe development of both child and adult rowers.

While following this guidance, it is important to remember that some rowers may not want, or may not have the opportunity, to row or to do specific rowing training more than once a week. Any undue pressure on the rower to attend the club for further training or rowing sessions may result in them unnecessarily dropping out of a sport they enjoy, or worse, suffering from mental health issues or fatigue. It is also important to remember that this is the same for competition. Not all rowers want to compete, and their choice to not compete should be respected. To help plan what is appropriate, you may wish to consider the British Rowing [Code of Conduct](#), which details the rights of individuals in our sport.

This handbook is underpinned by the British Rowing Code of Conduct, as well as our Safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance, all of which can be found on [British Rowing's Policies and Guidance Webpage](#).

Section 1 – How Much How Often

How Much How Often provides guidance from British Rowing on aspects you may wish to consider around a training programme, to ensure participants gain the best experience and enjoyment of the sport whilst preparing them for life, not just the sport of rowing.

The purpose of the guidance is to provide background considerations for rowers, coaches and parents. It is important that it is used in parallel with the '[Rower Development Guide](#)', which looks at the training aims for rowers to develop appropriately in the sport to maximise their time, enjoyment and performance.

While following the guidance, it is important to remember that some rowers may not want, or may not have the opportunity, to row or to do specific rowing training more than once a week. Any undue pressure on the rower to attend the club for further training or rowing sessions may result in them unnecessarily dropping out of a sport that they are enjoying. To help plan what is appropriate you may wish to take into consideration the British Rowing 'Codes of Conduct' document (found under 'Codes of Behaviour' on our [Policies and Guidance](#) page), which looks at the rights of individuals in our sport.

When considering 'How Much How Often', we must also consider other demands and pressures on rowers. Life must be a healthy balance and we all have a responsibility to provide the appropriate support and education for our rowers. We must consider many factors when demands are placed on our rowers to train. Our aim is for everyone to stay in the sport for the long term and become our future club captains, committee members, umpires as well as our future Olympic Champions. Rowers, family members, friends or crewmates may want them to do more; we sometimes have to say *no*! Remember it is often the case that family members or friends need educating to enable them to contribute positively to the individual rower's development.

Follow the links to access the [How Much How Often](#) guidance and the [Rower Development Guide](#).

Section 2 – On water and indoor rowing by school children

To ensure the safety of developing children, we strongly encourage clubs to read our guidance on on-water and indoor rowing by school children as the sport is often started by children of secondary school age and is regarded as a late-maturing sport. The sport is usually taken up in Year 9, but occasionally and, perhaps increasingly, children of Year 8 age and below are being offered the opportunity to try rowing. Therefore, it is important to understand how to safely increase training loads and intensities, in line with the developmental stages of children.

Rowing, whether on-water or indoor, is a power endurance activity and as such there are guidelines in British Rowing's '[How Much, How Often](#)' on the frequency of the activity for those starting in the sport to ensure that they are safe and allowed to develop over a sensible time. Initially, short sessions once a week are recommended, particularly for skill development and other activities which promote agility, balance, coordination and skill (ABCS) to develop the athletic, robust and safe rower. British Rowing's '[Rower Development Guide](#)' is an excellent resource for looking at areas to develop in your rowers.

Read our [On-Water and Indoor Rowing by School Children guidance](#).

Section 3 – Physical contact in rowing

As coaches and CWOs working with children, young people and adults at risk¹, it's important to understand when it is and isn't appropriate to make physical contact with rowers. This is to protect young rowers and also to ensure that your actions in the rowing environment cannot be misinterpreted.

Rowers may not always be comfortable with physical contact between themselves and their coach. There are many reasons for this, such as cultural expectations, individual preferences, previous experiences, learning difficulties or communication barriers. As volunteers, officials or coaches working with rowers, you must be aware that instances of touching may cause discomfort or embarrassment, even if your intentions are honest.

It is vital to remember and respect the fact that rowers have a right to say what level of contact they are comfortable with, and have their views respected.

Parents/carers must also feel confident that any contact between rowers and those at the club, such as coaches or Club Welfare Officers (CWO) running rowing activity, is safe and appropriate.

We recognise that physical contact between a coach and rower may be required to instruct or demonstrate particular aspects of rowing, as well as for other instances of celebration and encouragement such as high-fives or fist-bumps. We have therefore developed this guide to assist you in your role, and to help you to understand when and how physical contact with rowers may take place.

3.1 – Minimum standards and key principles for physical contact between coaches and children, young people and adults at risk

Physical contact between coaches and rowers must only take place to:

- develop sport skills or techniques;
- treat an injury, or give urgent first aid treatment in an emergency (delivered by a designated first aider or qualified practitioner);
- prevent harm or an accident from occurring;
- meet the requirements of rowing;
- to comfort a distressed rower, or celebrate/motivate e.g. high-five/fist bump, if agreed by the rower.

The following key principles should be adhered to when considering physical contact.

- Physical contact must only take place to serve the interests of the rower, not the adult involved.
- Consent for physical contact, unless in the case of emergency, must be obtained from the rower, before being carried out.
- The reason for, and type of, physical contact must be explained to the rower.
- Physical contact must *never* be used as a punishment.
- Physical contact must be culturally sensitive, and adults must make sure to be aware of the rower's cultural needs and differences;
- Physical contact should always take place in an open setting, and not in secret or out of sight of others.

¹ For the benefit of the reader, throughout Sections 3 and 4, children, young people and adults at risk will be referred to as rowers for the entirety of those sections.

It is always best practice for volunteers or coaches to make it clear to the parent/carer and the rower during any induction process if there may ever be any instances of physical contact, such as during the teaching of a rowing technique. This allows clubs to understand if the parent/carer and the rower is comfortable with physical contact before coaching starts. It is also a good opportunity to understand the individual needs of the rower and allows them to understand that they have the right to say what is and is not OK.

3.2 – Further advice

British Rowing recognises that there may be instances where a distressed rower needs comfort or reassurance, which may include physical comforting, such as a pat on the back. Rowers may also want to celebrate success or achievement through means of high-fives, fist bumps or similar gestures.

While we do not want to create barriers between coaches and their participants, coaches should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that their actions, or their actions as perceived by others, are appropriate for the recipient and do not constitute inappropriate or unnecessary contact.

It is also noted that physical contact is a requirement of roles such as sports scientists, strength and conditioning coaches, physiotherapists and medics. These roles should only be undertaken by properly qualified practitioners, who should conduct and record any treatment in a way specified by their regulatory body. This guidance does not seek to replace guidance for those specified professionals.

For more information, please see the [CPSU Briefing on physical contact and young people in sport](#).

Section 4 – Managing challenging behaviour in rowing

Coaches, Club Welfare Officers (CWOs), and volunteers who deliver rowing activity, are required on occasion, to deal with challenging behaviour. When dealing with challenging behaviour, it is important to apply the following principles, which aim to provide, support and promote best practice in rowing.

- The welfare of the rower is paramount.
- Rowers should be provided with clear guidelines about required standards of conduct, and the club's process for responding to behaviour that is considered unacceptable.
- Rowers must never be subjected to any form of treatment that is abusive, humiliating, harmful or degrading.
- The specific needs of the rower should be discussed with the parent/carer/guardian and, where appropriate, the rower, before rowing activity starts. Where appropriate, any planned approach or action plan should be agreed upon between the club staff, the parent/carer, the rower and the CWO. A recording of this approach should be provided to all parties.
- Parents/carers should be informed of any incidents of challenging behaviour as soon as is reasonably possible.
- Every rower should be supported by the club to participate in rowing. Only as a last resort, and in exceptional circumstances, where all possible means of support and addressing the challenging behaviour have been exhausted, should the club consider excluding the rower from rowing activity.
- Parents/carers should also be supported by the club to participate in the club environment. Only as a last resort, and in exceptional circumstances, where all possible means of support and addressing the challenging behaviour have been exhausted, should the club consider excluding the parent from the club environment if they are presenting challenging behaviour.

4.1 – What is challenging behaviour?

A rower's behaviour can be defined as 'challenging' if; *it puts them, or those around them, such as fellow children, young people or adults at risk, at risk, or leads to a poorer quality of life. It can also impact the child's, young person's or adult at risk's ability to join in everyday activities*². Challenging behaviour can include aggression, destructiveness, disruptiveness, refusal to follow direction or authority. The behaviour can be persistent or occasional.

4.2 – Planning activities

Good coaching practice requires planning sessions around the group as a whole but also involves taking into consideration the needs of each rower within that group. As part of session planning, coaches should always consider if any rower needs, or may need, additional support or supervision to participate in rowing activity safely.

Where staff, coaches or volunteers identify possible risks or support needs, strategies to manage those risks should be agreed upon in advance of the activity and not made at the last minute. The planning should also identify the appropriate number of adults required to safely manage and support the session,

² [NHS, Social care and support guide, Caring for children and young people, 2018](#)

including to adequately respond to any instances of challenging behaviour, safeguarding other rowers in the group and the staff/volunteers involved.

To ensure effective and safe planning of rowing activities, please take these four key steps.

- Carry out a thorough risk assessment and include any additional risks associated with a rower's behaviour.
- Consider whether specialist expertise and support may be needed from carers or outside agencies. If you have a rower in your group who is under the care of a carer or outside agency, you must discuss their needs with the carer/s, before rowing activities.
- Identify suitable ratios of adults to rowers to meet any additional needs. These ratios will be largely dependent on the outcome of your risk assessment.
- Give guidance to all staff, coaches or volunteers who may have to manage challenging behaviour.

4.3 – Agreeing acceptable and unacceptable behaviours

Coaches, CWOs, and parents/carers/guardians in all rowing clubs and organisations are bound by the British Rowing Code of Conduct.

It may be helpful for coaches, CWOs, and children to be involved in developing an agreed statement of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, such as a behavioural agreement, and the range of sanctions that may be applied in response to unacceptable behaviour.

This can be agreed at the start of the season, or during an induction process at the club, and it should involve the views of rowers to encourage buy-in and understanding.

Issues of behaviour and conduct should regularly be discussed with coaches and volunteers, as well as parents/carers/guardians and rowers in the context of rights and responsibilities. When rowers are asked to draw up a 'behavioural agreement' that will govern their participation in club activities, experience indicates that they tend to arrive at a very sensible and workable set of rules with greater buy-in than when rules are simply imposed by club officials. If an agreement is compiled, every member of the group can be asked and expected to sign it.

4.4 – Managing challenging behaviour

When challenging behaviour occurs, the response of the person in charge should always be proportionate, imposed as soon as practicable, and be fully explained to the rower and their parents/carers/guardians. In dealing with rowers who display negative or challenging behaviours, coaches and volunteers should consider the following options.

- Continue to praise the appropriate behaviour of those positively completing the rowing activity.
- Consider issuing the individual presenting the challenging behaviour a 'time-out' from the activity if it is safe to do so.
- Offer extra responsibility to the rower to help redirect their energy.
- Increase the number of coaches, staff, or volunteers who are overseeing the activity.
- De-escalate the situation by talking it through with the rower.
- Reason with the rower and advise them of the consequences of their actions.
- Use sanctions such as 'missing out on next week's race', or 'not being given a particular seat in a boat', alongside the explanation as to why they have not been selected and how they can regain this privilege.

The following acts should never be permitted as a means of managing a rower's behaviour:

- physical punishment or threat of such;
- refusal to speak to, or interact with them;
- depriving them of food, water, access to changing facilities or toilets, or other essential facilities;
- verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

4.5 – Physical intervention

The use of physical intervention should always be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent a rower from injuring themselves or others, or causing serious property damage. All forms of physical intervention should form part of a broader approach to the management of challenging behaviour.

Physical contact to prevent something from happening should always be the result of conscious decision-making and not a reaction. Before physically intervening, the coach or volunteer should ask themselves, 'Is this the only option to manage the situation and ensure safety?' It is good practice to ensure that if you have to physically intervene in a situation with a rower, it is in the least restrictive way necessary to prevent them from getting hurt, and used only after all other strategies have been exhausted.

The following must always be considered.

- Contact should be avoided with buttocks, genitals and breasts. Coaches or volunteers should never behave in a way that could be interpreted as sexual.
- Any form of physical intervention should achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the rower whose behaviour is of immediate concern, as well as the safety of other rowers in the session.
- Coaches/volunteers should consider the circumstances and risks associated with employing physical intervention, compared with the risks of not doing so.
- The scale and nature of physical intervention must always be proportionate to the behaviour of the rower and the nature of harm/damage they might cause.
- All forms of physical intervention should employ only a reasonable amount of force, ie the minimum force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property, applied for the shortest possible time.
- Coaches/volunteers should never employ physical interventions which are deemed to present an unreasonable risk to rowers, or themselves.
- Coaches/volunteers should never use physical intervention as a form of punishment.
- Physical intervention should NOT involve inflicting pain.
- where rowers are identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require physical intervention, this should be discussed with parents/carers, and where necessary, the club should seek advice from or work in partnership with external agencies (eg Children's Social Care) to ensure that the rower can be supported to participate safely.

Any physical intervention used should be recorded in writing as soon as possible after the incident by the coaches/volunteers involved and passed to the Club Welfare Officer as soon as possible.

4.6 – Views of the child, young person or adult at risk

Physical intervention may provoke strong feelings in rowers, and they may be left physically or emotionally hurt. Even a rower who hasn't directly been involved in the situation may be fearful that it will happen to them in future or have been upset by seeing what happened.

A timely debrief for everyone involved, including the parents/carers where applicable, should always take place following an incident where physical intervention has been used. This should include ensuring that the physical and emotional wellbeing of those involved has been addressed and ongoing support has been

offered where necessary. Everyone should be allowed to talk about what happened in a calm and safe environment. This should be following a discussion about the needs of the rower and their continued safe participation in rowing activity between the coach, CWO and parent/carer of the rower.

4.7 – A policy for managing challenging behaviour

In conclusion, all rowing clubs and organisations that have a duty of care to children, young people and/or adults at risk should ensure those working with them are aware of these guidelines on managing challenging behaviour or should consider developing their own guidance. Any guidance must clearly set out:

- the standard of conduct expected from staff/coaches/volunteers and participants;
- how the club or organisation will respond to unacceptable behaviours;
- how the club or organisation will respond to 'high risk' behaviours, giving rowers a clear picture of what will happen;
- the circumstances in which rowers will be restrained;
- the guidance, information or any support and/or training available to coaches/volunteers, particularly where they are supporting a rower with recognised challenging behaviour to access rowing activities;
- the circumstances where external agencies such, as the Police or Children's Services, will be contacted for support or in response to concerns;
- arrangements to check on the physical and emotional wellbeing of the rower and coach or volunteers;
- how an incident should be recorded and monitored;
- who should be informed.

Section 5 – Safeguarding children and young people at club events where alcohol is being consumed

This section is a guide for club committees and event organisers to help them manage their rowing events and club functions in a way that is safe and suitable for children and young people, particularly if alcohol is on sale. It is not intended to deter clubs from including children and young people in social events or club dinners, but to highlight some of the area's organisers might consider, offer solutions and signpost to helpful documents. Organisers of rowing events for children and young people should also consult the guidelines for rowing competitions, which can be found in [Section 7 of this handbook](#).

If, in the course of your rowing activity, or a related social event, your club uses premises, such as a pub, social club or a clubhouse that is licensed under the 2003 Licensing Act for training sessions, competitions, end of season presentation nights or fundraising functions, the premises manager has a legal responsibility to make sure systems are in place to protect children and young people from physical, moral and psychological harm. This is so that children and young people may participate in activities and benefit from the facilities safely and enjoyably. The venue you choose may have alcohol on sale or offer other 'licensable activities' such as gambling machines. The Licensing Act is not intended to create overly restrictive conditions on the admission of children and young people to events and venues where alcohol is on sale or being consumed; it is partly intended to help promote responsible drinking and family-friendly environments.

Clubs with licensed bars, or those that are hiring out their premises for licensable events, are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with the guidance issued under section 182 of the [Licensing Act 2003](#), updated in 2018.

If you are holding an event at a licensed venue outside of your clubhouse, you may find that the licensee/premises already have effective safeguarding systems operating to make sure the environment remains family-friendly, so that children and young people involved in junior rowing events can learn to socialise, integrate and drink responsibly. Some premises may already have dedicated welfare staff, such as CWOs, to deal with children and young people. These systems may be a legal condition of their premises license, so you must be aware of and compliant with the child protection systems operating at the premises. If you are holding an event at your club and the club has a licensed bar, the club committee and licensee must ensure that any legal requirements relating to safeguarding are in place.

5.1 – What are the risks of junior rowing events and functions?

The risks will vary, depending on the type of activities taking place and the audience attending. For example, if you're running training sessions attended by children and young people and are supervised by qualified coaches, the risks may be lower than if you're organising an end of season function, where alcohol is on sale. There are some circumstances where children and young people at licensed premises, either rowing or spectating, may be at risk of physical, psychological, or moral harm. These include:

- being exposed to inappropriate behaviour, including strong or offensive language, shouting, swearing, bullying, verbal abuse or criticism;
- being exposed to dangerous adult behaviour, e.g. when adults are intoxicated, violent or aggressive;
- indecent exposure, including urinating in public;
- accidental harm, such as discarded drink containers and broken glass;

- the purchase or consumption of alcohol (by children and young people);
- proxy purchasing, which involves adults/friends buying alcohol for children and young people;
- adults failing to supervise children and young people;
- unsuitable adults supervising children and young people.

5.2 – How should risks be managed?

Everyone involved in providing a service or organising an event for children and young people has a duty of care to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to avoid putting them at any additional risk of harm. It is recommended that the club or organising committee discusses the potential risks for any event or situation at the earliest possible opportunity and looks at what systems may already be in place at the club.

Where an event will take place at a venue other than the club, you should discuss potential risks with the venue manager at the time you book the event and ask what systems they have in place to protect children and young people. You may be asked to agree to comply with their systems, and this agreement may form part of your booking contract with the premises manager. Demonstrating that safeguarding measures operate at the premises will help reassure the parents/carers and your club's management committee that the premises is a suitable venue.

5.3 – Overnight stays

Two-day regattas where clubs camp on-site can also create higher risk situations, especially where alcohol is available. Club coaches and/or junior coordinators should consider how overnight stays without parents/carers present will be managed, including the number and gender of coaches and chaperones. It may be too much to expect a coach to be solely responsible for a group of children or young people, no matter how few, 24 hours a day. Clubs and events should consider whether junior rowers must race on both days and whether junior events could be held on one day only, therefore avoiding the overnight stay and risks involved.

For further guidance on overnight stays, please see [Section 9.6 of this handbook](#).

5.4 – Within the club environment

All club committee members and event organisers should consider the following when running their club or event.

- Are those operating your club bar trained to:
 - challenge potential purchases from individuals who look under 25 years of age, and to request proof of their age;³
 - refuse alcohol sales if an individual appears to be intoxicated or under the age of 18;
 - manage confrontation;
 - be vigilant for instances of proxy purchasing;
 - understand the law relating to alcohol;
 - maintain a refusals and incidents log?

³ The British Beer and Pub Association's 'Challenge 25' initiative encourages those serving at bars to seek proof of age from anyone who looks under the age of 25 years and to encourage those who are, or look, under 25 years, to carry appropriate identification. Resources and information on this scheme can be found on the [Challenge 25 website](#).

- Who from the club or event is responsible for managing the safeguarding responsibilities? Will the CWO be on-site or contactable during the event/function?
- Where relevant, are sponsors and advertisers appropriate to the age of those attending the event?
- If running an event open to several other clubs, or where there is public access, consider a prominent display of signage to highlight:
 - that adults must supervise the children for whom they are responsible/comply with British Rowing's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy;
 - designated drinking areas, if appropriate;
 - restricted access areas, for example, changing facilities;
 - toilet facilities;
 - named Event or Club Welfare Officer;
 - Challenge 25 proof of age scheme.
- Does the club have appropriate measures in place to sanction irresponsible adults and/or children or young people?

A zero tolerance of alcohol for under 18s is normal at school club dinners and is the preferred safeguarding option. Some clubs prefer to insist that parents/carers attend with under-18-year-olds and are responsible for their child's behaviour and alcohol intake. Other clubs have decided to hold a separate club lunch for children and young people where alcohol is not available with only over-18s allowed to attend the evening club dinner.

5.5 – Risk assessment

It is best practice for an event organiser to do a risk assessment before each event/function and to have a process in place where this risk assessment can be evaluated and reviewed after each event. This should be retained on your club files as a record to demonstrate that you have complied with the requirements for child safety at your event/function, should a situation arise regarding the safety of a child or young person.

Your organising committee should also promote best practice by encouraging parents/carers to adhere to British Rowing's Code of Conduct and explain at parent induction meetings the importance of adults behaving safely and acceptably at junior rowing events.

Section 6 – Recruitment of children and young people between clubs or schools

From time to time, children and young people, or their parents/carers/guardians, may seek an opportunity at a new club. There are a variety of reasons for this, such as developing their potential, as part of an academic opportunity or scholarship, individual/parental choice, or relocation.

To support the continued success of club and school rowing we encourage clubs and schools to consider the following before any such transfers take place.

- The welfare and wellbeing, which includes education, of the child or young person *must* take precedence over all other considerations.
- Clubs or programmes that would like to offer an opportunity for development to a child or young person who is currently a member of another club should arrange for a discussion to take place with the child or young person's parents/carers, as well as their current coach, to explore this.
- The new club or programme must be open and transparent about what they can offer the child or young person, so the parents/carers can make an informed decision.
- If, having met the club, the parents/carers prefer the child or young person to remain at the original club, this decision *must* be respected by all. No attempt should be made to involve the child or young person, especially to try and exert pressure on the parents/carers.
- If a child or young person directly approaches a new club or coach, that club or coach should make it clear that any discussion must include the child's or young person's parent/carer and current coach, captain or CWO.
- Occasionally, it may be that the move to the new club or programme does not suit the child or young person. Maintaining a positive and open relationship between clubs will ensure they have the best support to enable them to go back to their original club if necessary.
- Passive recruitment processes, such as adverts, open days and recruitment stalls, where the rower/parent/carer makes the initial approach, are acceptable.

There may be times when it is more appropriate for a child or young person to remain at their current club, where they could be supported and provided with additional guidance from a new club or programme, to facilitate a possible transfer later on. Clubs and coaches are encouraged to work together where it is in the child or young person's best interests to do so and to keep parents/carers informed at all times of guidance offered.

In the event of a dispute relating to a child or young person moving between clubs and/or schools, please refer to your club's or school's dispute policy, and British Rowing's dispute guidance, which can be found, on [British Rowing's Policies and Guidance webpage](#).

Section 7 – Guidance for rowing competitions

Anyone working with children, young people, or adults at risk, or providing a service to them, has a duty of care to them.

Although many competitions in rowing are organised by affiliated clubs that have adopted British Rowing's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, and most of the participants will be members of those clubs, the competition still needs to ensure that it has effective policies and procedures in place to ensure that any safeguarding matter is appropriately dealt with. The organising committee is responsible for the failure to have these policies and processes in place and will be held blameworthy if harm should come to a child or adult at risk as a result.

7.1 – Safer recruitment

When recruiting employees, volunteers or contractors to support your competition, you must ensure you follow British Rowing's Safer Recruitment guidelines, which can be found in Section 4 of Safeguarding Handbook 1, the Club Welfare Officer. Event organisers should ensure that they have assessed which individuals involved in the competition require a DBS check. For information on carrying out a DBS check, please see Section 7 of [Safeguarding Handbook 1, the Club Welfare Officer](#).

All competitions should appoint an Event Welfare Officer (EWO), who will be the designated lead responsible for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk. For guidance on appointing an EWO for your competition, and understanding the role requirements, please see Section 2.4 of [Safeguarding Handbook 1, the Club Welfare Officer](#).

Finally, you should draw up a Code of Conduct for all volunteers, including young (u18) volunteers, who are working or volunteering at the competition, and make sure everyone understands it and agrees to follow it.

7.2 – Safeguarding Plan

The event committee should be in regular contact with the EWO and the key people in any other organising roles involved to draw up a safeguarding plan for the event. This may be called an 'Event Safeguarding Statement' or 'Event Welfare Plan'.

Your safeguarding plan should include:

- your overarching safeguarding policy (if you are a British Rowing affiliated club or event, this will be British Rowing's Safeguarding Children and Young People policy and British Rowing's Safeguarding Adults at Risk policy);
- the name of the person who has overall responsibility for safeguarding at the event and how to contact them on the day;
- how officials and volunteers should respond to, and report, any safeguarding concerns that may arise during the competition;
- how the EWO will respond to any allegations of abuse made against any official, volunteer or contractor during the competition;
- where to go for further safeguarding advice and guidance during the competition, e.g. contact details for the NSPCC helpline (0808 800 5000), and the local authority or emergency services.

It is vital to ensure that all officials involved in the competition have read the plan and understand it. It is also good practice to ensure that participants at the event, including competitors and spectators, know that you have a safeguarding plan in place.

7.3 – Reporting structure

Ensure that everyone involved in the competition understands how to report any safeguarding concerns that may arise. This involves having a clear reporting structure for staff and volunteers, competitors, coaches, officials, spectators and parents/carers. For information on British Rowing's reporting structures, please see the [British Rowing Handbook 2 – Handling concerns, Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures, and appendices 2 and 3](#).

7.4 – Health and safety

Make sure that you have all the necessary health and safety procedures in place, including:

- appropriate first aid cover;
- communication of fire safety procedures;
- comprehensive risk assessments;
- confirmation that all organisations or individuals you're subcontracting to (if applicable) are compliant with safety standards;
- adequate insurance.

Take into account the needs of all individuals attending your competition. For instance, if you have children with additional needs, or adults at risk attending, ensure that you have suitable facilities for them. If you have individuals attending an event with additional needs, and you fail to cater for those needs, you are placing those individuals in a potentially unsafe environment.

Medical provision should be provided at the competition during the hours of racing. Signage or competitor information should provide contact numbers for the local hospital or clinic and contact details for first aiders and emergency services.

7.5 – Missing participants

It is vital to have measures put in place in the event children, young people, or adults at risk get lost or go missing during your event or activity. Organising committees are highly recommended to consider:

- whether you will have a designated meeting point for lost children, young people or adults at risk, where this will be, how you will make sure people know about it and how it will be supervised;
- how you will contact parents/carers/guardians to inform them that their child, or individual they care for, has been lost or found;
- how you will verify that adults coming forward to collect a child, young person or adult at risk are their genuine parents/carers/guardians;
- whether any of children, young people, or adults at risk supporting or volunteering at the competition might need extra supervision to prevent them from going missing, eg if children or young people have behavioural issues, or if adults at risk lack the capacity to understand their surroundings;
- who will coordinate the initial search for the missing child, young person or adult at risk;
- who is responsible for contacting the police, if necessary, and when this should happen.

7.6 – Photography and filming

Children, young people, adults at risk and their families might want to take and share photos or videos of the competition. However, it's important to be aware of safeguarding issues surrounding images of children, young people and adults at risk, and put measures in place to keep them safe. The Organising Committee's should read and follow [British Rowing's Photography and Use of Imagery policy](#).

7.7 – Gathering consent and information sharing

Mechanisms should be in place for both participants, as well as parents/carers to consent or withhold consent, to aspects of competition, such as being filmed, having photographs taken, or sharing information. This can be gathered through online or written forms as part of the registration process and should be managed following the Data Protection Act 2018.

Competitors should be signposted to guidance on information sharing which is provided in [Safeguarding Handbook 4 - Safety in the digital world](#).

Section 8 – Transporting children and young people

Transporting children and young people to and from rowing activity can be challenging for parents/carers and clubs to manage. To provide clarity for coaches, and any individuals with roles in regulated activity, we have developed the following guidance on the safe transport of children and young people to and from rowing activity.

It is recommended that clubs and coaches communicate this guidance to parents, and inform them that in most instances it is the responsibility of the parents, and not of the club, to appropriately transport their child to and from rowing activity, regardless of whether this is home training, trials or an away competition/race. Where parents are transporting their child, they are responsible for their child's safety and the suitability of any travel arrangement.

British Rowing accepts that at times, parents make private arrangements between themselves so that, for example, other parents can pick up their child, or vice versa. These arrangements are made at the discretion of the parents involved, and not the club. It would be sensible to ensure that coaches and club staff are made aware of any such arrangements to avoid confusion during any pick-up or drop-off times.

8.1 – Transportation of children and young people by coaches

British Rowing policy, following guidance from the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU), states that coaches should not be alone with children or young people, unless in instances of emergency, for both the protection of the coach, as well as the child or young person. This extends to the transportation of children and young people. Best practice is that coaches and club staff should not transport children or young people on their own, except in an emergency or exceptional circumstances.

It is not recommended that a coach transports a child or young person to any form of rowing activity, regardless of the coach's familiarity or close relationship with the rower's family. However, if two families make a private arrangement, between both families and the coach, for the coach to transport more than one child or young person, then this would be acceptable, as there is no one to one contact. In these circumstances, which should only occur if there is no possible means of transport that does not involve the coach, the coach should take steps to protect themselves, such as:

- ensuring both families are aware of, and consent to the arrangement;
- ensuring all children and young people involved consent to the arrangement;
- ensuring the agreement is documented and the Club Welfare Officer is aware of it;
- where possible, avoiding children or young people sitting in the front of the car;
- ensuring the coach's DBS checks are all up to date;
- ensuring the vehicle is safe, road legal, and insured and that the drivers' insurance covers 'business purposes'.

All of these measures go towards ensuring both parties are protected.

Where a parent/carer does not engage with the club or is unable to make their own private arrangements, it should not be assumed that coaches will step in to transport children and young people. Instead, clubs and coaches should do all they can to engage with the parent/carer, reminding them that it is not the responsibility of the club to facilitate the travel of children or young people.

Where only after every effort was made to avoid coaches transporting children and young people, should the following steps be followed to permit a coach transporting a child or young person in a one to one capacity.

- Only in exceptional cases where a child or young person may be excluded from rowing, should a club manage their transportation, and then only if both the child/young person and their parent/carer consents to this. This should not be routine practice.
- If an exceptional circumstance has arisen, and a club permits a coach to transport a child or young person, clubs must ensure there is consent from parents who have the full facts about the journey, including the planned pick up and drop off points, the length of the journey, any planned stops, the vehicle and the driver. The club should ensure they are aware of this as well, and ensure it is documented.
- Emergency contact details should be available for all children.
- Other means of transport, including public or private, was unavailable to the child or young person and they and their family did not have the means to pay for such travel.
- The child or young person did not have any means of safely transporting themselves, e.g. through walking, cycling or another form of self-sustained travel.
- There were no other available parents/carers who could readily transport the child or young person.
- There should be no assumption that coaches should routinely transport children or young people.

For the avoidance of doubt, an exceptional circumstance includes an instance of:

- the parents having genuine, and justifiable reasons, to be unavailable to transport their child to training, such as childcare commitments, health issues, or financial hardship **not** lack of time or being able to leave work;
- there being no other available parents, and all possible methods were made to contact said parents;
- no other means of transport, other than being driven by a coach, that is available to a child or young person.

If coaches do elect to transport children and young people in a one to one capacity, they must be able to prove, and document, that all of the above options were not viable and that the coach had assessed this, before transporting the child or young person. This documentation must be provided to the CWO as soon as possible and must be properly recorded as it may need to be referred to in the future.

8.2 – Non-engaging parents

In some circumstances, clubs may find that there is little support or engagement from parents. Clubs should make sure that every effort is made to bring these parents on board so that they can share their child's rowing experience. However, we do recognise that on occasion this may be very difficult. We would not want to exclude a child or young person from taking part in rowing where parents who otherwise consent do not engage with the club or fail to take responsibility for the transportation of their child. In these circumstances, parents should be encouraged to make their own private arrangements with other parents, and to communicate this to the club.

An example of this arrangement could be a 'buddy system'. A buddy system could be put in place at the club, for instance where children and young people do not have parents who can facilitate transport for their child. This system would involve parents making arrangements with either other parents, or the coach, where children and young people buddy-up with other children or young people who are struggling to attend rowing. Each child or young person could meet at an agreed-upon pick-up point, where a coach or parent/carer can then transport them to and from rowing activity. This way, clubs can avoid having to

place coaches in compromising situations and ensure that there is no one to one contact during the transportation of children and young people. If clubs decide this is viable, it is important that they:

- ensure the CWO is aware of this agreement and its details, including names of the rowers, their parents/carers, the location of the pick-up/drop off point, and who the coach is;
- emergency contact details are available for all parties involved;
- the children and young people involved have given their consent, as have their parents and this is documented;
- there were no other viable forms of transportation for these children or young people;
- the vehicle that is used is safe to operate, appropriately insured, and the driver is qualified to operate the vehicle;
- all details of this agreement are properly recorded by the club.

If clubs are finding that children or young people who attend trials or competitions are struggling to find transport, then it is recommended that parents and clubs explore this system with neighbouring clubs.

8.3 – Late collection

If a parent/carer is late to collect their child, it is expected that they will make every effort to communicate this to the club, so that they know when to expect the child or young person to be collected. In the instance of the parent/carer being late due to unexpected circumstances, or emergency, where it is not possible to inform the club of this, it is good practice for the club to keep details of an alternative emergency contact. To help coaches and clubs with responsibility for children and young people to handle this situation, we suggest that they:

- attempt to make direct contact with the parents as soon as possible;
- wait with the child, preferably in the company of others;
- notify the Club Welfare Officer;
- remind the parents that collecting their child promptly is their responsibility.

It is important to address the matter with the parent/carer if there is a pattern of late collection or unavailability. The Club Welfare Officer can speak with the parent/carer and gain further information or find out if they are struggling with anything the club can help support them with. It is also important to remember that the Club Welfare Officer can consult with British Rowing's Lead Safeguarding Officer if there is a deeper problem or a concern for the welfare of the child or young person.

8.4 – Transporting adults with care and support needs

When transporting adults with care and support needs, careful consideration must be taken around what type of vehicle that is being used, what accessibility capacity it has, if relevant, and the level of qualification the driver has to drive the vehicle.

If you are transporting adults at risk, this arrangement must be discussed with the adult at risk and their parent/carer, and consent must be obtained before the arrangement takes place. Things to consider in terms of transportation include:

- a wheelchair ramp;
- seating;
- space for a wheelchair or other accessibility device;
- spare seat/s for any/parent/carer.

Section 9 – Planning away trips and overnight stays for children, young people and adults with care and support needs

Giving children and adults with care and support needs the chance to attend training camps and competitions, while sometimes staying away from home overnight, can provide opportunities for them to have fun and grow their confidence and self-esteem. When the club informs parents, carers, or adults with care and support needs that these trips are being planned, this can present anxiety or worry. However, careful planning and preparation from CWOs and coaches can ease those natural worries.

This section should be read by both CWOs and coaches as both parties should be responsible for the planning process for away trips and overnight stays involving children, young people and adults with care and support needs. Before considering running away trips and overnight stays, make sure your club has a current:

- safeguarding children and young people policy;
- safeguarding adults at risk policy;
- safer recruitment policy;
- an active CWO and coaches with current enhanced DBS checks;
- a designated point of contact for parents/carers;
- a clear procedure for all individuals to be able to report concerns.

9.1 – General considerations

When planning any trip, whether or not it involves an overnight stay, the CWO and coach(es) should ensure that there is an overarching plan to safely deliver the trip. This plan should be drawn up between the CWO and the event leader, be known to all involved with the trip, and should include considerations and information about:

- your safeguarding children and young people policy;
- your safeguarding adults at risk policy;
- who has overall responsibility for safeguarding at the event or activity and how to contact them on the day;
- how staff and volunteers should respond to any welfare or child protection concerns that may arise during the event or activity;
- how you will respond to any allegations of abuse made against an adult or a child involved with your group or organisation during the event or activity;
- your whistleblowing procedures.

It is important to ensure that all staff involved in the trip are aware of the plan and understand it fully. If you are required to transport children, young people or adults with care and support needs as part of this trip, ensure you follow all procedures laid out in [Section 8 of this handbook](#).

9.2 – Information gathering

It is important to have a transparent process and share information with parents and carers ahead of the trip, as well as with any staff and volunteers involved. This will enable you to ensure everyone is clear

about how the event will run and what their expectations can be and how you are planning to keep children, young people and adults with care and support needs safe. It is important to make all children, young people and adults with care and support needs aware of who they can talk to if they have concerns.

9.2.1 – Consent forms

Before the event, you must get written consent from parents for their child, who is anyone under the age of 18, being involved. If you have adults attending who require a carer or are still under the care of their parents, you must gain consent of the parent/carers as well as the adult at risk. It is also good practice to also seek consent from a child who is over 16, and make it clear to them that they do not have to take part in the trip if they do not want to.

As part of the consent form you will need to ask for information such as emergency contact details and any medical conditions, allergies, disabilities or other vulnerabilities, meaning you can ensure that the child/adult at risk receives the extra care and support they need.

Consent forms do not have to be physical forms. Most clubs will find it easier to send out electronic consent forms to parents and carers, as well as children, young people and adults. This method also presents fewer risks in terms of accidental data breaches as there are no physical copies to manage that can be lost or misplaced.

If you decide to use online consent forms to record consent and personal information for children and adults with care and support needs to take part in activities, please see [Section 9.2.3](#) for guidance.

9.2.2 – Emergency information and additional needs

Ensure that you have emergency contact details for everyone attending and make sure this is easily available to the coaches or volunteers who will be responsible for them. Best practice would be to also gather a secondary emergency contact, if applicable, in case the first emergency contact is unavailable.

Make sure that coaches and volunteers know and understand the procedure for contacting the emergency services. You should also ensure that parents and carers can contact the lead coach on the trip in case of an emergency.

Before the trip, if any of the children, young people or adults have additional needs, such as needs for any medication or extra care, make sure this is known and discussed with the parents/carers. Coaches and volunteers must be aware of any additional support needs for each child, and how these will be catered for.

9.2.3 – Data handling

Clubs receiving and storing consent forms, both electronically and physically, must consider the below data retention and safety procedures relating to GDPR.

- Data retention period – do not store any information longer than you need to. For example, if you are requiring information from parents for a competition, once the competition is officially completed, you no longer need to retain any information you gathered so it should be destroyed.
- Destroying information – if you are collecting physical copies that have personal data on them, such as dietary requirement forms, once they have passed the retention period, these should be shredded or thrown in a confidential waste bin. If they're electronic copies, they should be deleted from the drive they were stored on and any cloud-based storage system that was used.
- Physical storage – if your club is using physical forms to collect information, these must be stored securely in locked cupboards or rooms and managed by as few people as possible. If you're handling physical copies while away from your club, e.g. at a competition, it is good practice to ensure that

these files are managed by one single person, who can ensure they are kept in a locked and secure location, which could be with the organising party.

- Electronic storage – if your club is using electronic forms to collect information, these must be stored securely in a locked folder on a private computer, accessed by as few people as possible.
- Access – always ensure as few people as possible have access to the information. This way, you can mitigate the risk of someone committing an accidental data breach. Information should only ever be shared on a need-to-know basis.

For further information on how to store data securely, please visit the free [Sport and Recreation Alliance GDPR toolkit](#).

9.3 – Health and safety

When taking children, young people and adults with care and support needs on away trips, you must ensure all coaches and volunteers involved in the trip are familiar and comply with health and safety procedures, such as:

- making sure appropriate first aid cover is available and everyone knows who the first aiders are;
- making everyone aware of fire safety procedures;
- finding out as much as you can about external venues;
- talking to any third-party providers directly and make sure they are fully compliant with the law;
- carrying out comprehensive risk assessments in advance;
- ensuring you have adequate insurance in place.

It is good practice to take into account the age, level of ability, stage of development of and any accessibility or care needs of the participants, making sure to think about how their support needs may differ.

Health and safety are everyone's responsibility. Brief your coaches and volunteers so they understand any health and safety risks involved with the event or activity and how to mitigate them. It is important to explain to parents and carers, as well as their children/adults with care or support needs, what emergency procedures you have in place. If you feel that some people in the group display behaviour that may impact others' safety, it is important to discuss behaviour expectations with them and their parent or carer before the trip commences.

9.4 – Missing people

Think about what measures you can put in place to prevent children/adults at risk from getting lost and make sure you have clear procedures to follow if children/adults at risk go missing during your event or activity. For more information on procedures for missing children/adults at risk, please see [Section 7.5 of this handbook](#).

9.5 – Supervision

It is important to ensure that you provide the right number of adults to supervise children and young people throughout the trip. The number of required adults to safely supervise children will be dependent on your club's risk assessment process, which should consider the age, group size and the activity the children and young people are involved in and should be carried out in line with British Rowing's Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

Clubs should consider making it clear which adults are 'working' (whether paid or volunteers) and which are spectators. For example, you could issue your officials and volunteers with badges, t-shirts or high-vis vests. This is important in case of an emergency. It also helps children and young people recognise trusted adults they can talk to if they have any concerns.

9.6 – Overnight stays

Trip organisers should ensure they meet with parents or carers in advance to explain the arrangements for the trip and answer any questions they may have. This is a good opportunity to explain the steps you are taking to keep their children/adults with care and support needs safe and hear questions from parents/carers. You should ensure parents or carers know the address of where you will be staying and have an emergency telephone number they can call if they need to.

Talk to children, young people and adults with care and support needs about keeping themselves safe and well while they are away. Make sure they know who to talk to if they are unhappy or worried about anything, such as feeling frightened or homesick. Make sure all coaches and volunteers are prepared to help and know how to respond to safeguarding concerns that may arise.

9.6.1 – Accommodation considerations

When arranging overnight stays, there are some key things to ensure regarding accommodation.

- There should be separate sleeping, washing and toilet areas for adults and children, older and young children and boys and girls.
- Children sharing rooms must be of the same gender, and ideally, of a similar age (eg a 17-year-old would not share with a 12-year-old).
- All beds should be single beds and coaches and children/adults with care and support needs must not share rooms, unless the coach is the designated carer for the adult with care and support needs, and this has been discussed with them, and agreed upon, prior to the trip.
- The suitability of the venue should be checked in advance and consideration should be given to issues such as security, where the fire exits are, and whether the venue staff are contactable.
- If possible, all rooms should be on the same floor, or close together. Best practice is to ensure that children are not spread out across the accommodation. If possible, try to negotiate exclusive access to one floor.
- If it is not possible to keep all rooms on one floor, then there should be at least one supervising adult per floor that has children and young people/adults at risk.
- Sharing arrangements should be finalised before departure for the trip, and these arrangements should be shared with the child's parents.
- Supervising staff are of the appropriate gender, i.e. female staff supervise girls and male staff supervise boys.
- Children and young people should know the fire procedures.
- Adults with care and support needs, where possible, should have their own floor, separate from children and young people.

For further information on how to conduct safe away trips, please read the [NSPCC's Safer activities and events guidance](#).

Section 10 – Changing room guidance

British Rowing recognises that clubs will use different facilities to one another, some with toilets, changing and showering facilities, some without, and some that are shared with other clubs, or even rented out by the club. This guidance is written to provide clubs with information on best practice when managing the safety of children while using changing facilities.

Clubs must recognise the need to properly safeguard children in changing rooms. The following are some key questions for clubs to consider.

- Are the changing rooms at the facilities shared by both adults and children?
- Are there changing rooms available for separate genders, or do the clubs rotate access to the changing rooms?
- Are there separate shower and toilet facilities, or do the changing rooms have these facilities?
- How many people in the club access these changing rooms?

It is important to think about how your club can effectively meet the needs of all its members, considering the above. This guidance should be considered by all appropriate officials and volunteers at your club.

10.1 – Supervision

If your club uses changing rooms that can be accessed by both adults and children, then at least two adults, who are either club officials/volunteers of the same gender as the group of rowers, and one of which holds a current Enhanced DBS check, should supervise the children when they are using the changing room.

Supervision involves being in the vicinity of the changing room, i.e. standing outside the door or in the corridor. Adults must be able to act quickly in the event of an emergency but should not be inside the changing room when the children are changing. Adults who are supervising must also make sure the changing room is not accessed by other adults during the time it is being used by children.

Supervision inside the changing facility may be necessary in the following situations.

- The children are too young to be left alone or are unable to change themselves.
- The group includes children with disabilities who require additional support and assistance when changing. If this is the case, the additional support and assistance should be discussed with the parent or carer, prior to using the facilities.
- There are concerns about bullying, fighting, or other harmful behaviours taking place that need to be managed.
- There are concerns that members of the public could access the changing rooms.

It should be recognised that older teenagers may not require any supervision, however, clubs may wish to have an appropriately recruited adult within the vicinity of the changing rooms to ensure their welfare is monitored.

10.1.1 – Who should supervise?

Supervising children in changing rooms provides access to children in circumstances of increased vulnerability, therefore, careful consideration should be given to ensuring that those undertaking this task have been assessed and are suitable to do so. You should consider the following.

- Numbers – clubs must ensure that they have more than one adult supervising as this will ensure cover in the event of an accident or incident occurring, or if one supervisor is called away.
- Gender – children must be supervised by adults of the same gender as them.
- Safer recruitment – the individuals responsible for supervising children should be recruited using British Rowing's Safer Recruitment policy, which details references and DBS checks required.
- Age – are the children old enough to be left on their own as a group?
- Volunteers – do your volunteers feel comfortable supervising children in changing rooms? If you have volunteers who do not feel comfortable doing this, they shouldn't be required to do so.

10.2 – Children using the facilities

We recognise that many, if not all, clubs have different genders among their membership, as well as a large variety of age groups.

It is important to ensure that arrangements to enable these groups to change separately are in place. It is important to make sure that:

- children only use the changing facilities with other children of the same gender;
- children only change with other children of a similar age group - 16-year-olds should not change with 12-year-olds etc.

There may be occasions where Clubs need to make reasonable adjustments to changing arrangements to suit a child's individual needs, such as providing a separate changing space or arranging access to the changing space at a different time to provide greater privacy. Clubs are encouraged to discuss any reasonable adjustments with members and their parents as appropriate.

10.3 Best practice

There are many other things that clubs should consider to ensure the safety of children and adults using their facilities.

No photos

Your club must adopt a strict 'no photography' policy when inside changing rooms. If your club is hosting an event with official photographers, they should be told that under no circumstances can they access the changing rooms. You should also make it very clear to children who are using changing rooms that they are not take any photographs or videos inside changing rooms.

Timetables

Clubs with limited facilities and only one set of changing rooms need to understand who will be using the changing rooms and when. This way, the club can limit the risk of adults accidentally walking into changing rooms when children are there, or for females accidentally walking in when males are in there, and vice versa.

Privacy

People using the facilities should be reminded that the doors to changing rooms must remain shut at all times and are not left open when people are in there. Under no circumstances should doors to the changing facilities be locked, as this may prevent people from entering in cases of emergency, but doors should remain closed for the sake of privacy. If clubs have changing rooms with windows, the club should seek to ensure that these windows are made of privacy or 'frosted' glass, to prevent people from looking in.

Signs

Ensure that if your club has separate changing rooms, these are properly signposted with a clear indication of which gender is permitted to use which changing rooms. If you have accessible changing rooms for people with disabilities, ensure this is clearly signposted.

Sensitivity

If you have children who do not feel comfortable changing with others, for whatever reason, they should not be made to. The club should look into either finding a private space, providing movable privacy screens for the child, or look at timetabling the use of the changing rooms so they can make private use of the facilities.

Visitors

If your club is hosting a competition, and you have no facilities available for the visiting club/s to use, make sure this is clearly communicated to said club/s *before* their arrival. This way, all clubs involved can look into finding a suitable arrangement.

For further information, read the [CPSU briefing on the safe use of changing facilities](#).

Section 11 – Checklists

When running a training camp or an event for children and young people, it is important to ensure you have proper water safety and welfare procedures in place. To assist with this, we have provided a template checklist you can use in [Appendix 2](#).

To help the organising parties with safely planning training camps and trips away, we have also provided some template forms you can use or adapt. By using these templates, you can be confident that you are covering the basic principles of safety planning. The practice of completing checklists will also serve as a useful reminder for you to double-check everything before the trip, and you can also share these with parents to help put their mind at ease.

In the appendices, you can find the following templates:

- Appendix 1 – Template parental consent for residential trips
- Appendix 2 – Training camp/event checklist – Water Safety & Welfare
- Appendix 3 – Coach/volunteer information sheet for away trips
- Appendix 4 – Sample Event Welfare Policy Statement

Section 12 – Useful contacts

Several organisations are working in the field of safeguarding. Each offers specialist services and has contact information for those wishing to get in touch. You could get in touch if you have specific concerns, or if you are looking for general information.

The Child Protection In Sport Unit (CPSU):

The CPSU is a partnership between the NSPCC, Sport England, Sport Northern Island and Sport Wales. In Scotland, there is a similar partnership between Children 1st and Sport Scotland

Email: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk

Website: thecpus.org.uk

Childline:

Childline is a free, private and confidential service that exists to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through.

Website: childline.org.uk

Call: 0800 1111

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP):

CEOP works with safeguarding and child protection partners across the UK and overseas. It protects children from harm online and offline with a focus on child sexual exploitation and online protection issues.

Website: ceop.police.uk/safety-centre

Reporting: ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/Should-I-make-a-report-to-CEOP-YP

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC):

The NSPCC are the leading children's charity fighting to end child abuse in the UK and Channel Islands.

Call: 0808 800 50000

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Website: nspcc.org.uk

Section 13 - Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances.

- There is a change in legislation and/or government guidance as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, UK Sport and/or Home Country Sports Councils and British Rowing.
- Any other significant change or event occurs.

Revision Log

Date of Revision	Changes since previous version
January 2026	10.2 – Update to remove guidance on changing room provision for trans and non-binary children. This is to reflect a wider review of trans inclusion guidance by British Rowing.

Appendix 1 – Template parental consent for residential trips

Details of trip/activity:	
Details of transport:	
Departure time and location:	
Return time and location:	
Full name of child:	
Gender of child:	
Age and date of birth:	
Emergency contact name and number:	
Relationship to child:	
Alternate contact name and number:	
Relationship to child:	
Medical information:	
Does your child have any medical conditions that require treatment?	Yes / No If yes, please give details:
Does your child have any specific dietary requirements?	Yes / No If yes, please give details:

Does your child suffer from asthma?	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>If yes, please give details:</p>
Does your child suffer from any other allergy?	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>If yes, please give details:</p>
Is your child able to swim 50 metres?	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>If applicable, please provide any relevant information:</p>

- I have received details of the above activity and consent to my child's participation in these activities.
- I am aware of British Rowing's Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy.
- I acknowledge that the club will only be liable in the event of any accident if they have failed to take reasonable steps in their duty of care for my child during the activities.
- I agree to be at the drop-off/pick up point at the agreed time.
- I confirm to the best of my knowledge that my child does not suffer from any medical condition other than those detailed above.
- I consent to my child receiving medication as required and any emergency medical, dental or surgical treatment, including anaesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present.

Appendix 2 – Training camp/event checklist – Water Safety & Welfare

Name of Water Safety Advisor (responsible for safety provision at the training camp):	
Is the Water Safety Adviser a member of the Camp Organising Committee?	Yes / No / NA
Is Water Safety an item at each meeting of the Camp Organising Committee?	Yes / No / NA
Is Water Safety part of the training camp review?	Yes / No / NA
Has a Risk Assessment been undertaken covering situations on both land and water?	Yes / No / NA
Is the nature of the training venue taken into account: water and weather conditions and forecasts, distance from bank, access to the shore, method of attracting attention of coaches, other participants?	Yes / No / NA
Has the venue or previous known users been contacted to find out what risks they identified or safety plans they put into place?	Yes / No / NA
Has a Safety Plan been formulated, based on your Risk Assessment?	Yes / No / NA
Does the Safety Plan cover how participants would alert others that they are in distress, circulation pattern of the venue, first aid provision, ratios of coaches and athletes (boat types), communication between coaches, directions to nearest medical facility etc?	Yes / No / NA
Has the Safety Plan been shown to the host club or other recognised experts for their input?	Yes / No / NA

Do you ensure that all coaches, participants and emergency links fully understand the safety plan before participating in the camp?	Yes / No / NA
Is there a system for reporting incidents while on the camp?	Yes / No / NA
Do you provide first aid cover from within your group?	Yes / No / NA
Do you have medical information re: allergies, medications for the group?	Yes / No / NA
Do you inform the group who the First Aid trained people are?	Yes / No / NA
Do you have a method of communication to summon first aid to an accident? (eg do you know the emergency phone number 999 equivalent in that country)	Yes / No / NA
Will an Equipment audit be completed (boats, launches, trailer) before travelling to and from the camp?	Yes / No / NA
Is it necessary/desirable to have sufficient spares ie bow balls, slides, heel release mechanisms, fins, rudders and rudder lines?	Yes / No / NA
Will the participants check that their equipment is safe to use before each session?	Yes / No / NA
Will there be a system for reporting damage to equipment?	Yes / No / NA
Does each boat carry a dry bag containing: an appropriate method of attracting attention (eg whistle, mobile phone, radio etc), thermal blanket(s), food, buoyancy aids etc?	Yes / No / NA
Have all PFDs (lifejackets and buoyancy aids) been checked and will you be taking	Yes / No / NA

spare PFDs, CO2 cylinders and, if fitted, automatic inflation cartridges?	
Are you taking sufficient safety kit for the safety boats: method of attracting attention (eg whistle, mobile phone etc), spare PFDs, line throwing equipment, thermal blankets, first aid equipment, bailer, knife, paddle, cut-out lanyard device (x2 per launch), anchor and line where appropriate?	Yes / No / NA
Do you have sufficient insurance cover for your activities and non-club equipment?	Yes / No / NA
Does this include member-to-member cover?	Yes / No / NA
Have all the participants been advised to take out personal travel insurance which includes racing (if appropriate)?	Yes / No / NA
Have you fully briefed an emergency contact at home over the safety plan and given them full contact details for the group?	Yes / No / NA
The following questions are to be completed where there are junior participants	
State the name of the person who is responsible for welfare issues	
Have the children been made aware of and introduced to this person?	Yes / No / NA
What ratio of adults to children is required for the activities involved?	Yes / No / NA
Is there at least one male and one female adult if the group is mixed gender?	Yes / No / NA
Have Parental Consent Forms been completed? (one copy at club, one copy with team leader)	Yes / No / NA
Has full trip information been published and	Yes / No / NA

circulated to parents and a copy left with the club secretary?	
Have all coaches and volunteers been appropriately vetted in line with the British Rowing Safeguarding & Protecting Children policy?	Yes / No / NA
Are all coaches and volunteers familiar with British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Children policy and procedures and RowSafe: A Guide to Safe Practice in Rowing?	Yes / No / NA

Appendix 3 – Coach/volunteer information sheet for away trips

Full name:	
Age and date of birth:	
Address including postcode:	
Mobile number and email:	
Emergency contact name:	
Emergency contact number(s):	
Alternative contact name:	
Alternative contact number(s):	
Medical information:	
Do you have any existing medical condition which is relevant to this activity?	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>If yes, please give details:</p>
Does you have any specific dietary requirements?	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>If yes, please give details:</p>
Do you have any allergies (including food and medication)?	<p>Yes / No</p> <p>If yes, please give details:</p>
Qualifications and other relevant information:	

Are you First Aid qualified?:	Yes / No
Are you qualified to drive a launch?	Yes / No
Do you have a clean driver's licence?	Yes / No
Coaching awards (if applicable):	
Other relevant qualifications (if applicable):	
DBS Certificate Number:	
Date of Certificate:	

I have read and agree to comply with the following British Rowing policies:

- Safeguarding Children and Young People;
- RowSafe: A guide to Safe Practice in Rowing.

Signature:

Name:

Date:

Appendix 4 – Sample Event Welfare Policy Statement

The Organising Committee of **[insert Competition]** believes that the welfare and wellbeing of all participants are paramount, whether as competitors or as spectators, and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and British Rowing requirements. It acknowledges that everyone, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, have equal rights to safety and protection and that special measures are required to protect children and young people and adults at risk.

All suspicions, concerns and allegations of harm will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

This Policy Statement aims to ensure that all participants:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of sport at **[competition]** in a safe environment;
- are protected from abuse while participating/attending at **[competition]** or outside of the activity.

The **[competition]** policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in **[competition]**. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the event and future British Rowing competitions both virtual, indoor and on water.

Responsibilities of the Organising Committee (OC)

As part of our safeguarding policy the OC will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of participants, officials, volunteers and spectators;
- ensure all personnel understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and welfare and have undertaken appropriate training;
- ensure all personnel dealing with minors in rowing are aware of the British Rowing Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy;
- ensure the Event Safety Advisor is aware of this Policy Statement and Safety plan;
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of welfare incidents/concerns of abuse and that support is provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern;
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored;
- do their best to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals;
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation - a designated Event Welfare Officer will be appointed annually and is responsible for receiving and managing any concern/reports with the appropriate bodies (British Rowing, Local Authorities, the NSPCC and/or the Police).

The Event Welfare Officer for **[insert year]** will be **[insert name]**. They can be contacted using the mobile number / email **[insert number/email]**. This contact number will be posted on the competition website and they can be contacted via any event official during the event as well.

To report an allegation or concern, please contact the Event Welfare Officer on **[insert contact details]**.

The only volunteers who may have substantial, unsupervised access to children are listed below. These volunteers will be asked to provide the date and number of their enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Where no such disclosure exists, the Committee will require one to be produced before the event.

- Members of the First Aid providers
- The Event Doctor (should one be present)
- The Event Welfare Officer

Responsibility of clubs

It is a condition of entry to **[competition]** that any crew that includes junior athletes shall have a named coach or responsible adult. The named coach or responsible adult, who must be over the age of 18, must be named on the entry form and a current mobile telephone number for that person must be provided. If a substitute coach or responsible adult comes to the competition, they must contact the Event Welfare Officer and register their mobile telephone number.

Each named coach or responsible adult is responsible for the welfare, safety and appropriate supervision of their crew or entered athlete and is always expected to know the whereabouts of all their athletes during the competition.

All participants and coaches must abide by British Rowing Rules of Racing and Codes of Conduct as well as the BR Safeguarding Policy, which can be found on our [safeguarding webpage](#), and are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship and conduct at all times.

Volunteers who are under 18 (young volunteers)

Volunteering can be a great way for young people to learn and develop new skills and gain experience for their future employment. Young volunteers are considered a vulnerable group and therefore measures should be put in place for their safe recruitment and participation. Please see British Rowing's safe recruitment guide on the website for more information.

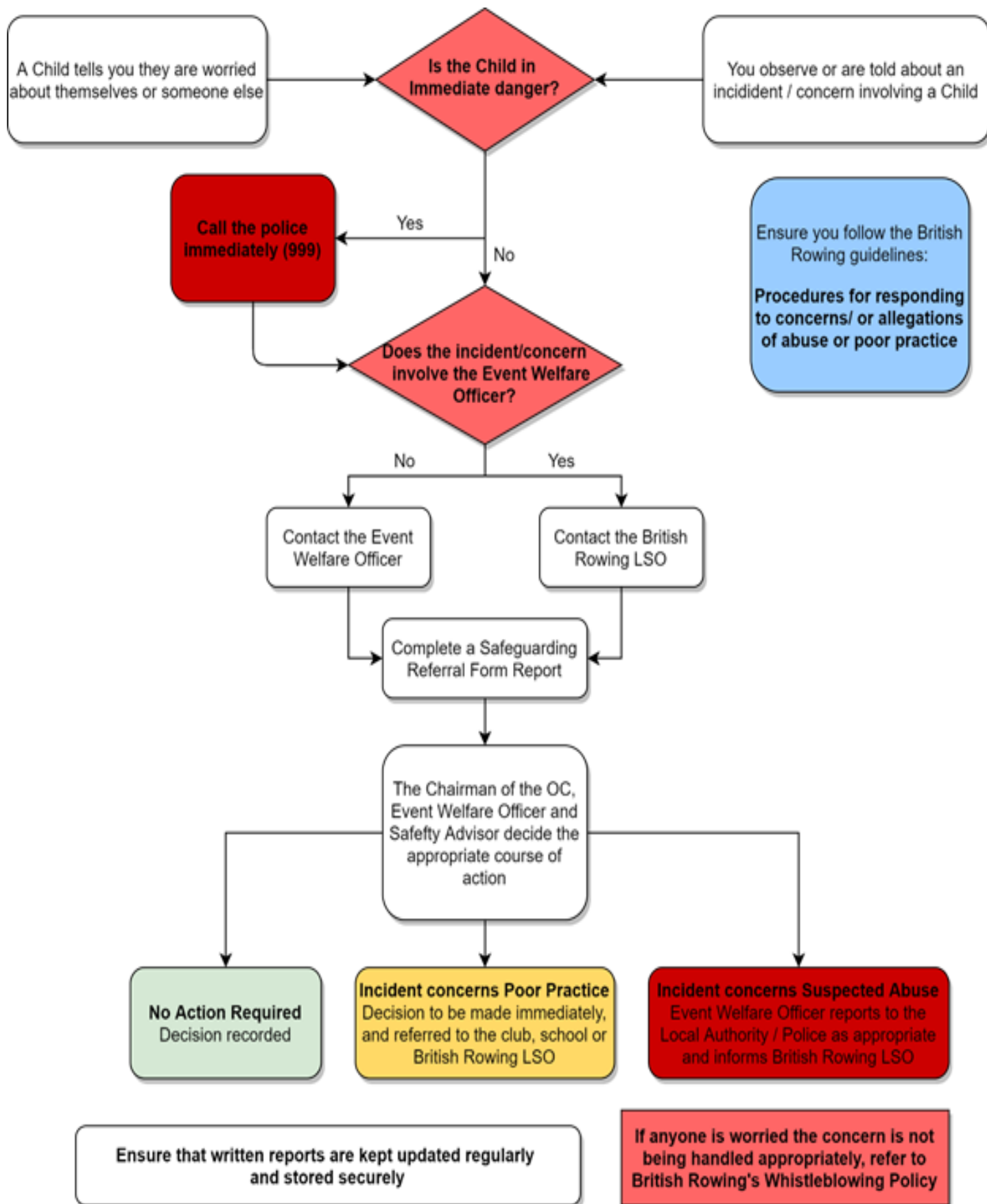
Before accepting them, the Organising Committee must ensure that young volunteers:

- agree to the British Rowing Codes of Conduct;
- provide written agreement from their parent/carer that they may carry out the responsibility they have been assigned;
- are supervised at all times by at least one adult (including an official) who holds a DBS check and has undergone appropriate safeguarding training;
- know their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, and how to report any concerns they have or become aware of;
- are not given responsibilities that may put someone at risk of harm eg sole supervision of other juniors or lifting heavy equipment.

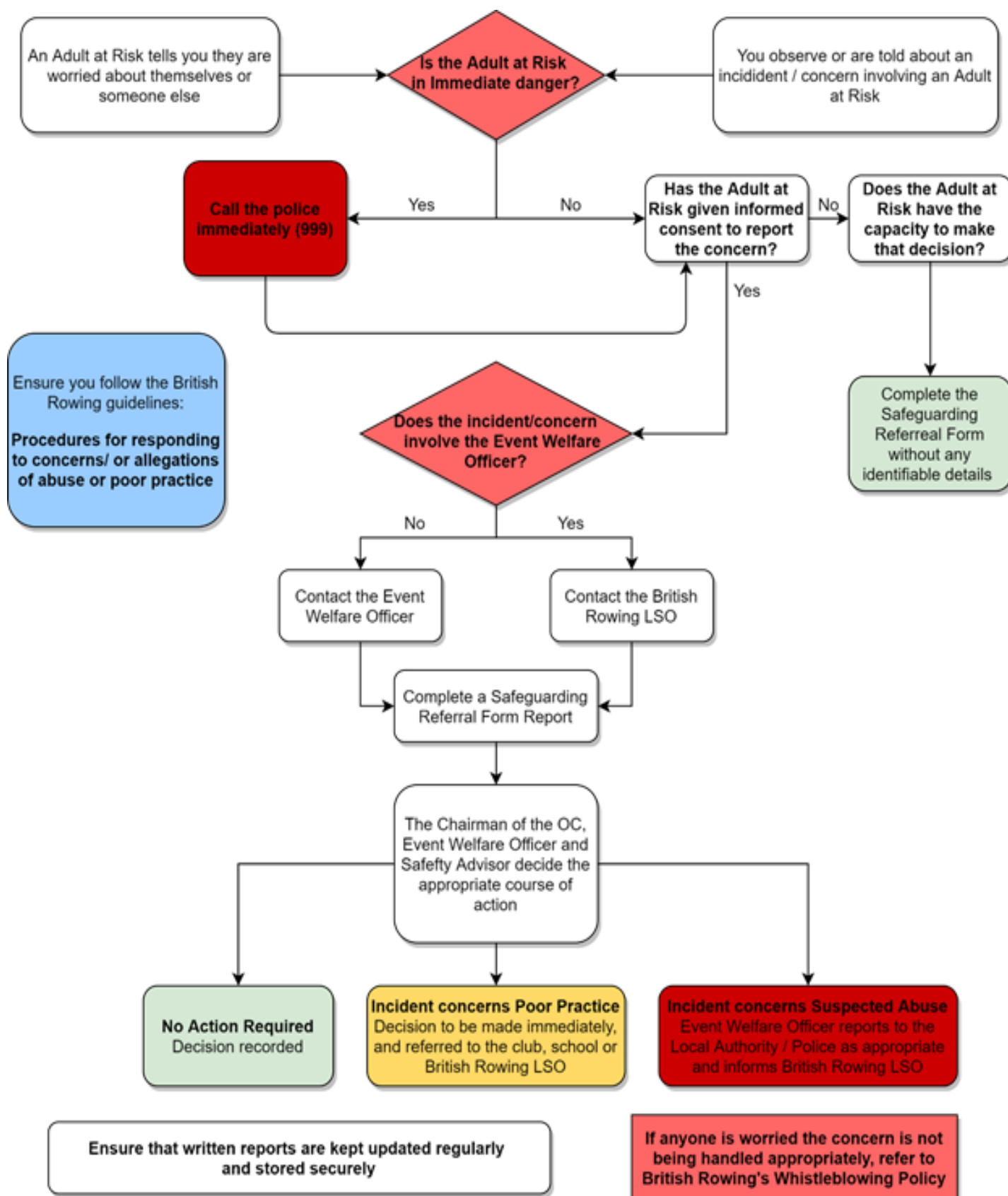
The OC should ensure that appropriate liability insurance is in place to cover young volunteers.

Reporting structure for concerns or allegations at [competition]

Reporting procedures concerning a child:



Reporting procedures concerning an adult at risk:



Medical provision

All medical staff will be sent a copy of this Policy Statement and be given the contact details for the Event Welfare Officer.

In an emergency the Race Committee/Safety Advisor/Welfare Officer should contact the emergency services using 999.

Security

Volunteers and officials may be briefed on exercising vigilance for anything suspicious eg someone unknown to the crews hanging around or tampering with equipment; people taking pictures near the changing facilities.

Missing persons

If a person has been missing for more than 20 minutes, contact the Event Welfare Officer and/or the Event Safety Advisor via any official.

If a child goes missing during an event, the following procedure will be applied.

- Officials must ensure that all other children continue to be supervised appropriately while a search for the child concerned is carried out.
- The initial report must be reported to the EWO.
- The EWO will request all available officials to conduct a search of the surrounding area allocating each individual to a specific area.
- Radio communication should convey a description of the child but not their full name.
- All those searching should be told to report back within a short time, dependent on the size of the area being searched.
- If the child cannot be found after a search of the immediate surroundings, the child's parents/carers should be contacted to advise them of the concern and reassure them that everything is being done to locate the child.
- A note should be made of the circumstances in which the child has gone missing and where he/she was last seen. A detailed physical description of the child should be prepared, including their hair and eye colour, approximate height and build and clothing he/she was wearing, as this will be required by the police.
- The concern should be reported to the police if the search is unsuccessful, no later than 20 minutes after the initial missing person report if the search is ongoing.
- Police guidance should be followed, further action recommended should be taken and close contact with the police maintained;
- All officials involved, the parents, searchers, and police must be informed if at any stage the child is located.

DBS checks, access to young people or their contact details

The Entries Secretary and Registration personnel should not hold any contact details for young people and do not need to be DBS checked. DBS disclosures of medical staff and the Event Welfare Officer shall be checked.

Any personnel having contact unsupervised with minors in an enclosed environment (if they have not had DBS Checks performed) must work in pairs.

Photography and publicity

The OC recognises that at a sports event such as the British Rowing **[competition]** many parents and other supporters will wish to take photographs and all participants should be aware of this.

The OC may approve photography by commercial organisations and these professional photographers will be asked to display a badge to the effect that they are permitted to take photographs. The OC will provide the professional photographers with a copy of British Rowing Photography Policy which they are expected to sign and follow.

A copy of the British Rowing Photography Policy will be available on the British Rowing [welfare guidance documents webpage](#).

Live streaming

The purpose of any live streaming must be to promote a positive image of rowing, and its competitors, officials and spectators. Live streaming should promote the inclusivity and diversity of rowing, and it is important that we reduce any opportunities for misinterpretation or abuse.

The OC will ensure that any company engaged for the purpose of livestreaming provides the Event Welfare Officer with an up-to-date safeguarding policy which also takes into consideration:

- positioning of cameras: this must respect the dignity of any individual;
- promotion of safety: cameras should be redirected away from incidents to avoid any footage which could later be kept and used for the purpose of cyber-bullying.

In accordance with British Rowing's Online Safety and Social Media Policy, competitors using a webcam to contribute to live-streaming should ensure the following.

- The location cannot be identified.
- The use of language and body language is respectful and appropriate for spectators of any age.
- The location is a communal or outdoor space such as a study or dining room and never a bedroom or other private space.
- Subjects are appropriately dressed with full rowing kit.
- Unwanted or inappropriate imagery and personal items (such as family photographs) are not visible. Remember that mirrors (or even windows) can display items or family members you are not expecting to be seen.
- No family members, particularly children, are visible.