

Child Protection Policy

H2O Water sports

Introduction

All personnel working or helping within H2O water sports, must ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff (paid/unpaid) have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer. (Note: Staff/volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.)
- All staff are aware that **David Boffin** is the Director of Hi 5 is the **Nominated Child Protection Officer**, and can be **contacted** on **01189 567556**

Policy statement

H2O water sports, has a duty of care to safeguard from harm all children involved in any of our events and activities. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be considered. Hi 5, will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in our activities and events through adherence to these Child Protection guidelines.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

Policy aims

The aim of the H2O water sports Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Hi 5
- Allowing all staff /volunteers to make informed decisions and give confident responses to specific child protection issues.

Promoting good practice

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school, and the sporting environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people to harm them. A coach, instructor, teacher, official or volunteer will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.

Outdoor activities and sports can play a crucial role in improving a child's self-esteem. We work with children from many differing environments and backgrounds and in all instances Hi 5 activities must work to ensure the child receives the most appropriate support.

Good practice guidelines

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- Always working in an open environment (e.g., avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all young people/disabled adults with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before achieving goals or winning.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance (e.g., it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Building relationships based on mutual trust, which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Making activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play, without prejudice.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and appropriately. Care is needed, as it is difficult to position hands appropriately in certain circumstances. Young people should ideally be consulted, and their agreement gained where possible. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications, and insurance in outdoor activities.
- Involving parents/carers/teachers whenever appropriate. For example, engaging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups must be supervised in the changing rooms, try to ensure that parents, teachers, instructors, or volunteers work in pairs.
- Ensuring that where possible, a male and female member of staff should always accompany mixed groups. However, remember that same-gender abuse can also occur.
- Ensuring that during residential events, adults should avoid entering children's bedrooms and should never invite children into their private rooms.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people with and without disabilities – avoiding excessive physical activity or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Securing parental consent in writing for the child's participation if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any incident or accident that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers

Hi 5 recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that reasonable steps should be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

Where a member of staff is required to work unsupervised and in a nature that leaves opportunity for abuse, the following checks must be made:

- Where we consider it necessary to seek further information, consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau.

Induction

All associates (and volunteers) should receive formal or informal induction, during which:

- Their qualifications should be substantiated.
- Our requirements and their responsibilities should be clarified.
- They should agree to work within the organisation's Health & Safety Policy and this Child Protection Policy in which procedures are explained.

Training

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes raising awareness through discussion to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against established good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations.
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person.
- Work safely and effectively with children.

H20 requires that:

- All associates read the advisory information herein outlining good practice and informing them about what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person or one young person to another.
- Where it is considered necessary, a DBS check is undertaken.