



# **THE RED ROSE CAVE AND POTHOLE CLUB**

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **1. Introduction**

The Red Rose Cave and Pothole Club, hereinafter called the Club, has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved with the Club from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

The Club will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved with the Club through adherence to the child protection guidelines adopted by the Club.

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

### **2. Policy aims**

The aim of this Club's Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice: -

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of the Club.
- Allow all members to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

### **3. 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 in order 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.

### **4. Good practice guidelines**

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

Good practice includes: -



- Understanding and complying with this and the Club's Youth Membership Policies.
- All children whilst on trips or taking part in social activities must be in the care of a parent/guardian or other responsible person.
- Children staying overnight at the Club Headquarters must always be under the supervision of a parent/guardian and should, ordinarily, camp outside with their parents. An exception may be made for Club 'family' events where a group of parent members may agree to exclusively book a bunk room for themselves and their children.
- Always working in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication.
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first.
- Making caving safe, enjoyable and promoting learning skills.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly. If it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is constantly moving, young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and / or other medical treatment. A written record of any injury that occurs will be made, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if Club members are required to transport young people in their cars.

## **5. Practices to be avoided**

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If a case arises where these situations are unavoidable (e.g. the child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital), it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge in the Club, or the child's parents.

- Spending time alone with children away from others.
- Taking or dropping off a child to an event on a one-to-one basis

## **6. Practices never to be sanctioned:**

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never: -

- Engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Share a room with a child unless the child is always accompanied by a parent/guardian or other responsible person.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.



- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults that they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you in your room unsupervised.

**Note:**

It may sometimes be necessary for members to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the child involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

**7. Incidents that must be reported/recorded:**

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a child
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

**8. Use of photographic, video or audio equipment at Club events:**

Photographic, video footage or audio recordings of child members whilst on Club premises or whilst taking part in Club trips or events must be with the approval of both the child member and their supervising adult and similarly their subsequent use in any publications, or on social media.

The parent or guardian may define, in writing to the Club, the frequency and means by which such approval should be sought.

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled people in vulnerable positions. All clubs should be vigilant and any concerns should be reported to the Club Committee.

Video as a coaching aid:

There is no intention to prevent Club members using video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid. However, performers and their parents/carers should be made aware that this is part of the programme and such films should be stored safely.

**9. Action if there are concerns:**

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused or mistreated in any way should be reported to the Club Committee who will promptly take such steps as considered



necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible.

### **10. Confidentiality:**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The Club Committee
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation.

Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

### **11. Internal Enquiries and Suspension:**

The committee may make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending possible further police or social services inquiries.

### **12. Signed on behalf of the committee:**

*Steve Gray*

*22/03/2022*

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Chairman

Date



### **13.Revisions and approval history**

- 12/05/2011 - 1<sup>st</sup> draft.
- 04/06/2011 - Reviewed & Accepted.
- 01/10/2011 - Approved, no updates.
- 09/06/2012 - Reviewed (M. Wilkinson) and Approved, no updates.
- 11/01/2014 - Reviewed, Updated and Approved
- 06/12/2014 - Reviewed (M. Wilkinson) and Approved, no updates.
- 07/07/2018 - Reviewed (C. Makin) and Approved, no updates
- 16/02/2022 - Reviewed S.Lieberman, Changes in line with Youth Membership Policy.
- 22/03/2022 - Above changes approved by 2022 AGM
- 23/12/2025 - Reviewed by Gwen Tawy. No amendments required. Approved by Committee (minuted)