

# **HLSTC Child Safeguarding Policy**

As defined in the Children Act 1989, for the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child. All members, staff and guests of the club should be made aware of this policy.

HLSTC is committed to safeguarding children taking part in its activities from physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or bullying. We recognise that the safety, welfare and needs of the child are paramount and that any child, irrespective of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual or gender identity or social status, has a right to protection from discrimination and abuse. These policies will also apply to vulnerable adults.

## **HLSTC actively seeks to:**

1. Create a safe and welcoming environment, where children have fun and develop their skills and confidence.
2. Recognise that safeguarding children is the responsibility of everyone at the Centre
3. Ensure that training and events are run to the highest possible safety standards.
4. Be prepared to review its ways of working to incorporate best practice.

## **We will:**

1. Treat all children with respect and celebrate their achievements.
2. Carefully recruit and select all employees, contractors and volunteers.
3. Respond swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected or actual abuse.

## **Staff (paid and unpaid)**

As all posts at HLSTC involve regular contact with children, DBS checks (Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure) will be conducted for all staff aged 18 or over, who will have significant, unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults, or will be in a supervisory role. In addition to DBS checks, all staff will be asked to provide references which will specifically enquire into the candidate's suitability to work with children.

## **Guidelines for Staff:**

These common sense guidelines should be followed in order to reduce the risk of suspicions arising, actions being misinterpreted or false accusations being made.

- Avoid spending any significant time working with children in isolation
- Do not take children alone in a car, however short the journey
- Do not take children to your home as part of your organisation's activity

- Where any of these are unavoidable, ensure that they only occur with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation or the child's parents
- Design training programmes that are within the ability of the individual child
- If a child is having difficulty with a wetsuit or buoyancy aid, ask them to ask a friend to help if at all possible
- If you do have to help a child, make sure you are in full view of others, preferably another adult
- Restrict communications with young people via mobile phone, e-mail or social media to group communications about organisational matters. If it's essential to send an individual message, copy it to the child's parent or carer.

You should never:

- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged, or use such language yourself when with children
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- fail to respond to an allegation made by a child; always take advice
- do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.

It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the child (where possible) and their parents/carers. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, parents should be fully informed. In such situations it is important to ensure that any adult present is sensitive to the child and undertakes personal care tasks with the utmost discretion

Staff should refer to their staff training in HLSTC procedures and be aware that their first point of contact for any welfare matter is the duty Senior Instructor.

## **Guidelines for Members and Visitors**

- We have sufficient toilets and changing areas to have designated adult and child facilities. Where these are in use, all members and visitors must use the appropriate signed facility.
- Children on courses must be able to dress themselves and get into and out of a wetsuit.
- Photography and use of media and social networking is restricted: No persons at the club (including parents of children on courses) may take or upload photographs at HLSTC without direct permission from the HLSTC Principal/General Manager. By signing the T&Cs on our booking forms you have already consented to HLSTC taking photographs for promotional purposes, however you will be contacted if this is scheduled to take place on your visit.

## **Concerns**

Anyone who is concerned about a young member's welfare whilst at HLSTC should contact the duty Senior Instructor, Principal/Welfare Officer or General Manager immediately, in strict confidence. The Welfare officer will follow HLSTC procedures (see RYA Flowcharts 1 and 2).

Club Members or Staff should not attempt to deal with a situation themselves. If they have serious concerns where they believe someone to be at immediate risk, they should call 999 and inform them that there is a child protection risk.

Any member of the Club/ Staff failing to comply with this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.