



Elmbridge Canoe Club Safeguarding and Protection Policy

(This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Club Policies and Codes of Conduct. All members and carers are advised to view these documents).

Part I – Safeguarding Children Policy

The principles of Elmbridge Canoe Club. Safeguarding Children Policy are based on our moral and ethical duty to ensure children can enjoy canoeing in a safe environment and as such they reflect current best practice and the legislative framework of England.

Duty of Care:

Elmbridge Canoe Club are committed to ensuring that all those taking part in canoeing are able to do so protected and kept safe from harm. This is particularly true in respect of children. The following definition is used:

“The duty which rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of any person involved in any activity for which that individual or organisation is responsible”

Paddle Safe:

The welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility, particularly when it comes to protecting a child from abuse. Everyone in Paddlesport can help – club officials, coaches, parents, friends and children themselves.

Whilst the welfare of children is our first consideration in establishing child protection policies and procedures, we have also taken account of the needs of coaches, particularly where falsely accused. A feature of our policy on safeguarding children is to ensure that we provide any individual against whom allegations have been made with access to confidential advice, guidance and support, provided separately to that provided for those with concerns that abuse may be taking place.

These safeguarding and child protection procedures stem from the following principles:

- The child’s welfare is paramount.
- Anyone under the age of 18 is classed as a child.



- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief, marital status and sexual identity have a right to be protected from abuse.
- All concerns or allegations of harm must be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

We believe that taking part in Paddlesport should be a positive and enjoyable part of people's lives and to achieve this we have the following aims:

- Club coaches and helpers should follow the British Canoeing [Code of Ethics](#).
- All Club coaches, helpers and officials should read and adhere to the [Paddleuk Safeguarding Adults Policy](#) and the [Paddleuk Safeguarding Children Policy](#). The Club will follow the guidance of the Policies in the event of any concerns or allegations.
- Club coaches and helpers will be provided with relevant training in the safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable groups.
- The Club will ensure that anyone who meets the eligibility criteria for a Disclosure and Barring Service Check will not be deployed until a satisfactory check has been returned.
- All club members are made aware of the Club's Codes of Conduct.
- The Club will obtain written medical details of young paddlers which will be made known to coaches, where deemed appropriate and/or necessary. The onus will be on the parent/carer to ensure details are updated and that the coach leading any given session is aware of relevant medical conditions or recent health episodes that may impact on fitness to paddle.
- Any paddler who coaches for the Club should be a member of Paddleuk and Elmbridge Canoe Club. The Club will encourage and support helpers to gain qualifications and assist coaches to stay updated.
- The Club will identify a person whose role it is to deal with any issues concerning Safeguarding and Child Protection (Club Welfare Officer) and notify this person to all members. Anyone with concerns with respect to the welfare of a child (or other person at risk) should contact that person. If that person is unavailable, they can contact the Paddleuk Safeguarding Officer.
- The Club will review this Policy annually.



What to do if you have a concern:

If you have concerns about the welfare of a child, please remember the golden rule – It is not your responsibility to decide whether a child is being abused – but it is your responsibility to pass the information on to the appropriate person. Make a detailed note of what you have seen or heard but do not delay passing on the information.

If you are a member, or the parent/carer or friend of a member of a canoe club/ centre you should:

- Tell the Club Welfare Officer (Letitia Mackie – details below). At an event tell the person responsible for safeguarding (Event Welfare Officer) or the event organiser – unless, of course you suspect them of being involved OR
- Contact the Paddleuk Lead Officer (details below) OR
- If you need urgent advice, contact the NSPCC Child Protection 24 hours Help Line 0808 800 5000.

If you are the person responsible for safeguarding children at your organisation you can:

- Talk to the child's parents/carers about the concerns if you think there may be an obvious explanation such as a bereavement or pressure from their studies/exams.
- If you need urgent advice, contact the NSPCC Child Protection 24 hours Help Line. Contact your local social services department or, in an emergency, the Police.
- If you are working with paddlers away from home, at a training camp, perhaps, or a national/ regional competition – tell the team manager or the designated welfare officer.

Please note, that when you have reported your concerns to the NSPCC, police or social services you are also required to contact Paddleuk Safeguarding Officer to advise them of your concern and to whom you have reported it. An [Online reporting form](#) for this purpose is available here.

If a child tells you that he or she is being abused

- Stay calm.
- Do not promise to keep it to yourself.
- Listen to what the child says and, please, take it seriously.
- Only ask questions if you need to identify what the child is telling you – do not ask about explicit details.



- Make a detailed note of what the child has told you but, as advised in the previous section, please do not delay passing on the information.

Contacts:

- Club Welfare Officer: Letitia Mackie email: welfare@elmbridgecanoeclub.com
- Paddle UK Safeguarding Team on **01158655354** or safeguarding@paddleuk.org.uk. Paddle UK's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Joy Johnson.
- Surrey: Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Monday to Friday 9 am – 5 pm 03004 709 100
Outside office hours – Emergency Duty Team: 01483 517 898 or email: cspa@surreycc.gov.uk
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline – 0808 800 5000
- Childline: **0800 1111** (24 hour)

Reviewed and Adopted by ECC Committee Nov 2025



Part II – Whistle Blowing Policy

The purpose of Elmbridge Canoe Club's Policy is:

- To encourage individuals to feel confident in raising concerns about the safety and welfare of children, young people and adults involved in canoeing.
- To provide a method of raising concerns and to receive feedback on any action taken.
- To ensure that individuals receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied.
- To reassure individuals that they will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for whistle blowing in good faith.

The whistle blowing policy should only be followed if the person raising the concern feels unable to follow the standard reporting procedures as set out in Paddleuk Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adult policies and procedures.

Confidentiality:

Elmbridge Canoe Club will do its best to protect the identity of the whistle blower when they raise a concern and do not want their name to be disclosed. It must be appreciated that the investigation process may reveal the source of the information and a statement by the whistle blower may be required as part of the evidence. They will be given prior notice of this and a chance to discuss the consequences.

Anonymous Allegations:

This policy encourages the whistle blower to put their name to their allegation. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful, but they will be considered. In exercising the discretion, the factors to be taken into account would include:

- The seriousness of the issues raised.
- The credibility of the concern.
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources or factual records.

Untrue Allegations:

If an individual makes an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against them. If, however, it is established that they have made malicious or



frivolous allegations, or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against them. In such cases, British Canoeing disciplinary procedure will apply.

How to Raise a Concern:

Concerns may be made verbally or in writing. The individual should set out the background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible and the reason why they are particularly concerned about the situation. The earlier the individual expresses concern, the easier it is for someone to take action.

Although the whistle blower is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds for their concern. Individuals should raise their concerns in the first instance to the contacts below:

Paddle UK1 Whistleblowing - whistleblowing@paddleuk.org.uk OR post to: (marked 'Private & Confidential') Whistleblowing, Paddle UK, National Water Sport Centre, Adbolton Lane, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham, NG12 2LU.

If you subsequently feel that you have not received a satisfactory response to your concern, you should contact: Paddle UK Chief Executive (marked 'Private & Confidential') National Water Sport Centre, Adbolton Lane, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham, NG12 2LU.

Although the whistle blower is not expected to prove the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds for their concern.

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