

# **POLICIES ON: PHYSICAL CONTACT AND YOUNG PEOPLE USE OF CHANGING ROOMS ANTI BULLYING EQUALITY**

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Based on BCU guidance issued 15.05.14 and updated 06.03.15

### **1. Guidance to members/parents**

New members (and parents/carers) should note that coaching in paddlesport can properly involve physical contact between coach and student.

Children are encouraged to voice concerns if any physical contact makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened.

### **2. Guidance to Coaches**

**Physical contact during Paddlesport should always be intended to meet the child's needs, not the adult's. The coach/ volunteer should only use physical contact if their aim is to:**

- develop skills or techniques**
- treat an injury**
- prevent an injury or accident from occurring**
- meet the requirements of the activity engaged in**

**The coach/ volunteer should seek to explain the nature and reason for the physical contact to the child reinforcing the teaching or coaching skill. Unless the situation is an emergency, the adult should ask the child for permission.**

**Contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks, breasts or any other part of the body that might cause a child distress or embarrassment.**

**Physical contact should always take place in an open or public environment and not take place in secret or out of sight of others.**

In the case of a young person with a disability, specific support or assistance may be required. When children with disabilities are lifted or manually supported, the child should be treated with dignity and respect. Relevant health and safety guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of the child and those assisting. It is recommended that those assisting receive appropriate training.

### **3. Physical punishment**

**Any form of physical punishment of children is unlawful, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way of restraint.** It is particularly important that coaches /volunteers understand this, both to protect their own position and the overall reputation of the Club.

#### **4. Contact as part of coaching**

Some areas of training are likely to require coaches to come into physical contact with children and young people in the course of their duties, for example, showing a novice how to put on a buoyancy aid, land training in the gym, showing a student how to use a piece of equipment or demonstrating an exercise during a coaching or teaching session in order to reduce the risk of injury. Coaches/ volunteers should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place, and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted. Even where there is a need to support or touch a child, over-handling should be avoided because even justified physical contact between a Coach/ volunteer and a child during legitimate teaching or coaching may be misconstrued or misunderstood by a student, parent or observer.

Touching young participants, including well-intentioned informal and formal gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to questions being raised. As a general principle, coaches /volunteers in positions of responsibility should not make gratuitous or unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. It is particularly unwise to attribute frequent touching to their teaching or coaching style or as a way of relating to young participants.

#### **5. Responding to distress and success**

There may be occasions where a distressed young person needs comfort and reassurance which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent would give. Physical contact may also be required to prevent an accident or injury and this would be wholly appropriate. A young person or coach may also want to mark a success or achievement with a hug or other gesture. Coaches/ volunteers should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is (and what is seen by others present) normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same young person over a period of time. Coaches should also remember that what may feel appropriate to an adult may feel inappropriate to a young person.

## **CHANGING ROOMS POLICY FOR FRANKWELL**

Gender specific changing rooms are available.

Changing rooms are for mixed age group use.

Mobile phones, cameras or any other recording devices **must not** be used in changing rooms at any time.

Parents of U18s are allowed to supervise their child (of the same gender) whilst in the changing room.

Children under the age of 8 can change, when accompanied by their parent, in the changing room of the opposite gender.

## **ANTI BULLYING POLICY**

(BCU policy last updated 02/2015)

### **Statement of Intent**

British Canoeing is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in our sport in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. If bullying does occur, all paddlers or parents should be able to *tell* and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* organisation. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the club welfare officer or any committee member. Please note: This policy refers to Bullying of children and young people.

### **What Is Bullying?**

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can include:

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence and theft
- Verbal name calling, constant teasing, sarcasm, racial or homophobic taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Emotional tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating and ignoring
- Cyber: All areas of internet, such as email, social media and internet chat room misuse. Mobile phone threats by text message, calls, photos and video.

### **Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?**

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect. Paddlers who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. We have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

### **Objectives of this Policy**

- All committee members, coaches, volunteers and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All committee members, coaches, volunteers should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All junior paddlers and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As an organisation we take bullying seriously. Junior paddlers and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

### **Signs and Symptoms**

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is unwilling to go to club sessions
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- feels ill before training sessions
- comes home with clothes torn or possessions damaged or missing
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- is bullying other children or siblings
- is frightened to say what's wrong

- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone

In more extreme cases

- starts stammering
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- stops eating
- runs away or attempts or threatens suicide

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

### **Procedures**

1. Report bullying incidents to your Club Welfare Officer or a member of the committee.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents should be referred to British Canoeing for advice or contact one of the organisations listed below.
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour

### **Recommended Action**

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they should follow the procedure outlined below:

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails or is not appropriate, a panel should meet with the parents/ carers and child alleging bullying to obtain exact details of the allegation. The panel should comprise of the Club Chair, the Club Welfare Officer (CWO) and one other committee member. Minutes should be taken for clarity; these must be agreed and signed as a true account.
3. The same panel should meet with the alleged bully and their parents/ carers to put the allegation to them. They will be asked to answer and give their account of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity; these must be agreed and signed as a true account.
4. If bullying has, in the panel's view, taken place the person should be warned and put on notice of further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension should the bullying continues. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
5. In some cases the parent/ carer of the bully or victim of bullying can be asked to be present at the Club with the young person each time they attend, if appropriate.
6. The Club committee should monitor the situation for a given period to ensure the bullying is not continuing.
7. All coaches/ instructors and volunteers involved with both parties should be made aware of the concerns and sanctions.

### **In the case of adults alleged to be bullying:**

- The Club Welfare Officer (CWO) will follow British Canoeing Child and Vulnerable Groups Protection Policies and Procedures.
- British Canoeing should always be informed and will provide advice on action to be taken.
- British Canoeing will treat the allegation as a Child Protection concern.

### **Prevention**

- The Club will adopt British Canoeing Child and Vulnerable Groups Protection Policy and Procedures. This includes codes of conduct for all members and an anti-bullying policy.
- All members will sign to accept the Club Child Protection Policy upon joining the club.
- The Club Welfare Officer will raise awareness of bullying within the Club. If issues of bullying arise then they will consider meeting with the paddlers to discuss the issue openly and constructively.

We acknowledge our thanks to KIDSCAPE who provide this policy for schools. KIDSCAPE is a voluntary organisation committed to helping to prevent child bullying.

### **HELP ORGANISATIONS:**

KIDSCAPE Anti-Bullying Helpline for Parents 0845 1205 204  
 Family Lives 0808 800 2222  
 NSPCC 24 hour help line 0808 800 5000

## **CLUB SPORTS EQUALITY POLICY** (based on a BCU template dated 2011)

### **What is Sports Equality**

Sports Equality is about fairness in sport; equality of access; recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It involves changing the culture and structure of sport to make it equally accessible to all members of society and ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to realise their talent and full potential.

### **Equality Policy Statement**

The Club is committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and aims to ensure that everyone has a genuine and equal opportunity to participate in Paddlesport at all levels and in all roles of the sport, irrespective of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation. In addition, the Club will endeavour to ensure that all are given the same opportunities regardless of their socio-economic background. This includes members, volunteers, participants, supporters, coaches, officials, job applicants and employees (together known as Stakeholders).

The Club will take, or support, positive action to eliminate individual and institutional discrimination:

- ✓ The Club respects the rights, dignity and worth of every person and will treat everyone equally within the context of their sport.

- ✓ The Club is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from threat of intimidation, victimisation, harassment and abuse.
- ✓ All Club members have a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity and the club's management committee is responsible for implementing, maintaining and dealing with any breaches of this policy.
- ✓ The Club regards any incidence of discriminatory behaviour as serious misconduct and will deal with this according to club disciplinary procedures.

### **Legal Responsibilities**

The Club is required by law not to unlawfully discriminate against its Stakeholders and recognises its legal obligations under, and will abide by the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and any equivalent legislation (as amended) and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality related legislation that may be relevant to the Club.

The Club considers that canoeing is a gender affected sport under the Equality Act 2010 and will adhere to the BCU/Canoe England guidance and policy in relation to participation by transgender athletes. The BCU/Canoe England do not currently have a policy for transgender in place however any queries should be directed to the Lead Officer for Equality in the first instance.

### **Implementation**

A copy of this policy will be posted on the Club website. All persons shall respect, act in accordance with, and thereby support and promote the spirit and intentions of this policy.

### **Reasonable Adjustments**

The Club recognises its duty to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities. The Club will consider all requests for adjustments and where possible will accommodate reasonable requests and will work with disabled Stakeholders to implement any adjustments that will enable them to participate more fully in all Club activities.

### **Types of Unlawful Discrimination**

The Club regards any form of unlawful discrimination as serious misconduct and any employee, volunteer or member who unlawfully discriminates against, harasses or victimises any other person will be liable to appropriate disciplinary action. Unlawful discrimination can take the following forms:

#### ***Direct Discrimination***

- treating a person less favourably than others would be treated in the same circumstances on the grounds of age; disability; gender reassignment;

marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

***Indirect Discrimination***

- occurs when a job requirement or condition is applied equally to all, which has a disproportionate and detrimental effect on one sector of society, because fewer from that sector can comply with it and the requirement cannot be justified in relation to the job.

***Harassment***

- described as inappropriate actions, behaviour, comments or physical contact that are objectionable or cause offence to the recipient or any other individual affected by such conduct.

***Bullying***

- described as the misuse of power, the act of criticising persistently or to humiliate and undermine an individual's confidence.

***Victimisation***

- described as when one person is treated less favourably than others because he or she has taken action under one of the relevant Acts/Regulations or provided information about discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour.

**Declaration of Intent:**

The Club hereby declares that this policy is adopted by the members and committee of The Club and will implement this policy into the club environment: