# PSS Safeguarding Policy

PSS 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. The policy also applies to vulnerable adults, who are defined as individuals aged 18 and over and who are acknowledged as requiring additional support due to a mental or physical disability, learning difficulties, social challenges or are at higher risk due to the misuse of substances.

For the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of 18 should be considered as a child.

Children will not be sailing on our courses unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

All employees should be aware of the policy. Everyone at PSS has responsibility for the safeguarding of students and staff alike and are required to abide by the safeguarding policy.

PSS takes all reasonable steps to ensure that, through safe recruitment, appropriate operating procedures and training, it offers a safe and fun environment to children taking part in its activities and courses.

All relevant concerns, allegations and complaints about safeguarding should be reported without delay, in strict confidence, to the Principal, or designated Welfare Officer, who is responsible for safeguarding at PSS. As much as possible instructors should avoid being with the children without a parent or guardian present. We know this isn't always practical.

All instructors are required to be DBS Approved and to provide relevant references on application. Checks on DBS status will be carried out by PSS staff before any instructors or employees begin any work which involves contact with young people. This information will be stored securely in the Instructors Certificate Tracker in Airtable with updates monitored annually.

All PSS staff and freelancers should follow the good practice guidelines outlined in the Instructor's Handbook.

PSS will seek written consent from parents/carers before taking photos or video of a child during a training session or publishing such images. If PSS publishes images of children, no identifying

information other than names will be included. Any concerns about inappropriate or intrusive photography or the inappropriate use of images should be reported to the Principal who is responsible for safeguarding at PSS.

**Designated Persons**

Although everyone has a role to play in ensuring that children are safe, the Principal has specific responsibility for implementing this policy, and acts as the point of contact to receive information. If the Principal is not available a designated Welfare Officer will be assigned.

**Handling the Media**

If there is an incident at PSS which attracts media interest, or if you are contacted by the media with an allegation concerning a guest, student or employee, do not give any response until you have had an opportunity to check the facts and seek advice from the Designated person.

**Good Practice Guidelines for Instructors**

- 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 act

- 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 both the child (where possible) and their parents/carers. In an emergency situation which requires this type of help, parents/carers should be informed as soon as possible. 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.

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse or find it more difficult to express their concerns. For example:

- a disabled child who relies on a carer to help them get changed may worry that they won't be able to sail any more if they report the carer
- a deaf child may not be able to express themselves or speak confidentially if they need an interpreter
- a child who has experienced racism may find it difficult to trust an adult from a different ethnic background
- children with low self-esteem or mental health problems can be more vulnerable to bullying or abuse, as can gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender young people, or any child who has a characteristic that marks them out in others 'eyes as 'different'.

Approved by Principal 26/02/2025