

Marine Operations, Procedures, and Policies

CWM 01 (Section 5)

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Procedure

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Description
CWF	Challenge Wales Form
CWP	Challenge Wales Policy
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

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5 Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

5.1 Introduction

Challenge Wales is committed to safeguarding the safety and wellbeing of children and adults involved in Challenge Wales activities. As part of the commitment, Challenge Wales wishes to ensure that everyone who takes part in activities, as staff, volunteers or participants, understands the boundaries of appropriate behaviour.

Challenge Wales aims to provide an environment where staff, volunteers and service users are respected and valued and can feel safe and secure. The charity recognises its responsibility to protect children and vulnerable adults, and has developed a safeguarding policy to ensure that effective practices are in place for all of its activities.

In addition to this the charity aims to safeguard the welfare of its staff and volunteers working in potentially volatile situations with children, young people and vulnerable adults. The organisation will ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities with regards to child and vulnerable adult protection, and will provide them with the information, training and supervision that they need for this purpose.

The charity seeks to ensure that its policies and procedures comply with statutory duties, reflect guidance and good practice in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, and that safeguarding arrangements are proportionate and based upon common sense. These guidelines are designed as a reference guide to the safeguarding measures which Challenge Wales expects its staff and volunteers to observe when they have contact with the target groups of this policy.

The charity is committed to practices that protect children and vulnerable adults from harm regardless of age, gender, disability, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic as defined in The Equality Act 2010. For more information on the charities commitment to equality and diversity, please refer to the organisation's Equality and Diversity Policy (CWP 05).

A relationship of trust exists where staff or volunteers are in a position of power or influence over a child or vulnerable adult by virtue of the nature of the activities undertaken by Challenge Wales.

This policy will apply to all the charity's staff, volunteers, and service users.

5.2 Definitions

5.1 Child

The Children's Act 2004, states that anyone under 18 years of age should be considered as a child. This is adhered to for the purposes of this document.

5.2 Vulnerable Adult

A person over 18 years of age who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

People with learning disabilities or mental health problems, older people and disabled people may fall within this definition, particularly when their situation is complicated by additional factors, such as physical frailty or chronic illness, sensory impairment, challenging behaviour, social or emotional problems, poverty or homelessness.

5.3 Abuse

Abuse is "a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons". An abusive act may consist of a single act or repetitive acts. It may be physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, neglect or psychological. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can happen in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. (Department of Health, No Secrets: Guidance on Developing and Implementing Multi-Agency Policies and Procedures to Protect Vulnerable Adults from Abuse, 2000).

The NSPCC state there are four types of child abuse. They are defined in the UK Government guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010* (1.33 – 1.36) as follows:

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional abuse
3. Sexual abuse
4. Neglect

Bullying is not defined as a form of abuse in *Working Together* but there is clear evidence that it is abusive and will include at least one, if not two, three or all four, of the defined categories of abuse. For this reason it has been included in this policy. Psychological abuse would be

defined under emotional abuse but would include verbal insults, isolation of identity, withdrawal of privileges and verbal threats.

Some instances of abuse will constitute a criminal offence. In this respect children and vulnerable adults are entitled to the protection of the law in the same way as any other member of the public. Examples of actions which may constitute criminal offences are assault, whether physical or psychological, sexual assault and rape, theft, fraud or other forms of financial exploitation, and certain forms of discrimination, whether on racial, gender or disability grounds. Alleged criminal offences differ from all other non-criminal forms of abuse in that the responsibility for initiating action invariably rests with the state in the form of the police and the Crown Prosecution Service. Accordingly, when complaints about alleged abuse suggest that a criminal offence may have been committed it is imperative that reference should be made to the police as a matter of urgency. Criminal investigation by the police takes priority over all other lines of enquiry.

The NSPCC further define the forms of abuse as following:-

5.3.1 Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve pushing, hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. It could also include any deliberate act inflicted or an omission or failure to act or protect. The threat of any of these would also be deemed physical abuse. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or Carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

5.3.2 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. These effects may not manifest until into adulthood. Persistency is defined as being over a period of one month or more. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

A child or vulnerable adult may be consistently shouted at, threatened or taunted. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

A child is considered emotionally abused if he/she witness through seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of

children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

5.3.3 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adults to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

5.3.4 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:-

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

5.3.5 Bullying

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but there are several types including: physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling), emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group), non-verbal (e.g. hand signs, text messages, silent calls, ignoring someone) and online or cyberbullying.

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, cause them significant harm (including self-harm). All settings in which

children, young adults or vulnerable adults are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies.

5.4 Aims

The aims of this policy are to:-

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties within the scope of the policy
- Support the promotion of a safe working environment and a culture of care in which the rights of all children and vulnerable adults are protected and respected
- Promote best practice in how staff and volunteers interact with children and vulnerable adults while providing the charity's services
- Develop clear guidance and procedures for staff and volunteers who interact with children and vulnerable adults and ensure through training and support that they are aware of these and are able to implement them
- Enable information sharing about safeguarding concerns with relevant agencies, involving parents/carers, children and vulnerable adults appropriately
- Support procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance
- Ensure that when the charity works with partners, that they have a responsibility to meet acceptable standards of safeguarding to protect children and vulnerable adults

Challenge Wales aims to ensure that:-

- All individuals have a right to be protected and safe from abuse in the activities they, or their parents and carers choose
- Everyone is listened to and heard
- Everyone is valued and treated as individuals
- Everyone is respected for their individuality and identity
- All are encouraged and praised
- Everyone is involved in decisions whenever appropriate

5.5 Responsibilities

5.5.1 All staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are familiar with these policy guidelines
- Creating an environment that promotes wellbeing and ensures personal safety
- Ensuring that they are familiar with and understand this policy and procedure
- Treating all children and vulnerable adults they come into contact with while carrying out their work with respect
- Reporting to their appointed trustee, staff member or senior volunteer any concerns they may have about abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults

This responsibility extends to all staff and volunteers, not just those who are directly working with children and vulnerable adults.

5.5.2 The appointed Trustee is responsible for:

- Ensuring that staff and volunteers for Challenge Wales whose duties will involve contact with children and vulnerable adults are screened at the appropriate level and are appropriately qualified and/or trained in working with these groups
- Ensuring that all necessary procedures and practices are in place to provide adequate protection for both children and vulnerable adults and for the staff and volunteers who work with them
- Ensuring that appropriate records of any incidents are kept and held securely and are communicated to the Independent Safeguarding Authority
- Ensuring that Challenge Wales staff, volunteers and those who work with children or vulnerable adults are adequately trained and are aware of their responsibilities in this area

5.6 Safeguarding Children

5.6.1 Recognising child abuse

Recognising child abuse is not easy and is not the responsibility of staff or volunteers to decide whether abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk. They do however, have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns.

5.6.2 Indications that a child is being abused

Listed below are some more common signs of child abuse which, if seen, may suggest that abuse has occurred. They include but are not limited to:-

- Unexplained injuries such as bruises, cuts or burns particularly if situated on parts of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- Injuries for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- Fear of parents being approached about such injuries
- Reluctance to get changed or wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Flinching when touched or approached
- A failure to thrive or grow
- Sudden speech disorders
- Difficulties in making friends
- The child is prevented from socialising
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour such as bed wetting
- Fear of being left with a specific person
- Sexually explicit behaviour
- Sexual knowledge beyond their age and developmental level
- A distrust of adults/others particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food

- The child is dirty/smelly/unkept
- Loss or gain of weight
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions

This list is by no means definitive and it is important to remember that some children and vulnerable adults may exhibit some of these indicators at some time and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

There may be other reasons for changes in behaviour, for example, the death of a family member or the birth of a new baby. It is crucial that this is only a process of observation and that at no point in time should a staff member or volunteer feel that they should be actively seeking out abuse or an abuser.

The responsibility of the member of staff or volunteer is to report any concerns they may have.

5.6.3 Safeguarding vulnerable adults

In addition to the four main areas of abuse listed above in respect of children (physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect), Vulnerable adults are also open to financial and psychological abuse.

- **Financial abuse** – may include theft, fraud, exploitation and pressure with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions. It may include misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits by someone who has been trusted to handle their finances or who has assumed control of their finances by default
- **Psychological abuse** – includes threats of harm, control, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, enforced isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks. Grooming an adult to hide the activities of abuse by another is abuse. Humiliation, bullying, shouting or swearing can also be seen as abuse

It is not easy to identify adult abuse as sometimes the nature of the abuse is not visible and/or the person being abused is afraid to speak out. However, some of the more common signs of abuse which if seen, may suggest that abuse has occurred, include but are not limited to the following:-

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruises, cuts or burns particularly if situated on parts of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- Injuries for which an explanation seems inconsistent

- Fear of carers being approached about such injuries
- Deterioration of health for no apparent reason
- Loss or gain of weight
- Withdrawal or mood changes
- A carer who is unwilling to allow access to the person
- A person who is unwilling or unhappy about being left alone with a particular carer
- Unexplained shortage or disappearance of money

The responsibility of the member of staff or volunteer is to report any concerns they may have and never to assume that others will do so.

5.7 Accidents

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult is accidentally hurt whilst they are under your supervision or care, you should report the incident as quickly as possible to the Skipper. The Skipper must then deal with the incident in accordance with Challenge Wales standard procedures.

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5.8 Disclosure

Disclosure is a term used to describe the act of a child or vulnerable adult telling an adult or another child that something has happened and they want to talk about it or they may just come right out and tell you they are being abused in some form. It is either only when they are away from their abuser or at a later time/date that they may take the opportunity to tell.

In cases of child abuse the main aim is to remain calm and provide a positive, friendly attitude to make the child feel listened to and safe. Try to be in view of others but try to ensure that your conversation cannot be overheard.

It is unsafe for Challenge Wales personnel to ask probing questions at this or any stage.

This is a simple guide to what to do when someone discloses to you:-

- Listen
- Tell the individual they are safe
- Do not be dismissive
- Inform the individual that you have a legal and moral obligation to record/report all serious allegations
- Let them speak but do not ask any leading questions
- Do not put words into their mouths
- Your role is to listen in a supportive manner but it is not to judge or glean more from the speaker than they want to disclose
- If there is immediate danger inform the authorities
- Remember that you are not qualified to deal with the issue on a deeper level
- Your role is to ensure the safety of the speaker whilst in the care of Challenge Wales
- Record the allegations in as much original detail as you can
- Inform the Skipper or the Child Protection Co-ordinator as appropriate
- Do not hand the speaker back to a person alleged to have caused abuse to them
- Alert the authorities who will make that decision. The decision of what happens post disclosure is not your responsibility
- If in doubt, call Social Services

5.9 Reporting Procedure

Challenge Wales staff, volunteers and service users should be made aware that they can report any complaints, allegations or suspicions to the Skipper or refer to the Child Protection Policy (CWP 03) for alternative Challenge Wales personnel.

Challenge Wales officials are asked to only gather information and record it. Challenge Wales do not carry responsibility beyond this unless the allegation is against a Challenge Wales official. Unnecessary interviewing of the speaker could prejudice a case.

Medical attention should be sought immediately for the person disclosing if required.

If an allegation is made and concerns are about the parent or direct care giver that person should not be informed of Challenge Wales intent to inform the authorities because this could put the individual at further risk.

When responding to allegations of abuse staff or volunteers should:-

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully
- Find an appropriate, early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared. Do not promise to keep secrets
- Allow the speaker to talk at their own pace
- Ask questions **for clarification only** and at all times avoid leading questions. Do not ask questions to reveal more information.
- Ask the person disclosing what action they feel they would like to happen to ensure their own safety and assure them that all will be done to follow those wishes (apart from your silence)
- Reassure the speaker that they have done the right thing in telling you
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- Record what was said using the speaker's words as far as possible. Note the date and time of the report; the place where the alleged abuse took place; the name of the complainant, and if different, the name of the person who has allegedly been abused; the nature of the abuse; a description of any injuries observed. Do not attempt to make any psychological diagnosis.

- Relay this information as soon as possible to the Skipper if onboard Challenge Wales or to the Child Protection Co-ordinator if shore based. If neither is available the next deemed senior person
- Any reporting to Social Services has to be done within 24 hours of the disclosure

This information can be recorded on the Child and Vulnerable Adult Reporting Form (CWF 82).

N.B. If you think a child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger then always contact the Police on 999. Report your actions to the Skipper as stated above.

If whilst on board Challenge Wales it is disclosed that the person who has disclosed information is to be returned to a person they say has abused them (definitions above) you have a duty of care to contact the appropriate organisation so they can be waiting shore side to take the allegations further. Challenge Wales staff and volunteers are not trained or responsible to tackle this issue. The speaker must be informed of your actions and be told why you have this obligation as a duty of care.

It is the role of the Skipper or Child Protection Co-ordinator for Challenge Wales, to assess the disclosure and inform the relevant authorities.

**If unsure call the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000
Or
CHILDLINE on 0800 1111**

5.10 Allegations against a staff member, volunteer or trustee

Any member of staff or volunteer who suspects that a colleague may be abusing children/vulnerable adults or may be acting in any way inappropriately, should act upon their suspicions. They should also act if they suspect a colleague of withholding information regarding a third party whether that third party is a victim of abuse or an instigator of it.

The Skipper or Child Protection Co-ordinator should be informed of any suspicion of abuse or inappropriate behaviour as soon as possible. The details of the incident should be reported noting the date and time of the report; the place where the alleged abuse took place; the name of the member of staff, volunteer or trustee in question; the nature of the abuse/inappropriate behaviour; a description of any injuries observed. The designated Challenge Wales official, after investigation, should make a decision as to whether the matter relates to poor practice or abuse. The matter will be dealt with in accordance with the charity's Disciplinary Policy

and Procedure. The decision to refer to outside agencies will follow the same process as any other disclosure or suspicion of abuse.

Any allegations of child abuse or its support by a member of staff or a volunteer will be taken seriously by Challenge Wales. One of the three following is a possible outcome:-

1. A criminal investigation
2. A child protection investigation carried out by Social Services
3. A disciplinary or misconduct investigation by Challenge Wales

Challenge Wales will be sympathetic towards the person reporting issues in violation of this policy as their actions could bring feelings of guilt and anxiety. Support may be required and would be provided if necessary.

5.11 The Role of the Child/Vulnerable Adult Co-Ordinator

When the report is received the co-ordinator reads the report form and takes the following action:-

- Steps are taken to ensure that the person being reported does not continue to have access to the child, other children or vulnerable adults until the matter is resolved where Challenge Wales is concerned
- The co-ordinator may feel that the allegations are so serious that the police are informed at once
- Less serious advice is sought from other appropriate statutory authorities
- Where appropriate (i.e. the allegation is not against the parent or carer) the parent/ carer is informed of the allegations and will be kept informed of any investigation by Challenge Wales
- The co-ordinator will report to Social Services within 24 hours of the disclosure.

5.12 Safeguarding Code of Conduct and Good Practice

These guidelines are designed, not only to protect children and vulnerable adults but also to protect staff members and volunteers from situations where false allegations might occur.

The charity recognises that it is not practical to provide definitive instructions that would apply to all situations at all times when staff and volunteers come into contact with children or vulnerable adults. However, standards of behaviour required are detailed below.

Staff and volunteers must:-

- Treat all children and vulnerable adults with respect
- Provide an example of good conduct that they would wish others to follow
- Ensure that wherever possible that there is more than one adult present during activities with children and vulnerable adults or at least they are within the sight and hearing of others
- Respect the child/vulnerable adult's right to personal privacy and encourage them to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they don't like
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions
- Believe as the default any allegations made
- Be aware that physical contact with a child/vulnerable adult might be misinterpreted and be mindful of how and where they touch them. However be aware of a visually impaired person's need for physical contact but ensure that contact is appropriate and with the consent of the individual involved
- Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues
- Challenge all unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse

Staff and volunteers must **not**:-

- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or vulnerable adults
- Spend excessive time alone with a service user away from others
- Make sexually suggestive comments
- Make derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children/vulnerable adults
- Show favouritism
- Ask people to do things that are potentially dangerous, illegal or otherwise unreasonable
- Allow bullying
- Take children or vulnerable adults alone in a vehicle unless in an emergency

- Take children/vulnerable adults to their home
- Meet up with children/vulnerable adults outside of their work with the charity unless it is with the full consent and knowledge of the person's parents/carer and the Skipper
- Engage in rough, physical games with children/vulnerable adults
- Do things of a personal nature for a child/vulnerable adult that they could do themselves
- Where assistance is needed e.g. putting on wet weather clothing; keep the door open at all times
- Give a service user your personal contact details or connect personally on social media
- Allow allegations to go unrecorded and reported
- Physically restrain a child or vulnerable adult unless the restraint is to prevent physical injury. **In all circumstances physical restraint must be appropriate and reasonable; otherwise the action can be defined as assault.**

Staff and volunteers who engage in any of the above may be subject to disciplinary action under the charity's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

5.13 Taking Children or Vulnerable Adults on Voyages and/or Visits

The following should be observed when taking children/vulnerable adults on voyages and/or visits:-

- All information about the visit/voyage must be given in written form for parents/carers. Updates must be given in good time.
- If children need to come out of school, permission should also be sought from the school
- Parents/carers should be given a full itinerary, when known and provided with both office and boats contact numbers.
- Consent forms must be collected for each participant with parent/carer signatures when appropriate.
- Overnight voyages require more information regarding medication, dietary needs, emergency contact numbers, taking part agreements and emergency medical treatment forms

- Parent/carers should have the opportunity to meet with the charity's officials if they voice a need deemed valid

5.14 Behaviour

It is policy to undertake an open discussion at the first opportunity after all have joined the yacht. The aim is to get everyone to make a contribution, giving everyone the opportunity to speak and a behaviour contract is agreed. Clear boundaries according to the service users understanding need to be set so all are aware of the routines, procedures and everyone knows what is expected of them.

Further detail of the above can be found within the narrative of the Behaviour Policy (CWP 12).

5.15 Embedding this Policy

It is the responsibility of Challenge Wales to ensure the implementation of this policy. All staff and volunteers have to abide to the procedures detailed and the ethos that supports it. To this end Challenge Wales must ensure that all personnel have read, agree to, and understood this policy.

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