**Scarborough and District Canoe Club - Whistleblowing Policy**

**Purpose**

* To encourage individuals to feel confident in raising concerns about the safety and welfare of children, young people and adults involved in paddling in Scarborough and District Canoe Club.
* 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 whistleblowing in good faith.

**Key Principles**

The following important principles are contained within this policy:

* This policy is complementary to Scarborough and District Canoe Club’s Safeguarding Children Policy, Safeguarding Adults Policy and Code of Conduct
* It also sits within the context of British Canoeing Safeguarding Policies, Code of Ethics and procedures.
* If a matter results in any disciplinary action, Scarborough and District Canoe Club disciplinary procedures will apply (or those of British Canoeing).

**General Principles**

Coaches, committee members, and volunteers are often the first to realise that the safety and welfare of a child or adult are under threat. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be too difficult. It may also be that they fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances it may be easier to ignore concerns rather than report what may just be a suspicion of poor practice.

Scarborough and District Canoe Club are committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability. In line with that commitment, individuals are encouraged, if they have serious concerns about any aspect of someone else’s safety and welfare, to come forward and voice those concerns.

This policy makes it clear that individuals can raise a matter of concern without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. The policy is intended to encourage and enable individuals to raise serious concerns within Scarborough and District Canoe Club and British Canoeing, rather than overlooking a problem or blowing the whistle outside the sport.

It is in the interest of all concerned that disclosure of potential abuse or concerns are dealt with properly, quickly and discreetly. This includes the interests of Scarborough and District Canoe Club and any persons who are the subject of any complaint, as well as the person making the complaint.

**Safeguards**

Scarborough and District Canoe Club is committed to good practice and high standards and aims to be supportive of everyone in the Club.

Scarborough and District Canoe Club recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If an individual believes what they are saying to be true, in reporting their concern they will be doing their duty of care to the child, young person or adult concerned.

Scarborough and District Canoe Club will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation and will take appropriate action to protect individuals when they raise a concern in good faith.

**Confidentiality**

All whistleblowing concerns will be treated with confidentiality and can be done so anonymously.

Whistleblowers are encouraged by British Canoeing to report under their name as anonymous disclosures are less powerful, and if referred to British Canoeing will only be considered at the discretion of British Canoeing Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Case Management Group.

Factors taken into account in this consideration are:

* The seriousness of the concern raised.
* The credibility of the concern.
* The likelihood of confirming the allegation.

**Untrue Allegations**

If a concern is raised in good faith is proven untrue, no action will be taken against them.

If an untrue concern is raised maliciously or for self-gain, Scarborough and District Canoe Club will not tolerate this and action will be taken.

The whistleblowing policy should only be followed if the person raising the concern feels unable to follow the standard reporting procedures set out by Scarbrough and District Canoe Club and British Canoeing, or if they are not satisfied with the response of the Club to an allegation.

**How to raise a concern**

Concerns can 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 a concern is expressed, the easier it is for action to be taken.

Although the individual will not be expected to prove the allegation, they will need to demonstrate sufficient grounds for their concern.

Whistleblowing concerns should be raised, in the first instance to:

British Canoeing Safeguarding Lead: 01158 968842

Email: safeguarding@britisgcanoeing.org.uk

Or Post to:

British Canoeing

National Water Sport Centre

Abolton Lane

Holme Pierrepont

Nottingham

NG12 2LU

If you do not believe you have received a satisfactory, you should approach British Canoeing Chief Executive.

**How British Canoeing Will Respond**

Action taken by British Canoeing will depend on the nature of the concern. All concerns will be referred to the British Canoeing Safeguarding Case Management Group.

In order to protect individuals it is likely that the Safeguarding Lead will conduct initial enquiries so that the Safeguarding Case Management Group members can decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.

Receipt of the individuals concern will be acknowledged within five working days, the Safeguarding Lead will write to them:

* Indicating how the matter will be dealt with.
* Giving an estimate of how long it will take to provide a final response.
* Tell them whether any initial enquiries have been made.
* Tell them whether further investigations will take place, and if not, why not.

The amount of contact between the Safeguarding Case Management Group and the individual raising the concern, will be dependent on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. Further information may be sought from the whistleblower as part of the investigation process.

**How the matter can be taken further**

This policy is intended to provide individuals with a way of raising concerns about the safety and welfare of anyone paddling within the Club or any activity under the jurisdiction of British Canoeing.

British Canoeing aim to resolve all Safeguarding concerns raised by Whistleblowers, however if they are not satisfied with the response there are a number of ways to raise the matter outside of British Canoeing:

* The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU).
* Local Area Child Protection Committee.
* Local Social Services.
* Local Police.

If any concern is reported outside British Canoeing, the individual must ensure they do not disclose any prohibited confidential information.

For further information, please refer to British Canoeing Whistleblowing Policy at:

<https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/guidance-resources/safeguarding/policies-guidance-and-templates>

Useful contacts:

<https://www.britishcanoeing.org.uk/guidance-resources/safeguarding/safeguarding-contacts>

Signed: Date:

Scarbrough and District Canoe Club Chairperson