

# West Yorkshire Canoe Club

## Safeguarding Policy

Document Information	
Version	1.0
Approved by	WYCC Committee
Date approved	April 2026
Review due	April 2027
Policy owner	Club Welfare Officer
Applies to	All members, coaches, volunteers and visitors

### 1. Policy Statement

West Yorkshire Canoe Club (WYCC) is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk who participate in our activities. We believe that everyone who takes part in paddlesport should be able to do so in a safe, positive and enjoyable environment.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone involved with the club. This policy applies to all WYCC members, coaches, volunteers, committee members, and any other individuals who come into contact with participants through club activities, whether on water, at pool sessions, on trips, at camps or at club events.

WYCC will not tolerate abuse, bullying, harassment, discrimination or harm of any kind directed at any person participating in our sport.

### 2. Adoption of Paddle UK Policies

As an affiliated club of Paddle UK (a trading name of British Canoeing), WYCC formally adopts and implements the following national governing body policies:

- Paddle UK Safeguarding Children Policy (P1)
- Paddle UK Safeguarding Adults Policy (P6) – updated May 2024
- Paddle UK Safeguarding Procedure – updated March 2026

These policies set out in full the definitions, procedures, standards of behaviour and reporting mechanisms required of all affiliated clubs. All WYCC members, coaches and volunteers are bound by these policies and are expected to read and understand the relevant sections applicable to their role.

Copies of all Paddle UK safeguarding policies are available on the Paddle UK website at [www.paddleuk.org.uk](http://www.paddleuk.org.uk) and are accessible via the WYCC website.

*A key principle of the Paddle UK Safeguarding Adults Policy is that adults have the right to self-determination. Adults must normally provide consent before concerns about them are reported to third parties, except where others are at risk, a crime may have been committed, the adult lacks capacity, or not intervening would cause further harm.*

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all activities organised or facilitated by WYCC, including:

- Pool sessions at Minsthorpe Leisure Centre and any other venues
- Open water sessions and club trips on rivers, lakes and open water
- Training and coaching sessions
- Summer camps, including the Sleningford Watermill Summer Camp
- Competitions and events
- Social and committee activities
- Any online or digital communications involving club participants

The policy applies regardless of the age, disability, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation of any participant.

### 4. Key Roles and Contacts

The following individuals hold designated safeguarding responsibilities within WYCC:

Role	Name / Contact
<b>Club Welfare Officer (CWO) and Safeguarding Lead</b>	Ben <a href="mailto:Ben@westyorkshirecanoeclub.com">Ben@westyorkshirecanoeclub.com</a> SMS: 07441 445 450
<b>Paddle UK Safeguarding Team (England)</b>	safeguarding@paddleuk.org.uk Tel: 0115 8655354
<b>Paddle UK Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	Via safeguarding@paddleuk.org.uk

If the Club Welfare Officer is unavailable, or if the concern relates to the CWO themselves, concerns should be reported directly to the Paddle UK Safeguarding Team.

### 5. Responsibilities

---

## 5.1 Club Welfare Officer

The Club Welfare Officer (CWO) has designated responsibility for safeguarding within WYCC. The CWO will:

- Act as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns within the club
- Ensure all concerns are reported to the Paddle UK Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without unnecessary delay
- Maintain the club's safer recruitment procedures, including oversight of DBS checks for those in regulated activity
- Ensure that safeguarding policies are reviewed annually and remain current
- Promote a safeguarding culture within the club
- Signpost members and volunteers to relevant training opportunities

## 5.2 All Members, Coaches and Volunteers

All individuals involved with WYCC have a responsibility to:

- Familiarise themselves with this policy and the relevant Paddle UK safeguarding policies
- Report any safeguarding concerns to the CWO or, if necessary, directly to Paddle UK or statutory agencies
- Not investigate concerns themselves – their responsibility is to pass the information on
- Maintain appropriate boundaries with participants at all times
- Complete safeguarding training appropriate to their role

## 5.3 The Trustees and Committee

The WYCC Trustees and Committee is responsible for ensuring that:

- A Club Welfare Officer is appointed and appropriately trained at all times
- This policy is reviewed and approved annually
- Sufficient resources are made available to support safeguarding activity
- Safer recruitment procedures are followed for all roles involving regulated activity

---

## 6. Safer Recruitment

WYCC follows the Paddle UK safer recruitment guidance. Any individual taking on a role that involves regulated activity with children or adults at risk must:

- Complete an Enhanced DBS disclosure check before taking up the role
- Provide references as required
- Complete appropriate safeguarding training

An adverse DBS disclosure will be assessed in accordance with the Paddle UK Safeguarding Procedure. It does not necessarily bar an individual from their role, but the matter will be reviewed by the relevant Paddle UK personnel in line with the Procedure.

---

## 7. Reporting Concerns

---

If you witness, suspect or receive a disclosure of abuse or poor practice, you should:

**RECOGNISE** – be alert to possible signs and indicators of abuse or concern

**RESPOND** – listen carefully, stay calm, do not investigate or ask leading questions

**REPORT** – tell the CWO (or Paddle UK if the CWO is unavailable or implicated)

**RECORD** – document what you witnessed or were told, using the person's exact words where possible, as soon as practicable and within 24 hours

Concerns should be reported to the CWO as soon as possible. If the concern is urgent or the CWO is unavailable, contact the Paddle UK Safeguarding Team directly ([safeguarding@paddleuk.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@paddleuk.org.uk) or 0115 8655354), or in an emergency contact the Police or Social Services.

Referrals relating to adults should take account of the adult's right to self-determination unless an exception applies (see Section 2 and the Paddle UK Safeguarding Adults Policy P6).

If you have concerns about the behaviour of a coach, volunteer or committee member, this must be reported to the Paddle UK Safeguarding Team (or relevant National Association) either directly or via the CWO within 24 hours.

---

## 8. Confidentiality

---

All safeguarding concerns will be treated sensitively and confidentially. Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to protect the individual or others, or where required by law.

Confidentiality does not mean secrecy. It is never appropriate to promise to keep a safeguarding concern secret. WYCC will follow the Paddle UK Safeguarding Procedure in relation to the sharing and retention of safeguarding information.

---

## 9. Code of Conduct and Best Practice

---

All WYCC coaches, volunteers and committee members are expected to:

- Treat all participants with dignity and respect
- Maintain appropriate physical and professional boundaries
- Avoid situations where they are alone with a child or adult at risk in circumstances that cannot be observed by others

- 
- Not engage in or facilitate one-to-one digital communications with children outside of the club's normal communication channels
  - Report concerns rather than attempting to handle them informally
  - Model the behaviour expected of all participants

## 10. Photography and Digital Media

---

WYCC will obtain appropriate consent before taking or using photographs or video of participants, particularly children. Images will not be shared on social media or the club website without consent. Any concerns about inappropriate photography or sharing of images should be reported to the CWO.

## 11. Training

---

The CWO will hold current Club Welfare Officer training as required by Paddle UK. All coaches and session leaders working with children or adults at risk are expected to complete appropriate safeguarding training before undertaking such roles. The committee will maintain a record of training completed by club officials.

## 12. Review

---

This policy will be reviewed annually by the CWO and approved by the WYCC Committee, or sooner if there is a change in legislation, Paddle UK guidance, or a significant safeguarding event within the club.

This policy does not override the Paddle UK Safeguarding Procedure or the national policies adopted under Section 2 of this document. In the event of any conflict, the Paddle UK policies and procedures shall take precedence.

## Appendix – Related Policies and Documents

---

- Paddle UK Safeguarding Children Policy (P1) – [www.paddleuk.org.uk](http://www.paddleuk.org.uk)
- Paddle UK Safeguarding Adults Policy (P6) – May 2024 – [www.paddleuk.org.uk](http://www.paddleuk.org.uk)
- Paddle UK Safeguarding Procedure – March 2026 – [www.paddleuk.org.uk](http://www.paddleuk.org.uk)
- Paddle UK Anti-Bullying Policy
- Paddle UK Safeguarding Whistle Blowing Policy
- Paddle UK Safer Recruitment Procedures
- WYCC GDPR and Data Protection Policy
- WYCC Code of Conduct