

Child Protection Policy

Purpose

We believe every child has the right to have fun, be safe, protected, and free from harm when participating in rowing at our club. Invercargill Rowing Club is committed to a safeguarding culture to ensure that everyone has a safe and enjoyable rowing experience. Safeguarding is about keeping all children safe from harm, abuse, violence, exploitation, and neglect by ensuring we recognise and respond appropriately to any suspected or confirmed abuse.

Scope

This policy applies to all rowers, staff, volunteers, contractors, and representatives of Invercargill Rowing Club (members). For the purposes of this policy and associated procedures, a child is recognised as anyone under 18 years old.

Policy Statement

Invercargill Rowing Club is a rowing club providing children with on and off water rowing training and racing experiences. We are fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of children by identifying and responding to vulnerability, child abuse and neglect in an effective and efficient manner.

We recognise the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm and to ensure that members are trained and skilled to know the signs of abuse, apply our policies and procedures and act appropriately and effectively in response to a concern or incident.

Members and volunteers will work together to demonstrate a strong organisational child protection culture to ensure that the rights of children are respected.

Policy Objectives

The objective of this policy is to ensure all members of Invercargill Rowing Club receive the support they need to promote good practice by:

- Promoting the health and welfare of children by providing opportunities for them to take part in sport and physical activity safely;
- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children;
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Person;



- Requiring the adoption and compliance with this Child Protection Policy and associated policies and procedures;
- Promoting and implementing appropriate safeguarding procedures;
- Providing safer recruitment and training to enable members to identify and respond appropriately to suspicion, disclosure or allegations of vulnerability, abuse or neglect, to protect children from harm and to reduce the risk of allegations or complaints against themselves;
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating the implementation of this policy and procedures.

Definitions

The Oranga Tamariki Act, 1989, defines child abuse as “...the harming (whether physically, emotionally, sexually), ill-treatment, abuse, neglect, or deprivation of any child or young person”.

(further explanation of these definitions of abuse can be found in Appendix B)

Responsibilities

Ensuring children are kept safe is a shared responsibility concerning anyone involved in the rowing experiences we provide. It is the responsibility of members to be vigilant, have knowledge and awareness of the indicators of neglect, potential or actual abuse and to report any concerns, suspicions or allegations of suspected abuse immediately and ensure that the concern is taken seriously and reported.

Designated Safeguarding Person

Invercargill Rowing Club has appointed the following people as Designated Safeguarding Person/s:

Please contact Kate Watkinson, Nigel Jack or Rachel Greenwood with any issues relating to a child’s safety, wellbeing or for guidance regarding the club’s safeguarding and child protection policy.

The Designated Safeguarding Person/s is responsible for ensuring that child safeguarding and protection is a key focus within Invercargill Rowing Club and that appropriate protocols, procedures, and training are in place. Invercargill Rowing Club must ensure that a Designated Safeguarding Person is appointed and given appropriate training.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Person/s is to:

- ensure that the needs and rights of children come first as their safety and wellbeing is paramount.

Date of last review



- ensure clear, confidential, detailed, and dated records on all child protection cases are taken and secure. These must contain all available information relating to the cause for concern and any subsequent action taken, including when it has been decided not to make a notification to Oranga Tamariki or the Police. These records will be kept separate from other records for the purpose of confidentiality.
- establish a close link with the relevant local agencies to ensure clear and effective communication and be a recognised contact within Invercargill Rowing Club for agencies to contact regarding concerns.
- ensure that all members are supported appropriately when dealing with child protection concerns.
- consult with the Invercargill Rowing Club Committee Chairperson regarding all child protection concerns.

Confidentiality / Information Sharing

We are committed to sharing information as appropriate, therefore if there is a concern about a child, the Designated person and/or Invercargill Rowing Club Committee Chairperson will seek advice from Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police before identifying information about an allegation is shared with anyone else.

In addition to seeking advice from Oranga Tamariki and the Police, we will refer to the privacy commission guidelines on sharing information about vulnerable children, to guide decisions on when to share information and talk to parents/whanau/caregivers.

The Designated person will be responsible for ensuring that any information relating to a child protection matter is stored securely online, within a restricted access area. The Designated person will also be responsible for the secure and confidential sharing of relevant information when required.

Under the Privacy Act 1993 and the Children and Young People's Well-being Act 1989, members will disclose information when there is a good reason to do so. Under sections 15 and 16 of the Children and Young People's Well-being Act 1989, any person who has a concern that a child has been or is likely to be harmed may report the matter to Oranga Tamariki or the Police and provided the report is made in good faith, no civil, criminal or disciplinary procedures will be brought against them.

Safe Working Practices

When working/dealing with children in rowing, adults need to establish and maintain clear and professional boundaries. The following safe practices are expected at Invercargill Rowing Club and ensures that all members are working in ways which reduce any risk to children, themselves and minimises the opportunity for harmful behaviour to occur.

Personal Responsibilities

Should	Should NOT
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Always act, and be seen to act, in the child's welfare and best interests	Use position of power to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce, or undermine a child
Record and report situations which may give rise to concern from either party	Use status and standing to form or promote relationships which are, or may become, inappropriate or of a sexual nature.
Be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described	Display conduct that would lead any reasonable person to question motivation and/or intentions
Always make sure training and racing is appropriate for the age and stage of the child.	

Contact and Communication with Children

Should	Should NOT
Always inform other colleagues or parents about one on one contact beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by	Meet with a child in a remote, secluded area. One on one contact should be avoided
Obtain parents or caregivers consent before displaying or distributing images of children	Take images 'in secret', or take images in situations that may be construed as being secretive or private
Ensure that personal social networking sites are set to private and children are never listed as approved contacts	Engage in communication with a child on a one-one-one basis through social media and texting other than for administration e.g. communicating training times
Understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified	Use language or conduct that gives rise to comment or speculation
Always explain what is happening and seek permission when physical contact is required e.g. first aid or technical guidance	Touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent

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Camps and regattas

Should	Should NOT
Ensure adults are vigilant in maintaining their privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations, particularly on overnight stays or in changing rooms.	Share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with parents or caregivers.
Use an 'open door policy' if entering a child's room. If possible, have another person present.	Share beds with a child.

Safe Recruitment

Effective screening which involves a rigorous and consistent process that looks at the information available about a person, can significantly reduce the risk to children and ensure we employ/select the best people for roles within Invercargill Rowing Club. Candidates will be assessed to ensure they are a safe person to work with them.

Safe recruitment processes at Invercargill Rowing Club include:

- the advert and position description will state the degree of contact and the level of responsibility with children.
- Job application forms will advise candidates if the role is subject to a police vetting check.
- Application forms, interviews and referee checks will be designed to provide the panel with valuable information about the candidate, including their attitudes; and their experiences and relationships in working with children and young people.
- Prospective and existing volunteers will be made aware that a periodic safety check is part of their employment conditions.
- Adults assisting with camps or overnight stays at regattas will be made aware that periodic safety checks are possible.

Induction and Training

To enable Invercargill Rowing Club to build a safeguarding culture where the safety of children is paramount, safeguarding training will be provided to all members at least every three years.

Child protection procedures will be included as part of the induction process. All new members will be taken through the child protection policy and associated procedures,

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advised where they are located online and asked to ensure that they read and understand the content.

All members will be informed promptly of any changes to the child protection policy and associated procedures. Access to annual training opportunities will be provided, particularly to individuals who are working directly with children or who are the designated person.

Handling Disclosures from a Child

Disclosure of abuse may come directly from the child. In such circumstances it is important to respond in a calm, caring and sensitive manner. It is important that members take what the child says seriously. This applies irrespective of the setting, or the member of member's own opinion on what the child is saying. The child is never to blame in situations of abuse and should be reassured they have done nothing wrong, either in relation to the abuse itself or in reporting it. Children need to know that members are listening and taking seriously the information divulged. They need members to respond positively to ensure their future protection.

It is important to record what is said at the time, if appropriate, or as soon as possible following the disclosure. It may not be appropriate to enquire into further details at this stage. The child also needs information and an explanation of what will, or is likely to, happen next.

Under no circumstances should a member of members attempt to conduct an investigation or deal with concerns of abuse by themselves.

Reporting a Complaint or Allegations made against Members

Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against members must be taken seriously and reported to the Designated Person who will deal with the allegation immediately, sensitively and expediently within the procedures outlined in this policy and associated procedures.

If the Police decide to undertake a criminal investigation then the member may be suspended as outlined in their individual Employment Agreement or applicable contract, without prejudice, as a precautionary measure. It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken, and no evidence gathered that might prejudice the criminal investigation.

Any complaint will be considered in accordance with the principles of natural justice and must ensure that all parties to the complaint are accorded the full benefit of those principles. Where a complaint is investigated but not substantiated, the findings along with a right of reply should be held on the record.

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Relevant Legislation

This policy adheres to the following acts:

- The Privacy Act 1993
- The Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 / The Children and Young People's Well-being Act 1989
- Children's Act 2014
- Vulnerable Children (Requirements for Safety Checks of Children's Workers) Regulations 2015
- Health and Safety Act 2015
- Employment Relations Act 2000
- Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015
- Family Violence Act 2018
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC)

Policy Review

Changes to this policy must be authorised by the Invercargill Rowing Club Committee. This policy will be reviewed and amended if necessary, at least every three years. The Committee may amend the policy at any time that it sees fit.

Date of last review