



Registered Charity
SC053271

Nairn Sailing Club

Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Policy & Procedure

Document Control:

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Update History

Version number	Changes summary	Author	Date
0.1	Updated with 2025 changes from Malcolm Gillies	Stuart Fox	7 October 2025
0.2	Further updates	Stuart Fox	7 January 2026
1	Updates from Malcolm Gillies feedback and Board approval	Stuart Fox	12 February 2026

1. Introduction

Nairn Sailing Club (NSC) is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all its members, particularly children, young people, and vulnerable adults. NSC recognises the importance of providing a safe environment for everyone to enjoy sailing, and acknowledges its responsibilities under the **Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme**.

This policy outlines the procedures and expectations for safeguarding vulnerable groups, including children (under 18) and protected adults (over 18) at risk. It applies to all Club members, staff, coaches, volunteers, and board members.

2. NSC's Commitment

- NSC is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable environment for all members and visitors.
- Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone at NSC, and NSC will take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to any concerns.
- NSC will treat all members with respect, dignity, and equality.

3. The PVG Scheme and Regulated Roles

The **PVG Scheme**, established under the **Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007**, requires anyone working in a regulated role with vulnerable groups to be a member of the PVG scheme. This includes paid and voluntary positions that involve contact with children or vulnerable adults.

- **Regulated Role:** Any position or activity where an individual has regular contact, supervision, or responsibility over children or vulnerable adults.
- **Who Needs to Apply?** Anyone carrying out a regulated role must be a PVG member. This includes staff, volunteers, coaches, instructors, and board members working directly with vulnerable groups.

4. NSC's Responsibilities

- **PVG Checks:** NSC will carry out PVG checks for all individuals in regulated roles before they begin their duties.
- **Compliance:** NSC will ensure compliance with the PVG Scheme by regularly checking that relevant members renew their PVG checks every 5 years.
- **PVG Officer:** NSC's designated PVG Officer will oversee the implementation of the PVG policy and maintain records of PVG memberships.

5. Application Process for PVG Checks

1. **Role Evaluation:** The PVG Officer will evaluate each role to determine if it requires a PVG check using **Disclosure Scotland's Regulated Roles Tool**.
2. **PVG Application:** Once identified as a regulated role, the PVG Officer will initiate the PVG application process through Disclosure Scotland.

3. **Approval:** No individual may begin regulated duties until a valid PVG disclosure has been received.
4. **Record-Keeping:** All disclosures will be securely stored and kept up-to-date, with expiration dates tracked.

6. Good Practice Guidelines

NSC expects all members, staff, and volunteers to follow best practices when working with vulnerable groups. This includes:

- **Supervision:** Always ensure that activities are appropriately supervised, particularly when children or vulnerable adults are involved.
- **Physical Contact:** Minimise unnecessary physical contact, and ensure any required contact (such as for safety) is appropriate, brief, and in the presence of others.
- **Training:** All coaches, instructors, and volunteers will receive safeguarding and PVG training as appropriate for their role.
- **Communication:** Limit private communication with young people (e.g., via social media or text messages) to group communications and official Club matters.

7. Reporting Concerns

If anyone at NSC has concerns about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, they should report the concern immediately to the Welfare Officer or the Commodore. NSC will follow the **RYA Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** for reporting and responding to safeguarding issues.

- **Recording Concerns:** Any concerns or disclosures should be recorded immediately, ensuring confidentiality where required.
- **Action:** The Welfare Officer will assess the situation and, if necessary, contact external agencies (e.g., social services or the police) in line with statutory requirements.

8. Code of Conduct

All members of NSC, particularly those working directly with children or vulnerable adults, must follow the Club's **Code of Conduct**, which includes:

- **Respect:** Treat all individuals with respect and fairness.
- **Behaviour:** Avoid inappropriate language, conduct, or physical contact.
- **Professionalism:** Maintain a high standard of personal behaviour at all times, particularly when representing the Club.

9. Parental Consent

NSC will obtain parental consent for any activities involving children under the age of 18. Consent forms will be completed by the child's parent or legal guardian.

Photography: NSC requests parents advise on the consent form should they wish for their Children not to be included in photographs for club promotional purposes.

10. PVG Officer

NSC will appoint a **PVG Officer** responsible for implementing this policy and supporting the safeguarding of vulnerable groups within the Club.

- The PVG Officer will be available to offer support and advice on safeguarding concerns.
- Contact details for the PVG Officer will be clearly displayed at the Club and on the website.

11. Confidentiality

NSC will maintain confidentiality in all safeguarding matters. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis, in line with data protection laws and safeguarding best practices.

12. Disciplinary Action

Any Club member, staff, or volunteer who violates this policy or the **Code of Conduct** will face disciplinary action, which may include suspension or removal from the Club.

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly (at least annually) to ensure compliance with the PVG Scheme and other legal requirements, and to reflect best practices in safeguarding.

Contact Information for PVG Officer:

- **Name:** Malcolm Gillies
- **Phone:** 07808 886096
- **Email:** pvg.officer@nairnsailingclub.org.uk / Jokkthe1@me.com

Sources:

- Disclosure Scotland: www.mygov.scot/pvg-scheme
- RYA Safeguarding Policy: www.rya.org.uk

1. Appendix A – Good Practice Guide for Instructors, Coaches and Volunteers

This guide only covers the key points of good practice when working with children and young people. You should also speak with the Welfare Officer to ensure you are aware of other supporting guidance/documentation ahead of working with vulnerable groups.

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

2. Appendix B - Nairn Sailing Club, Code of Conduct

It is the policy of Nairn Sailing Club that all participants, coaches, instructors, officials, parents and volunteers show respect and understanding for each other, treat everyone equally within the context of the sport and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the club. The aim is for all participants to enjoy their sport and to improve performance.

Abusive language, swearing, intimidation, aggressive behaviour or lack of respect for others and their property will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action.

Participants - young sailors

- Listen to and accept what you are asked to do to improve your performance and keep you safe
- Respect other participants, coaches, instructors, officials and volunteers
- Abide by the rules and play fairly
- Do your best at all times
- Never bully others either in person, by phone, by text or online
- Take care of all property belonging to other participants, the club/class or its members

Parents

- Support your child's involvement and help them enjoy their sport
- Help your child to recognise good performance, not just results
- Never force your child to take part in sport
- Never punish or belittle a child for losing or making mistakes
- Encourage and guide your child to accept responsibility for their own conduct and performance
- Respect and support the coach
- Accept officials' judgements and recognise good performance by all participants
- Use established procedures where there is a genuine concern or dispute
- Inform the club or event organisers of relevant medical information
- Ensure that your child wears suitable clothing and has appropriate food and drink
- Provide contact details and be available when required
- Take responsibility for your child's safety and conduct in and around the clubhouse/event venue

Coaches, Instructors, Officials and Volunteers

- Consider the welfare and safety of participants before the development of performance
- Encourage participants to value their performance and not just results
- Promote fair play and never condone cheating
- Ensure that all activities are appropriate to the age, ability and experience of those taking part
- Build relationships based on mutual trust and respect
- Work in an open environment
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people
- Be an excellent role model and display consistently high standards of behaviour and appearance
- Do not drink alcohol or smoke when working directly with young people
- Communicate clearly with parents and participants
- Be aware of any relevant medical information
- Follow RYA and club/class guidelines and policies
- Holders of RYA Instructor and Coach qualifications must also comply with the RYA Code of Conduct and keep up to date with relevant training.
- Holders of RYA Race Official appointments must also comply with the RYA Race Officials Code of Conduct.

If you are concerned that someone is not following the Code of Conduct, you should inform the PVG Officer or the person in charge of the activity.

3. Appendix C - What is child abuse?

(Based on the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2015)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (including via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse may involve adults or other children inflicting physical harm:

- by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating
- giving children alcohol or inappropriate drugs
- in sport situations, physical abuse might also occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.

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. It may involve:

- conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate
- not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate
- imposing expectations which are beyond the child's age or developmental capability
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction
- allowing a child to see or hear the ill-treatment of another person
- serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- the exploitation or corruption of children
- emotional abuse in sport might also include situations where parents or coaches subject children to constant criticism, bullying or pressure to perform at a level that the child cannot realistically be expected to achieve.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child.

Sexual abuse. Sexual abuse involves an individual (male or female, or another child) forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, to gratify their own sexual needs. The activities may involve:

- physical contact (e.g. kissing, touching, masturbation, rape or oral sex)
- involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images
- encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or watch sexual activities
- grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet)
- sport situations which involve physical contact (e.g. supporting or guiding children) could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Abusive situations may also occur if adults misuse their power over young people.

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 involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- respond to a child's basic emotional needs
- neglect in a sailing situation might occur if an instructor or coach fails to ensure that children are safe, or exposes them to undue cold or risk of injury.

Bullying (including 'cyber bullying' by text, e-mail, social media etc) may be seen as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated or sustained over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The bully may often be another young person. Although anyone can be the target of bullying, victims are typically shy, sensitive and perhaps anxious or insecure. Sometimes they are singled out for physical reasons – being overweight, physically small, having a disability or belonging to a different race, faith or culture.

The acronym STOP – Several Times On Purpose - can help you to identify bullying behaviour.

Recognising Abuse

It is not always easy, even for the most experienced carers, to spot when a child has been abused. However, some of the more typical symptoms which should trigger your suspicions would include:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- sexually explicit language or actions
- a sudden change in behaviour (e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper)
- the child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- a change observed over a long period of time (e.g. the child losing weight or becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt)
- a general distrust and avoidance of adults, especially those with whom a close relationship would be expected
- an unexpected reaction to normal physical contact
- difficulty in making friends or abnormal restrictions on socialising with others.

It is important to note that a child could be displaying some or all of these signs, or behaving in a way which is worrying, without this necessarily meaning that the child is being abused. Similarly, there may not be any signs, but you may just feel that something is wrong. If you have noticed a change in the child's behaviour, first talk to the parents or carers. It may be

that something has happened, such as a bereavement, which has caused the child to be unhappy.

If you are concerned

If there are concerns about sexual abuse or violence in the home, talking to the parents or carers might put the child at greater risk.

If you cannot talk to the parents/carers, consult your organisation's designated Child Protection/Welfare Officer or the person in charge.

It is this person's responsibility to make the decision to contact Children's Social Care Services or the Police.

It is NOT their responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place, BUT it is their responsibility to act on your concerns.

Nairn Sailing Club

Changing Room Policy

When children are changing in this changing room, please avoid using the facility. If this is unavoidable, it is best practice to enter with another adult.

Any child under the age of 8 can accompany a parent or guardian of the opposite gender into the changing room of that parent or guardian to receive assistance.

If it is essential in an emergency for an adult of the opposite gender to enter a changing area it is advised that they are accompanied by another adult preferable of the opposite gender.

Please support this policy as it forms part of our operating principles for protection of children

5. Appendix E

Parental Consent form (for participants under 18 years)

Please complete all sections in Block Capitals

Participant's details

First name	Surname/family name
Home Address	
Date of birth	Age

Parent/guardian/person with legal responsibility

First name	Surname/family name
Relationship to child	
Home Number	
Mobile Number	

Alternative Emergency Contact:

First name	Surname/family name
Relationship to child	
Contact number during sessions	

Medical information

It is your responsibility to make known any disability/medical condition that may affect your child during the activity, and any medication that they may require. This information will be shared with those responsible for supervising the activity.

Has your child ever suffered from any of the following conditions:
Asthma/bronchitis, heart condition, fits, fainting or blackouts, severe headaches, diabetes? YES / NO

If YES please provide details, including any specific medical advice to be followed in an emergency:

Is your child currently taking any medication? YES / NO

If YES please specify:

When did your child last have a tetanus vaccination? Year:

Is your child currently suffering/recovering from any injuries which may affect their sailing? YES / NO

If YES please provide details:

Is your child vegetarian? YES / NO

Does your child have any food allergies? YES / NO

If YES please provide details:

Does your child have a disability, learning difficulty or medical condition which may affect their learning (ability to participate in practical or theoretical sessions)? YES / NO

If YES please provide details:

Declaration of parent or person with legal responsibility

I the parent/guardian of hereby acknowledge that I have read the (attached below) conditions of participation and that I fully understand them. I have explained them to my child, who understands and agrees to abide by them.

Medical consent

I give permission to the organisers of activities during the period (dates of event) to administer any relevant treatment or medication to the above-named participant when or if necessary.

In an emergency situation I authorise the organisers to take my child to hospital and give my full permission for any treatment required to be carried out in accordance with the hospital's diagnosis. I understand that I shall be notified, as soon as possible, of the hospital visit and any treatment given by the hospital.

Consent for use of images (See also NSC membership application form)

I grant to the organisers without payment the right in perpetuity to make, use and show any motion pictures, still pictures and live, taped or filmed television of or relating to the event. I have read and understood the Conditions of Use attached. I agree to notify the organisation of any relevant changes in my child's circumstances.

I confirm that my child is under a court order. Yes
I confirm that my child is not under a court order. No

Signed: (participant)

Signed: (parent/guardian).....

Name: (please print) Date: