

2. QMSC SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION (& VULNERABLE ADULTS) POLICY

(Latest update + review 20/3/2026)

For this policy, anyone under the age of 18 should be considered a child. This policy also covers 'vulnerable adults' such as those with learning disabilities, who have difficulty communicating or who rely on others to provide personal care. All members of the Club and Staff should be made aware of this policy. Any member of staff, volunteer or club member failing to comply with this policy may be subject to investigation under the QMSC Club Bylaws or English law, as appropriate.

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Queen Mary Sailing Club to safeguard children and young people taking part in activities at QMSC from physical, sexual or emotional harm. The Club will take all reasonable steps to ensure that, through appropriate procedures & training, children participating in QMSC activities do so in a safe environment. We recognise that the safety & welfare of the child is paramount & that all children, irrespective of gender, age, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual identity or social status, have a right to protection from abuse. We recognise that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and will make this policy available to all users of the club.

The latest guidance regarding the recognition and prevention of child abuse can be found within the latest "RYA Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Guidelines" on the RYA website:

<https://www.rya.org.uk/about-us/policies/safeguarding/safeguarding-policies-procedures-and-guidelines>

Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

The CWO is the Assistant Manager & Training Principal, Ross Malloy. He can be contacted on: 01784 248881 / sailing.principal@queenmary.org.uk. Posters with this contact information can also be found by the entrance to the clubhouse. All concerns, complaints, reports or allegations of, or relating to, child abuse should be made to the CWO immediately and will be treated in the strictest of confidence. They will be taken seriously and will be responded to swiftly and appropriately. RYA guidelines will be followed. All personal/sensitive information will be treated as confidential, stored securely and only shared with those whom the CWO deems to be party to it in the course of their duties or to protect children.

If the CWO is unavailable, or is potentially implicated in the concern, then the Club Secretary, Tony Bishop (01784 248881 / 07932 971796/ tony.bishop@queenmary.org.uk.) should be contacted. The Club Duty Officer can also be contacted to help manage other water users/students if required.

Staff & Volunteers

All Club staff & volunteers whose role brings them into regular contact with young people will be asked to satisfactorily provide a QMSC Self-Disclosure annually. The Club Welfare Officer and those aged 16yrs+ who regularly instruct, coach or supervise young people on behalf of QM will also be asked to apply for an Enhanced Criminal Records Disclosure, with Barred List check if appropriate through the CWO. It is asked

that all staff/volunteers keep this check transferable with the CWO keeping the records up to date a minimum of every 3 years, with Self-Disclosure annually.

QMSC ensures all instructors working on our Junior Courses undertake safeguarding training, in addition to safeguarding courses required to become an instructor.

As of June 2022, sports coaches and instructors over 18 are defined as being in a position of trust over any of their U18 students. It is illegal for an adult in a position of trust to be involved in sexual activity with a person who is 16 or 17 years old and who they look after (and illegal for anyone to be involved in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 16).

To be in a position of trust, the person needs to be aged 18 or over, and must be carrying out the activity (coaching/instructing) on a regular basis. Instructors/volunteers should hold themselves to the same standards as schoolteachers regarding appropriate and professional relationships with U18 students.

If the CWO is made aware of a sexual relationship between someone in a position of trust and their student, they are duty bound to report this to the RYA and police.

Good Practice

All staff & volunteers should follow the '*Good Practice Guide for Instructors, Coaches & Volunteers*' and be aware of the guidance on recognising abuse. These documents are available from the RYA and QMSC staff websites. All members and visitors will be made aware of and asked to follow the good practice of the '*QM Code of Conduct*'.

Changing Rooms

With the current changing room set up, Queen Mary SC are unable to provide separate changing rooms for children and adults. Private changing facilities are available for staff in the staff room, and there are 3 disabled toilets (2 with shower facilities) for the use by all staff, volunteers, members & visitors. These must be used by staff & volunteers when changing/showering when the changing rooms are in use by their students. Outside of these situations, QMSC recommend staff/volunteers follow good practice and avoid prolonged periods in the changing rooms, and when necessary to enter the changing rooms with at least one other adult present.

During Junior Courses, when large numbers of young people will be in the changing rooms at fixed times, QMSC policy on use of the changing rooms is as follows:

- Instructors to check the changing rooms to ensure no adults are in there before students enter to change
- Students sent in to change, as quickly as possible
- Instructor to stand between the entrances to the changing rooms to prevent adults from entering
- Once all students are out of the changing rooms, adults can use them again.
- If any adults (including instructors) need to use the changing rooms/showers/toilets during this time, the disabled changing facilities outside the clubhouse are to be made available. Instructors can escort members into the changing rooms to collect their kit bag if they do not wish to wait until groups are out of the changing rooms.

Photography

At times photographs or video footage of children may be taken, under the direction of a senior member of staff, strictly for the purposes of coaching, recording events or for general promotional interest on and off the water. Parent/guardian consent to such images being taken and published in any QMSC promotional material is obtained within the Health and Water-confidence Declaration. No identifying information, other than first names, will be included in the publication of such images. Any adults using cameras or recording equipment when children are on site should be approached by a senior member of staff and politely asked to identify themselves and state their purpose. If there is any doubt about their intentions they should be requested to cease their activity and an entry be filled in in the *'Incidents, Accidents & Near-Misses'* book.

Handover of duty of care for young and vulnerable people

Any person under the age of 18 coming to QMSC for any organised activity (for example, a junior course, or to work as a member of staff), must be signed in and out by their parent or guardian. This must be done in person, so a physical handover of duty of care is witnessed. If a parent wishes for their child to sign themselves in or out, or for another adult to collect their child, this must be confirmed beforehand in writing by email to: sailondon@queenmary.org.uk for students and sailing.principal@queenmary.org.uk for staff, with the relevant dates. Children must be a minimum age of 14 to be able to sign themselves in/out, with written parental consent. A child over the age of 14 can take their younger sibling home with them and sign them out at their parents' discretion and with prior written permission, as above. We do not accept duty of care for young members free sailing, so parents must retain this duty of care for their child/ward and remain on site.

Concerns

Anyone who is concerned about a young member's or participant's welfare, either outside the sport or within the Club, should inform the Club Welfare Officer immediately, in strict confidence.

For urgent referrals needing immediate action, where the Club Welfare Officer is not available, the RYA Safeguarding team can be contacted on their emergency hotline: **02380012796 ext 3**.

This is available at weekends 09:00-17:00 and midweek 17:00-22:00.

Less urgent safeguarding referrals should be made to the RYA by the Club Welfare Officer on **02380012796 ext 1**

Any member of the Club failing to comply with the Safeguarding policy or any relevant Codes of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action by the Club Council.