BRITISH ROWING

Safeguarding Handbook 4

Safety in the digital world

Handbook Guide

Welcome to British Rowing's Safeguarding Handbooks. Within this handbook, you will be able to navigate with ease to find relevant policies, guidance and templates that will support you with your role in rowing.

Welfare in rowing means the safe and enjoyable participation of everyone, including children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

The Contents page will allow you to navigate to the relevant section by clicking on the section header or scrolling down to the corresponding page number.

If you want to print specific sections of this handbook, such as the sample templates we have included, go to your printer options, and specify the page numbers or page range you would like to print.

To save paper, we would encourage you to make the most of this digital version and avoid printing the whole handbook.

We hope you find these handbooks useful in supporting you to create a safe and enjoyable environment for all participants in rowing.

If you have a concern, or have seen, or experienced, something that is not quite right, please report your concerns to your Club Welfare Officer, or use the [British Rowing Report a Concern form on our Welfare webpage](#), or speak to British Rowing's [Lead Safeguarding Officer](#). Further contacts can be found on our [Governance Team webpage](#).

Contents

Definitions

CEOP: CEOP, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command, is a command of the National Crime Agency. The National Crime Agency is committed to protecting the public from serious and organised crime, and CEOP's role is to tackle the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, both online and offline.

Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices such as mobile phones, computers, and tablets. It can occur through text messages and apps, or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. It includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation.

Grooming: Grooming refers to a process by which an individual forms a relationship to manipulate those around them – typically (but not only) the child – to provide opportunities for abuse. Online grooming is when someone uses the internet to trick, coerce or pressure someone into doing something online, which may be sexual or illegal.

Terminology

For the purpose of this handbook, we will be using the following terminology:

<u>Children and young people:</u> A child is anyone under the age of 18 years. A young person is someone who is over 16 and under 18.

Throughout this handbook, we will refer to children and young people using the collective term of 'child'.

<u>Adults at risk:</u> An adult at risk is an adult who has care and support needs; is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect; and because of their care and support needs cannot protect themselves against actual or potential abuse or neglect.

<u>Adults with care and support needs:</u> An adult with care and support needs is an individual, who, due to illness, disability, a mental health issue or an addiction, cannot cope without care and support.

Throughout this handbook, we will refer to both adults at risk, and adults with care and support needs, using the collective term of 'adult with care and support needs'.

<u>Parents, carers and guardians:</u> A **parent** is any person who is the biological father or mother of another person. A **carer** is any person who cares for an individual, who, due to illness, disability, a mental health issue or an addiction, cannot cope without that care and support.

A **guardian** is a person who has been appointed by a court or otherwise has the legal authority to care for the personal and property interests of another person.

Throughout this handbook, we will refer to parents, carers and guardians with the collective term of 'parents/carers'.

Introduction

British Rowing recognises that abuse can take place anywhere, including in a rowing environment and online, and that it is everyone's responsibility to report concerns. Inaction is not an option. Abuse can take place face-to-face and online and perpetrators can be other children or adults, including those in positions of trust.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information for clubs, and particularly, individuals at clubs responsible for the club's online activity, on how to safely navigate the online world and digital media, as well as various other means of media-focused activity, such as photography and videography at competitions or events.

It should also be recognised by Club Welfare Officers that this handbook contains information on how to keep children safe online, which should be shared widely with children and their parents.

All club staff/volunteers who are responsible for managing their club's online activity via social media, electronic messaging, media such as video and photography, should familiarise themselves with the topics covered in this handbook. Club Welfare Officers should take the time to sit down with club officers responsible for these areas and ensure that they know the correct procedures for keeping children and adults with care and support needs safe.

This handbook is underpinned by British Rowing's Code of Conduct, as well as our Safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance, all of which can be found on the British Rowing Policies and Guidance page.

Section 1 - Photography and use of imagery

British Rowing has a strong commitment to the safety of children and adults at risk who take part in rowing. Taking pictures and videos is an important part of sporting life; they can be used as a coaching aid, for keeping a record and for promoting our sport. We are committed to doing our best to ensure that any imagery used within rowing shows our sport in the best light.

It is not our intention to prevent parents from taking pictures of their children but rather to ensure photographic practices are carefully monitored, allowing us to act in cases where inappropriate imagery is circulated and to deter anyone with undesirable intentions. This is in line with our Safeguarding Children and Young People and Safeguarding Adults at Risk policies, which can be found on our Safeguarding webpage.

1.1 - How to make safe environments

The safety of the child/adult at risk is paramount and, to ensure this, we need to create safe and secure environments in which they can train, compete and socialise.

Although rare, there are risks of abuse arising from the misuse of imagery. These risks include:

- the use, adaptation, or copying of images for abuse, either on the internet or in print;
- the identification of a child/adult at risk when an image is accompanied by significant personal information, which can put the child at risk of being groomed;
- the identification and location of a child/adult at risk from images where there are safeguarding concerns. For example, when the child/adult at risk:
  - has been removed from their family for their safety;
  - has restrictions on their contact with one parent following a parental separation;
  - is a witness in criminal proceedings.

Please see Section 1.4 of this handbook for more information on what to do when a child or adult at risk cannot be photographed.

We want children and adults at risk to be safe, so British Rowing affiliated clubs and events must comply with the following guidelines.

- No photograph, video clip or other image of a child/adult at risk involved in any aspect of rowing should be published, whether in print or electronically, eg on a website or social media, without written, informed consent from the parent/carer/guardian of the child/adult at risk. Best practice would suggest that you also get consent from a child who is over 16 and an adult at risk.
- No personal information, other than their name and their club, should accompany published images (particular provisions apply in connection to photography at public events such as competitions).
- While some editing of images is acceptable, images taken of children/adults at risk involved in rowing should not be modified, merged or manipulated in a way that might cause embarrassment or distress to the subject or cause the final image to be inappropriate.
- Care must be taken to ensure that images of children/adults at risk who are under a court order are not recorded or published except in compliance with the order, which could require permission from the parents/carers or appropriate authorities.
- Simultaneous, live streaming of images onto a website should be approached with caution and prior guidance should be sought from British Rowing.
- Any instance of the publication of inappropriate images of young people/adults at risk involved in rowing should be reported to British Rowing who may then inform the appropriate authorities.
- Clubs are recommended to introduce consent forms, ideally as part of the process applied when a rower joins a club, or during sign-up to an event/competition, concerning the taking of images for training or media purposes.

When determining whether it is appropriate to publish a photograph on a website or another form of media, consideration should be given to both the potential for inappropriate use of an image and the possibility that an individual could make contact with a child/adult at risk by using any personal and club details placed online.

The following steps can be taken to reduce the risk from the publication of imagery.

- Do not use any personal details in conjunction with the image if it is possible from those details to ascertain a specific location.
- If it is possible to ascertain any training or competitive location, consider using the first name only next to an image.
- Consider what the child/adult at risk is wearing and whether it is appropriate for a photograph of them to be published.
- Do not use images that appear staged and/or potentially provocative.
- Always use a parental/carer consent form to request the use of the image of a child/adult with care and support needs for publication. The parent/carer should be encouraged to discuss the consent form with the child/adult with care and support needs, ensuring they understand it.

1.2 - Photography at rowing events

1.2.1 - Official photography

British Rowing-accredited photographers may be present at British Rowing sanctioned events and, in some cases, events might be videoed and/or live streamed. These images may be used by British Rowing and our subsidiary companies for promotion, education and development of the sport. They may also be shared with relevant third-party organisations for journalistic/promotional purposes.

Any published material detailing and/or advertising for entries to a British Rowing competition will advise participants that photography and filming will take place at the event. British Rowing will also announce the photography/filming arrangements at the event. Clubs must ensure that rowers and parents/carers of junior rowers are informed of the photography arrangements for the relevant event.

Any rower or parent/carer who does not wish themselves or their child to be photographed/filmed at the event must advise the event organiser before the event. Although it is not always practical to manage the content of live-streamed footage, British Rowing will use its best efforts to ensure any identifiable images of the rower are not published without their informed consent.

The same rules will apply to a club or event which is livestreaming its events.

1.2.2 - Personal photography

British Rowing does not wish to discourage the use of video or photographic equipment at events for appropriate use but will take all reasonable precautions to protect rowers against the possible inappropriate use of films or photographic images.

If the event organiser/welfare officer (or authorised representative of the event organiser/welfare officer) suspects inappropriate photography or filming, the officer/organiser should ask the person to leave the venue and to surrender any film and/or delete any images relating to the event. Any person present at an event who has any concerns about any images being taken, by any person, should bring them to the attention of the competition organiser or other designated person. If the person who took the images refuses to comply with a reasonable request, the matter may be reported to the police.

1.3 - Use of video and photography as an aid to coaching

The use of video equipment can be a valuable aid to coaching and is a common tool throughout the sport. To ensure this is done safely, coaches must do the following.

- Ensure that any child or adult at risk and their parent/carer is aware of the purpose of the filming/photography as a coaching aid and has given their written consent, prior to the filming/photography.
- Refrain from publishing any footage or images without written consent of the parent/carer and preferably of the child, if they are over 16, or the adult at risk.
- Ensure that two responsible adults are always present when filming/photography is taking place.
- Store any footage/images securely and avoid any inappropriate use.
- Only keep the footage/images for as long as is necessary for the purpose expressed at the outset and then delete.

1.4 - What to do when someone cannot be photographed

Photography at events can be a great way to spread the positivity and joy people get from attending rowing competitions and events and can help significantly boost your club or competition's profile. However, unfortunately, photography can place some children or adults at risk at a greater risk of harm. Although rare, your club may have to deal with instances where they have children, young people, or adults at risk present at competitions or events who cannot be photographed. This may be due to the individuals being part of a protected family, a custody case, or there is a further security concern for the individual.

To mitigate this risk, organising committees for events must do the following.

- Ensure that everyone attending the competition/event knows that photography is taking place and that if they have a child or adult at risk who cannot be photographed or identified, they must alert the event organising committee *before* they attend the event.
- Ensure that when publishing photographs of children or adults at risk, you avoid using information that could help people identify them or their locations. This means, you must not publish:
    - full names – use first names only, if necessary;
    - their address or residential area;
    - their exact age – just refer to the age group in which they are competing;
    - the location of the club at which they train – just use the name of the club, if necessary.

If you have been notified that a child who is attending your event cannot be photographed or identified, as the organising committee, you must discuss this with the parent/carer. A possible solution could be to agree with the parent/carer that the child/adult at risk who cannot be photographed will be made known to the accredited event photographer. They will then agree not to photograph that child/adult at risk.

An alternative could be to give the child/adult at risk an identifiable item, such as a coloured wristband so they can easily be identified by the photographer.

These methods should be discussed with the parent/carer, the event organising committee, and the event photographer.

Section 2 - Information sharing

We want to ensure children and adults at risk are safe. We accept that from time to time, concerns will need to be shared with/between appropriate organisations to protect them. This information may be about the children or adults at risk and/or adults who may be working or volunteering with them.

Clubs, organisations and event organisers hold more and more information about people as a result of good recruitment procedures, including DBS checks, references and application forms, as well as membership details, which can include medical records. Clubs should manage this data in line with current legislation and best practices but must recognise that there will be times when, due to a concern, there will be a need to share this information.

2.1 - Guidance for sharing information

Data protection is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure information is shared appropriately. When information needs to be shared, British Rowing and clubs must do the following.

- When asking for the information, be clear what information, why, how and with whom it will, or could be shared, usually by way of a privacy statement or when consent is sought.
- If you are in doubt about information sharing, seek advice while continuing to respect confidentiality.
- Where possible, seek consent before sharing confidential information, although this may not always be possible.
- Base information-sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and wellbeing of the child, or adult at risk, and others who may be affected by your actions.
- Only share information where it is necessary, with those who need to know and where information can be shared securely. This will include sharing with statutory services, such as the police, children's services or the local authority.
- Always keep written records of any decision to share information along with the reasons it was shared.

(Based on Department for Education's 'Information Sharing Pocket Guide' 2018)

To see our information sharing flowchart, please see Appendix 1 of this handbook.

2.2 - Sharing information arising from safeguarding concerns regarding a child or adult, or the behaviour of an individual who may represent a risk to them

To ensure that children, young people and adults at risk are effectively safeguarded, concerns may need to be shared with appropriate people and agencies. British Rowing's Safeguarding policies identify the process for sharing information relating to safeguarding concerns, and the need for information to only be shared with those who have a clear need to know.

The Club Welfare Officer should always be the first port of call and if they are not available, contact British Rowing's Lead Safeguarding Officer at lso@britishrowing.org. Our ultimate concern is the safety of the child/ young person/adult at risk.

2.3 - Sharing information arising from the recruitment process

At present, there is a limit to the information that can be shared between organisations resulting from Disclosure and Barring Service, Disclosure Scotland or Access NI checks. We are unable to share this information with another sport or Active Sport Partnership. Where concerns are raised about an individual that we believe may be of interest to another organisation outside of rowing, clubs should use the following wording to communicate their concerns.

'*This person has applied to join our organisation in a role that would involve contact with children. As a result of our selection/recruitment process, which includes formal safeguarding checks, they have been deemed unsuitable for this post. I strongly suggest that your organisation undertakes a relevant check immediately.*'

2.4 - Useful information and contacts relating to information sharing

The Data Protection Act/GDPR

The Data Protection Act and GDPR provide a framework to ensure that personal information is handled properly. This is not a barrier to sharing information; it gives individuals the right to know what information is held about them. For more information on the Data Protection Act and GDPR, visit: Information Commissioner's Office, Guide to Data Protection

Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act 1998 gives further legal effect in the UK to the fundamental rights and freedoms contained in the European Convention on Human Rights. These rights not only impact matters of life and death, but they also affect the rights people have in their everyday lives: what they can say and do, their beliefs, their right to a fair trial and other similar basic entitlements.

For more information on the Human Rights Act 1998 visit: Equality and Humans Rights Commission, The Humans Rights Act.

Disclosure and Barring Service

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was formed on 1st December 2012 from a merger between the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA).

The DBS was established under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and provides a joined-up service to combine the criminal records and barring functions in England and Wales. www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs

Disclosure Scotland

Disclosure Scotland issues certificates known as 'Disclosures', which give details of an individual's criminal convictions, or state that they have none. Enhanced Disclosures, where appropriate, will also contain information held by police forces and other government bodies. They also manage the Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme on behalf of ministers. http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk

Access NI

Access NI is responsible for supplying criminal history information, upon request, to organisations and individuals in Northern Ireland, primarily to help them make safer recruitment decisions. http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni

Section 3 - Online Safety and Social Media Policy

All British Rowing clubs are encouraged to read the Online Safety and Social Media Policy. The policy guides clubs and coaches in the rowing community in the use of the internet and social media. It also outlines how we expect staff, coaches, rowers, volunteers, children, young adults, and adults at risk, who are members of British Rowing, to behave online.

The aims of this policy are:

- to protect all members, including children and adults with care and support needs, involved in British Rowing who use technology (such as mobile phones, game consoles and the internet) in connection with rowing;
- to provide staff and volunteers with information regarding online safety and ensure they know how to respond to incidents and concerns;
- to ensure everyone in British Rowing is operating in keeping with our values and within the law regarding online behaviour.

In the policy, you'll find information and guidance on:

- understanding the online world;
- safe use of social media;
- using mobile phones or other digital technology to communicate with children;
- use of other digital devices and programs;
- webinars and live streaming;
- keeping children and young people safe online;
- top tips for children on how to stay safe online.

You can access the Online Safety and Social Media Policy on the British Rowing Safeguarding page.

Section 4 - Clubs running websites or social media pages

We recognise just how valuable good websites and social media pages are for clubs who wish to develop and grow their membership. We want to ensure that all clubs that run websites and social media pages understand how to manage their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

We want to help clubs ensure children, young people and adults in positions of trust are not subjected to improper online behaviour or improper allegations. Remember, as a club, you are responsible for making sure that all content hosted or published on your website, or social media account(s), abide by British Rowing's Code of Conduct, and Section 3 of this handbook.

4.1 - Online conduct

When operating websites or social media accounts, it is important to be vigilant and monitor your site, as well as social media pages, if you are interacting with members of the public online. Whoever is in charge of handling your clubs' online presence should be mindful to monitor comments or posts to ensure that they are not:

- racist;
- derogatory;
- sexist;
- discriminatory;
- abusive;
- homophobic;
- offensive; or
- of a bullying nature.

If your club does encounter these comments online, you can report these comments to either:

- the police, via 'Stop hate crime', via their online reporting feature, or;
- the Internet Watch Foundation.

If not dealt with appropriately, comments made on your website or social media page(s) that are abusive, racist or homophobic, could lead to legal action being taken against those responsible for posting or hosting them.

Clubs should advise children and young people that they should always tell a trusted adult about any comment or post they see that has made them feel uncomfortable, or if they've been asked not to tell someone about a comment or post they have seen.

4.2 - Best practice for staying safe online

To help your club ensure it is keeping its websites and social media pages as safe as possible, we recommend that you take the following steps.

- Appoint an appropriate adult(s) to monitor the content of your website regularly. They should understand what inappropriate content or comments look like and remove these.
- Make sure everyone in your club knows who is responsible for monitoring the content of the website and social networking areas, and how to contact them if they wish to report something.
- Apply the principles detailed in Section 3 of this handbook to your online activities.

- Signpost people to the CEOP ['Report Abuse' button](#) so they can report hateful or abusive content.
- Signpost children and young people to [ThinkUKnow.co.uk](#), which offers age-appropriate advice to children, young people and parents on internet safety.
- Ensure that thorough risk assessments are carried out before you consider hosting message boards, forums or blogs that may open your club up to potential risks. If you do decide to use them, ensure they're password protected and only allow comments or posts from people who are known to the club. It is also important to have users sign up to a Code of Conduct.
- Ensure members know that the club is responsible for all content on its website, including forums, blogs, tweets or social media posts.
- Ensure privacy settings are locked to the designated individual responsible for handling the clubs' websites and social media pages.

In addition, clubs should **not**:

- post children's or young people's details (including addresses, mobile phone numbers and email addresses) where they can be seen or used by others;
- post details of children or young people that would lead to them being identified, e.g. school, class/year, rower profiles including ages/sizes/weights etc;
- publish and host pictures of people who have not given their consent, especially children etc for whom express written consent is required;
- post or publish content which may be considered to be abusive, offensive, racist, discriminatory or otherwise may cause harm to others.

For further guidance on how to safely and effectively run club websites, please visit the [British Rowing Club Management Guide, Managing your club effectively.](#)

Section 5 - Grooming

It is important to realise that abuse towards children and adults with care and support needs can happen online, as well as in person. We all need to be vigilant in keeping people safe in rowing, including in the virtual online world. Grooming is something that both children and adults at risk may be exposed to, both in-person and online. This section will look at what grooming is, how to spot it if it is happening, and what to do if you become aware of it.

We would recommend sharing this guidance with parents and carers of junior rowers and adult rowers at risk at your club, as a lot of the signs and symptoms of grooming can be identified early if spotted in the home. While this is a challenging topic to address, doing so sensitively will help parents and carers to be equipped to deal with this issue if it ever arises.

5.1 - What is grooming?

Grooming refers to a process by which an individual forms a relationship to manipulate those around them – typically (but not only) a child – to provide opportunities for abuse. Online grooming is when someone uses the internet to trick, coerce or pressure someone into doing something online, which may be sexual or illegal.

Anyone can groom a child, no matter what their age, background, race or religion. It could be someone they know, or someone familiar to the family, someone in a position of trust, such as a teacher or a coach, or a stranger the child has met online.

Grooming often happens either in person or online but can also be a combination of both. It is a process that can happen over months or years, or can take place as quickly as over a couple of weeks. It can take place in indoor settings, such as at home, at a club, or school, especially where there is ease of access to online platforms, such as gaming services, social media sites, or chat rooms.

People who groom children can use their real identity or create a fake profile, for example pretending to be a child who has similar interests and hobbies, such as rowing. A child may not necessarily know they are being groomed.

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) unit, have made a [short video about grooming](#), #WhoisSam, which summarises what grooming is and how to protect children from it.

5.2 - Why does grooming occur?

Grooming, both online and in person, can be used by the abuser to do one or more of the following.

- **Sexual abuse.** This involves forcing or persuading a child/adult with needs to take part in sexual activities. It does not have to involve physical contact and it can happen in person or online. Online abuse can include being coerced into sharing images or videos, or performing sexual acts via a webcam. Sometimes, the child/adult with needs may not understand what is happening, or that what is happening is wrong.
- **Criminal exploitation.** This is where an individual or group, takes advantage of a child or young person, either through abusing a position of trust, or an imbalance of power, to coerce or manipulate them into committing criminal acts. These acts can relate to money, drugs, or violence.
- **Radicalisation.** Radicalisation is the action or process of causing someone to adopt radical or extreme positions on political or social issues. This can lead to terrorism.
- **Involvement in 'county lines.'** County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks transporting illegal drugs from one area to another within the UK. They will use coercion, blackmail or manipulation to involve children in the movement or storage of drugs or money. This may also involve children staying in gang accommodation and selling or manufacturing drugs.

- **Trafficking**. Trafficking is where children are tricked, coerced or forced to leave their homes and family, are transported from one location to another, and then exploited, forced to work, or sold. Children can be trafficked for sexual exploitation, forced marriage, child labour or domestic slavery.

It is very important to recognise that perpetrators can begin the process of committing these acts via online grooming. In some cases, people who groom children to then commit one of these acts will target children online, through social media platforms, chat rooms, or gaming platforms.

5.3 - How does grooming occur?

Grooming can occur via several methods, such as building relationships and showing the child care and attention.

People who groom children attempt to gain a child's trust by discussing shared interests, such as hobbies, sports, or games. They will use information (which they could acquire from a child's online social media profile) about the child to their advantage. For example, if they find a child's Facebook page, and the child's profile picture is of them in their rowing singlet, they may use this information to feign a shared interest in rowing.

The relationship they build can take different forms, such as a romantic relationship, a mentoring relationship, or acting as a trusting confidant. They may also build a relationship with the child's parents, family, or friends, so the child will think the abuser is trustworthy. Through building a relationship with the child, the abuser can make the child feel dependent on them, giving them power and control.

Once a relationship has been built, the abuser may start to show the child attention or affection through forms of flattery, giving them money, buying them gifts or, in a sporting context, promising them preferential treatment, which could include a guarantee of a seat in the top crew. They may also relay to the child that their relationship is a secret.

Once the abuser has gained the trust of the child, they will often steer the relationship towards their intentions and agenda. This may involve talking about sex, criminal activity, religious ideologies or asking for them to share images or videos of themselves online, either through a webcam or their mobile phones, and via social media or a private messaging function.

The act of sharing sexual videos or pictures over mobile phones is often referred to as 'sexting'. It is important to remind children that whenever they take pictures of themselves and put them online, they may lose control of them and those images and/or videos may be shared with a wider audience. Sexting can also be consensual between children or young people of similar ages. Whilst this is still illegal and should not be encouraged or permitted if known, it does not always mean the child has been groomed.

Once the process of grooming has been established by the abuser, the conversations may become longer, or more frequent, and the abuser will likely begin to get more forceful, coercive or manipulative. If the child begins to show signs of withdrawal from the abuser, they may begin to try and blackmail the child, possibly through threats of sharing any images/videos or secrets they have acquired through online communication with the child.

5.4 - Signs and indicators of grooming

It can be very difficult for parents/carers, CWOs or coaches to spot if a child is being groomed, as the signs and indicators are not always clear. For young people, it may be difficult to differentiate between behaviour that is concerning, and that which is regarded to be 'normal teenage behaviour'. The most important thing adults can do is to look out for increased instances of behaviours described in this section that may indicate something is worrying the child. Behaviours and other signs can include:

- secretiveness about their friends, what they're doing, where they're going or their online activity, only using devices in private;

- engaging in antisocial or detrimental behaviour, such as drinking or taking recreational drugs;
- becoming emotionally volatile;
- staying out later than usual, with people you do not know or have not heard of, and not providing an explanation;
- unexplained injuries, such as bruising or cuts;
- unexplained gifts, such as new clothes or jewellery, or electronic devices;
- having a significantly older boyfriend/girlfriend/romantic partner;
- switching screens, or closing the laptop, when you come near them, or enter the room;
- spending an increasing amount of time on their electronic devices, or receiving more and more notifications on those devices;
- suddenly, or gradually, withdrawing from friends or family, or their previous hobbies, such as rowing training;
- sexualised behaviour or language, or demonstrating an understanding of sex that is not appropriate for their age.

5.5 - What can parents/carers do?

If you're a Club Welfare Officer or a coach looking to find out more about how you can prevent grooming of children and young people in your club, one of the best things you can do is raise awareness among parents or carers. Online grooming often starts in the home when the child is on their electronic device. If parents know what to do, how to spot signs and indicators and who to contact, we can ensure we're taking a big step towards tackling grooming.

If you're a parent, it is really important to be open with your child, and ensure they know that if they have any concerns, or if you have any concerns, these can be talked about in an open and safe environment. Remember, you can speak to your child about keeping them safe and remind them of their right to:

- feel safe when online, using social media, or gaming and streaming services;
- not feel uncomfortable or unsafe;
- have healthy relationships with appropriate boundaries;
- not be bullied, harassed or intimidated.

By reminding them of this, you can help encourage them to speak to you, or another trusted adult, such as the coach or Club Welfare Officer, if they ever feel unsafe.

It is also useful to know how to keep children safe online and how to set up privacy settings on their social media profiles, as well as how to report content. Using the social media site links below, you can find information on reporting abuse, or requesting to have offensive content taken down.

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [TikTok](#);
- [Snapchat](#)
- [Twitter](#)

5.6 - What if my child has been groomed?

It is very difficult to discover that your child has been groomed or abused. Although you may feel very upset, it is important to reassure your child, listen to them and what they have to say, and then seek advice on what you can do. It is really important that you do the following.

- Listen carefully to what they're saying, focus on the details they're telling you and be patient with them.

- Let them know they have done the right thing by telling you and that you will do all you can to help them and the situation.
- Explain that you will seek help and what this process will look like, including who you're going to speak to and when.
- Inform the appropriate person. The quicker someone is notified, the quicker a resolution to the issue can be found. If your child has told you something that you don't think is right, you must report this as soon as possible.
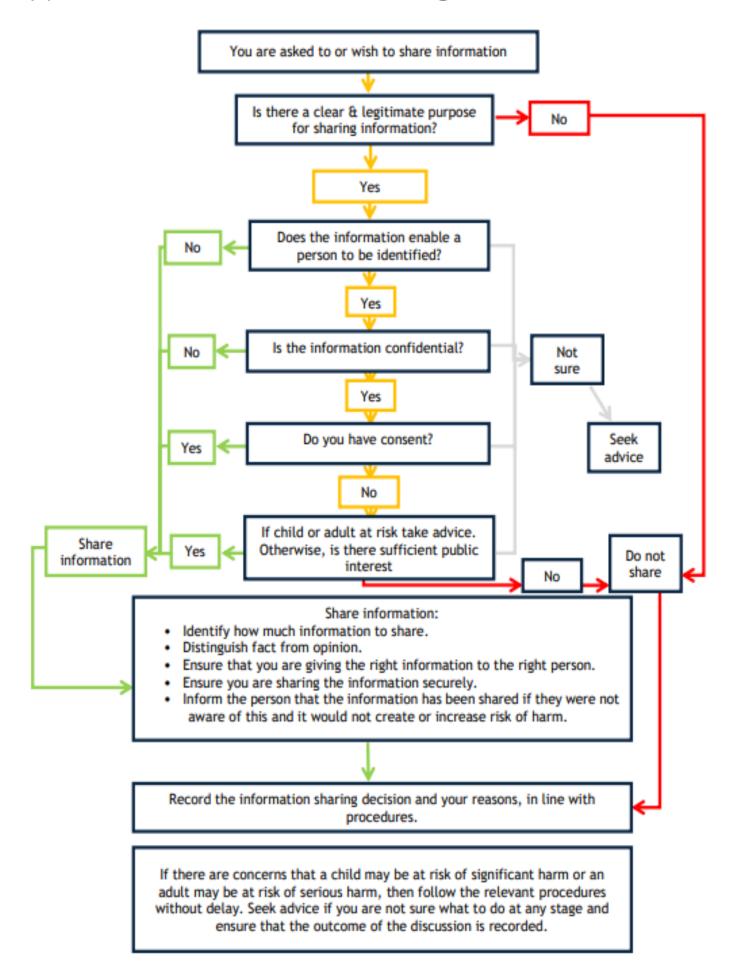
To report concerns, you can either:

- speak to your child's Club Welfare Officer;
- email British Rowing's Lead Safeguarding Officer at lso@britishrowing.org;
- use the 'Report a Concern' button on the British Rowing Safeguarding page;
- call the NSPCC 24 hour hotline on 0808 800 5000.

Remember, **never** confront the alleged abuser. This could endanger your child further, or even yourself. Do not delete any images/videos/messages relating to the grooming or abuse as these may be used as evidence.

For further advice on internet safety, please see Appendix 3.

Appendix 1 - Information sharing flowchart

You are asked to or wish to share information

Is there a clear & legitimate purpose for sharing information? → No

Yes

Does the information enable a person to be identified? → No

Yes

Is the information confidential? → No

Yes

Do you have consent? → Yes

No

Not sure → Seek advice

If child or adult at risk take advice. Otherwise, is there sufficient public interest → Yes → Share information

No → Do not share

Share information:
- Identify how much information to share.
- Distinguish fact from opinion.
- Ensure that you are giving the right information to the right person.
- Ensure you are sharing the information securely.
- Inform the person that the information has been shared if they were not aware of this and it would not create or increase risk of harm.

Record the information sharing decision and your reasons, in line with procedures.

If there are concerns that a child may be at risk of significant harm or an adult may be at risk of serious harm, then follow the relevant procedures without delay. Seek advice if you are not sure what to do at any stage and ensure that the outcome of the discussion is recorded.

Appendix 2 - Acceptable Use Statement for Digital Events and Social Media Use

British Rowing is dedicated to delivering an online experience that is welcoming and inclusive for everyone regardless of age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, and background. We will not tolerate harassment in any form, of anyone who engages with our online content, whether this is social media or digital events, such as webinars.

British Rowing recognises that safeguards need to be put in place to ensure everyone, including children, young adults, and adults at risk, remains safe while online or using social media.

Members of British Rowing found to be violating this acceptable use statement may, where applicable, be removed from participation in a British Rowing Digital Event. British Rowing may also take action under its disciplinary procedure, which may result in sanctions.

When a participant in rowing is under 18, we ask that their parent(s)/carer(s) spend a few minutes reading through and discussing this statement with their child and ensure they understand their responsibilities.

As a participant in rowing:

- I will be responsible for my behaviour when using the internet and social media or any digital content in relation to British Rowing, or my rowing club, including the content I access and how I conduct myself.
- I will not deliberately create, browse or access material that could be considered offensive or illegal. If I accidentally come across any such material, I will report this to my Club Welfare Officer.
- I will not use social media or the internet to send anyone material that could be considered threatening, offensive, upsetting, bullying or that is illegal.
- I understand that all my use of the internet and social media is potentially visible to everyone and that any issues involving my behaviour online may be addressed by my coach, another official at my rowing club, or by British Rowing.
- I will not give out any of my personal information (such as name, age, address, or telephone number online), or that of anyone else.
- I will not share my passwords with anyone else.
- I am aware that if I am experiencing bullying behaviour or abuse online, I can contact my Club Welfare Officer.

In addition, if I am under 18:

- I understand that I should only use my club's or British Rowing's official social media or website communication channels to contact them and should not seek out individual members of staff or coaches. However, I know that my club has a Club Welfare Officer who I can contact using the contact details they have provided, or British Rowing's Lead Safeguarding Officer by emailing LSO@britishrowing.org.
- I will not arrange to meet someone that I have met online unless accompanied by a parent/carer.
- I understand that these rules are designed to keep me safe, and if they are not followed my parents may be contacted.
- I will avoid using my mobile or smartphone during activities at my rowing club as I understand that it will have an impact on my safety and my opportunity to learn and achieve.
- I know I can contact Childline on 0800 11 11 if I have any worries about something I've seen or experienced online.

Anyone who feels unsafe, unwelcome or harassed, or who has any questions or concerns should contact British Rowing's Lead Safeguarding Officer by emailing: LSO@britishrowing.org.

Appendix 3 - Useful contacts

- The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

24-hour free and confidential telephone helpline that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of ill-treatment or abuse. Telephone: 0808 800 5000 Email: help@nspcc.org.uk. Website: www.nspcc.org.uk. For those with hearing difficulties, there is a text phone number: 0800 056 0566.

- The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Command

CEOP works with safeguarding and child protection partners across the UK and overseas. It protects children from harm online and offline with a focus on child sexual exploitation and online protection issues. Website: www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre. Reporting: www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/Should-I-make-a-report-to-CEOP-YP

- Safer Internet

The UK Safer Internet Centre is a partnership between Children International, the Internet Watch Foundation and Safety and Security Online (SWGfl). Their mission is to promote the safe and responsible use of technology for young people. Website: www.saferinternet.org.uk

- Internet Matters

Internet Matters is a not-for-profit organisation that wants to empower parents and carers to keep children safe in a digital world. Website: www.internetmatters.org

- Childline

Childline is a free, private and confidential service that exists to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. Website: www.childline.org.uk Call: 0800 1111

- Parents Protect

Parents Protect help parents and carers protect children and young people from sexual abuse and exploitation. Website: www.parentsprotect.co.uk. Confidential Support Line: 0808 1000 900

- National Working Group

The National Working Group is a charity whose objective is to tackle child exploitation by promoting, enabling, supporting and developing the protection of children and young people who are affected by sexual exploitation. Website: www.nwgnetwork.org. Online chat function: https://www.nwgnetwork.org/