

BSAC Welfare of Vulnerable People Policy Guidelines

Welfare of the Vulnerable

As the Governing Body for the sports of snorkelling and SCUBA diving, the British Sub-Aqua Club (BSAC) wishes to assure parents and guardians that all reasonable precautions will be taken to ensure the safety and well being of young children and juveniles who participate in the activities of the BSAC.

Accordingly, it is a policy of the BSAC that people convicted of criminal acts of a sexual or violent nature against, or otherwise involving, children, may not be members of the organisation and that, in particular, such persons will not have contact with young BSAC members in any form whatsoever.

Additionally, the BSAC has a set of clear guidelines setting out "best practice" for organising and arranging any events within the branch to provide a safe and encouraging environment in which all members and guests may participate without fear of harm. These guidelines are available and promoted to all branches.

The Children Act 1989 indicates that anyone who has care of children should "do what is reasonable in all circumstances for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare".

These procedures and guidelines have been produced by the British Sub Aqua Club (BSAC), with reference to the DOH document entitled "Working Together - To Safeguard Children 1999", as a result of increased awareness of a general social problem rather than an increase in malpractice within our sport and stem from the following principles:

- The welfare of vulnerable members, both adults and children, is the first consideration.
- All members have the right to be protected from bad practice, neglect, bullying and all forms of emotional and physical abuse.
- Suspicions and allegations of inappropriate behaviour will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- It is the duty of all members suspecting inappropriate behaviour and actions to act on any concern.
- As defined in the Children Act 1989, anyone under the age of 18 years should be considered as a child for the purposes of this Policy
- To treat all members fairly, equitably and without prejudice.
- Not to participate in or tolerate behaviour that frightens, degrades, embarrasses, demoralizes or negatively affects a member's self esteem
- Not to tolerate acts of aggression
- Photography - Members should be aware that the recording of photographic images might be inappropriate.
- The members of the British Sub-Aqua Club should not discriminate on the grounds of gender, marital status, race, colour, disability, sexuality, age, occupation, religion or political opinion.
- Branch Officers and Instructors will be made aware of good practice with a specific Welfare course available - free of charge, together with appropriate documentation, training and support from HQ, to ensure that Branches are able to implement the Welfare Policy.

Awareness of these issues, and the adherence to these simple guidelines, will help maintain professionalism and safeguard good practice, secure the protection of both the vulnerable and those responsible for them, from accusations arising from misinterpretation of innocent actions.