

# Lyme Regis Gig Club – Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

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## **Guiding Principle: ‘The Welfare of the child is Paramount’**

*This policy reflects best practice within the sport of Gig Rowing at the Lyme Regis Gig Club. It is based on the official CPGA Safeguarding Policy and sets out procedures for all members and participants. The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under the age of eighteen (18).*

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# Lyme Regis Gig Club – Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

## 1.0 Our Commitment to Safeguarding

### 1.1 Introduction

The Lyme Regis Gig Club (LRGC), as an affiliated member of the Cornish Pilot Gig Association (CPGA), believes that every person who takes part in gig rowing has the right to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment, free from judgment and abuse.

This policy applies to all LRGc rowers, coaches, volunteers, committee members, parents, and anyone else participating in club activities. We all have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and young people and prevent their abuse.

### 1.2 LRGc Policy Statement

LRGC is committed to:

- Ensuring the safety and well-being of all young people and children in our care.
- Making the welfare of children paramount in all our decisions, which may supersede the needs of adults.
- Actively promoting an inclusive club environment for all, regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, disability, or religion.
- Protecting all our members from discrimination, degrading treatment, harm, bullying, or harassment.
- Taking all suspicions and allegations of poor practice or abuse seriously and responding swiftly and appropriately in accordance with this policy.

### 1.3 How We Achieve This

- By valuing children, listening to them, and respecting them.
- By appointing a dedicated and trained Club Welfare Officer (CWO).
- By ensuring all members in eligible roles are safely recruited and DBS checked.
- By adopting and enforcing clear Codes of Conduct for all members, parents, and coaches.
- By sharing information about concerns with statutory agencies (Social Services/Police) when necessary.

### 1.4 Explanation of Key Terms

- **The Club:** Refers to the Lyme Regis Gig Club (LRGC).
- **Child/Young Person:** Anyone under the age of 18.
- **Parent:** Includes a parent, carer, or legal guardian.
- **CWO:** Club Welfare Officer, the designated person for safeguarding at LRGc.
- **LSO:** Lead Safeguarding Officer, the designated person for safeguarding at the CPGA.
- **DBS Check:** A Disclosure and Barring Service check (formerly CRB check).

## 2.0 Codes of Practice and Identifying Harm

### 2.1 LRGC Guidelines for Good Practice

All LRGC members, coaches, and volunteers will:

- **Safety Equipment:** Ensure all Under 16 rowers and any coxswain with Under 16s wear visible, properly fitted lifejackets.
- **Supervision:** Maintain a ratio of adults to young people of a minimum of **2:15** for those aged 8 and over.
- **Permissions:** Gain written permission from parents via the membership form to act *in loco parentis* for emergency first aid or medical treatment.
- **Information:** Hold up-to-date emergency contact and medical information for all junior members.
- **Appropriate Contact:** Avoid unnecessary physical contact. Where contact is appropriate for coaching, ensure it is not intrusive, and consent has been given.
- **Behaviour:** Display high standards of behaviour. Do not smoke or drink alcohol while responsible for young people. Foul or abusive language is not acceptable, particularly in the presence of junior members.
- **Journeys:** Avoid taking children alone in a car on journeys, however short.

### 2.2 Indicators of Poor Practice

The following behaviours are unacceptable at LRGC:

- Pushing people beyond their physical or emotional capabilities.
- Publicly ridiculing a person or using insulting language.
- Making sexual or suggestive comments, even in jest.
- Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching.
- Failing to act on an allegation of poor practice or abuse.

**Action:** If you accidentally hurt a child, or feel something you did has been misinterpreted, you must report the incident immediately to the LRGC CWO. All such events will be recorded in the club's Incident Book.

### 2.3 Forms and Indicators of Abuse

All members should be aware of the four main categories of abuse: Physical, Neglect, Emotional, and Sexual. Full definitions are available in the main CPGA policy, but within a rowing context, this could include forcing a child to train beyond their capability (physical), failing to ensure they wear a lifejacket (neglect), constant criticism (emotional), or inappropriate touching (sexual).

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## 2.4 Anti-Bullying Policy

The Lyme Regis Gig Club (LRGC) is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our members so they can participate in rowing in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. **Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our club and will not be tolerated.**

This policy outlines how LRGc will prevent and respond to bullying to ensure that all members feel valued and respected. We believe that everyone—rowers, coaches, parents, and volunteers—has a role to play in fostering an anti-bullying culture.

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. It is deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms:

- **Physical:** Pushing, kicking, hitting, or any use of violence. This also includes interfering with or damaging property or equipment (e.g., hiding a lifejacket or oars).
- **Verbal:** Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, or making threats. This includes "banter" that is persistent, unwanted, and causes distress.
- **Emotional/Social:** Excluding someone from a group, tormenting them, being deliberately unfriendly, or manipulating relationships.
- **Cyberbullying:** Any form of bullying that takes place online or through electronic devices, including sending hurtful text messages, emails, or social media posts, and sharing embarrassing photos or videos without consent.
- **Discriminatory:** Bullying based on a person's race, religion, gender, sexuality, disability, or any other personal attribute.

Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a trusted adult within the club. Members should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

1. **Who to Tell:** You can report bullying to **any** of the following people:
  - The Club Welfare Officer (CWO)
  - A coach or assistant coach
  - A junior coordinator
  - Any committee member you trust
2. **Responsibility to Act:** Any adult who is told about a bullying incident **must** report it to the **Club Welfare Officer (CWO)** as soon as possible.
3. **Confidentiality:** All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and handled with sensitivity. Information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the situation.

Once a concern has been reported, the CWO will lead the following procedure:

1. **Initial Discussion:** The CWO will speak with the person reporting the concern to get a clear account of the events.

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2. **Inform Parents/Carers:** The parents or carers of all children involved (both the person being bullied and the person accused of bullying) will be informed of the concern and invited to a meeting to discuss it.
3. **Investigation:** The CWO, often with another committee member, will speak with all individuals involved separately. This includes the person who was allegedly bullied, the person accused of bullying, and any witnesses.
4. **Record Keeping:** A written record of all conversations, actions taken, and decisions made will be kept securely by the CWO.
5. **Decision and Action:** Based on the investigation, the CWO and club committee will determine the most appropriate course of action.

Our goal is to stop the bullying behaviour and ensure everyone feels safe. The actions taken will be tailored to the severity and nature of the incident.

### Potential Outcomes may include:

- Mediation or a restorative conversation between the parties, facilitated by the CWO.
- A formal warning to the person bullying about their future behaviour.
- Temporary suspension from the Club, training sessions or club competition.
- In severe or persistent cases, termination of club membership.
- If the bullying involves a criminal offence (e.g., assault, harassment, hate crime), the club will inform the police.

### Support Systems:

- **For the person being bullied:** The club will provide ongoing support to help them feel safe, rebuild their confidence, and enjoy rowing again. We will discuss and agree on a plan with them and their parents to prevent any further incidents.
- **For the person who has bullied:** The club will work with the individual and their parents to address the underlying reasons for their behaviour. We will provide support to help them understand the impact of their actions and encourage them to change their behaviour.

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## 3.0 How to Respond to a Concern or Disclosure

### 3.1 Dealing with a Disclosure of Abuse

It takes immense courage for a child to disclose abuse. Your response is critical.

### 3.2 DOs – Immediate Actions

- **Stay Calm:** Do not show shock or panic.
- **Believe:** Believe what you are being told.
- **Reassure:** Tell the child they did the right thing by telling you.
- **Listen:** Let them speak without interruption.

Reference: LRGC Safeguarding & Child Protection –16 July 2025

Approved by LRGC Committee – 16 July 2025 and Board of Trustees on [TBC]

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- **Be Honest:** Explain you cannot keep it a secret and must tell someone who can help.
- **Record:** Make notes **VERBATIM** (word for word) as soon as possible.
- **Report:** Contact the **LRGC Club Welfare Officer (CWO)** immediately.

### 3.3 DON'Ts – Actions to Avoid

- **Do not promise secrecy.**
- **Do not ask leading questions** or probe for details.
- **Do not contact the parents** before seeking advice from the CWO, especially if they may be involved.
- **Do not re-question the child** or allow others to do so.
- **Do not contact the alleged perpetrator.**

### 3.4 Recording a Disclosure

Use a formal reporting form or a blank sheet of paper to record:

- The exact words of the child (verbatim).
- The time, date, and location of the disclosure.
- The child's demeanour (e.g., crying, fearful).
- Sign and date your notes. Pass this record immediately and confidentially to the CWO.

### 3.5 Passing on Concerns

Any disclosure or suspicion of abuse must be immediately discussed with the **LRGC CWO**. If the CWO is unavailable, contact the CPGA LSO. If the concern is about the CWO, go directly to the CPGA LSO. (Contact details in Section 6.2).

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## 4.0 Safeguarding Roles and Procedures at LRG

### 4.1 The Role of the CPGA Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)

The LSO provides overarching support, manages serious cases, and is the point of contact if the LRG CWO is unavailable or is the subject of a concern.

### 4.2 The LRG Club Welfare Officer (CWO)

- LRG will appoint a CWO who sits on the club committee.
- The CWO is the first point of contact at the club for all safeguarding concerns.
- The CWO will ensure this policy is implemented, promoted, and that all members know how to report a concern.
- The CWO's name and contact details will be displayed on the club noticeboard and on the official LRG website.

### 4.3 Procedure for Allegations Against an LRG Member

Reference: LRG Safeguarding & Child Protection –16 July 2025

Approved by LRG Committee – 16 July 2025 and Board of Trustees on [TBC]

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LRGC will follow a clear procedure to ensure all allegations are handled fairly and with the child's welfare as the priority.

**Step 1: A concern is raised about the behaviour of an LRG member.**

**Step 2: Is the behaviour poor practice, or could it be child abuse?**

- **If it is Poor Practice (but not suspected abuse):**
  1. Refer the concern to the LRG CWO.
  2. The CWO will liaise with the CPGA to determine next steps, which may include an internal club investigation.
  3. **Possible Outcomes:** No case to answer; advice/warning issued to the member; requirement for further training.
- **If the behaviour could constitute Child Abuse:**
  1. Report concerns **IMMEDIATELY** to the **LRGC CWO** (or CPGA LSO if the CWO is the subject of the concern).
  2. The CWO **must** then:
    - Ensure the immediate safety of the child.
    - Refer the concern to the local Children's Social Care services and/or the Police.
    - Inform the CPGA LSO of the referral.
  3. The CPGA will be consulted regarding the immediate **suspension** of the individual from all rowing activities pending the outcome of the statutory investigation.
  4. LRG will not conduct its own investigation into the allegation at this stage.
  5. **Possible Outcomes:** Police inquiry, criminal proceedings, or referral back to the CPGA for disciplinary action.

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## 5.0 Safe Club Operations

### 5.1 Safe Recruitment

All individuals wishing to work with children at LRG in an eligible role (paid or voluntary) must complete our safe recruitment process, which includes an application, references, and a DBS check.

### 5.2 Personal Disclosure and DBS Checks

- **Personal Disclosure:** Before a full DBS check is returned, all volunteers in eligible roles must complete a Personal Disclosure form. This immediate check will be held by the LRG CWO.
- **DBS Checks:** An enhanced DBS check is mandatory for the CWO and all coaches, trainers, and regular volunteers with significant access to children. The CWO will guide



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applicants through the current process. Checks must be renewed at least every three years.

## 5.3 Training

The LRGC CWO and all regular junior coaches must attend a Safeguarding and Protecting Children workshop. The CWO will also attend the 'Time to Listen' course. The CWO will maintain a record of all safeguarding training undertaken by club members.

## 5.4 Changing Rooms

Adult coaches should not shower or change at the same time as children. Supervision should be appropriate and respect privacy. No photographic equipment is ever allowed in changing rooms.

## 5.5 Coaching Ratios

A risk assessment will be conducted for each session. A minimum ratio of **2 adults to 15 children** will be maintained. Coaches will not work in isolation with children.

## 5.6 Photography, Video and Mobile Phones

LRGC will obtain written consent from parents via the membership form before taking photos or videos for club purposes. Images used on our website or social media will not identify children by their full names.

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## 6.0 Policy Implementation and Contacts

### 6.1 Policy Implementation and Review

- This policy will be available on the LRGC website, and a copy kept in the gig shed.
- The CWO's contact details will be clearly displayed for all members.
- The LRGC committee will review and re-adopt this policy annually.

### 6.2 Key Safeguarding Contacts

Role/Service	Name	Phone Number	Email/Website
LRGC Club Welfare Officer (CWO)	Kerry Maguire	07977 414351	<a href="mailto:safeguarding@lymeregisgigclub.com">safeguarding@lymeregisgigclub.com</a>
LRGC Deputy CWO	Kate Vernon	07967 275525	<a href="mailto:safeguarding@lymeregisgigclub.com">safeguarding@lymeregisgigclub.com</a>
CPGA Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)	Current LSO	See CPGA Website	<a href="mailto:secretary@cpga.co.uk">secretary@cpga.co.uk</a>
Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership		01305 221196	<a href="http://www.pdscp.co.uk/dorset">www.pdscp.co.uk/dorset</a>

## Lyme Regis Gig Club – Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

<b>Dorset Local Authority Designated Officer</b>	-		<b>LADO@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</b>
<b>Dorset Council Family Support &amp; Advice Line</b>			<b>01305 228558</b> <b>Out of Hours 01305 22100</b>
<b>Police (non-emergency)</b>	<b>Dorset Police</b>	<b>101</b>	-
<b>Police / Social Services (Emergency)</b>	-	<b>999</b>	-
<b>NSPCC Helpline</b>	-	<b>0808 800 5000</b>	<b><a href="mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk">help@nspcc.org.uk</a></b>