



# RYA Scotland Youth and Junior Communication Policy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. It is the Policy of RYA Scotland to safeguard vulnerable groups taking part in boating and windsurfing from physical, sexual and emotional harm. RYA Scotland takes protecting vulnerable groups seriously.
- 1.2. This document sets out the recommended means of communicating with sailors at each level of the RYA Scotland programmes.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. The objective of this Policy is to recommend and share appropriate means of communicating with young sailors on the RYA Scotland programmes in order to minimise the risk of the young sailors being exposed to actual or potential abuse via the means of communication used. .
- 2.2. This Policy takes into account the need to develop independence in young sailors, so that they develop relevant skills to enable them to go on to perform at the highest levels in international sport.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1. For the purpose of this Policy the following terms shall have the meanings stated below:
  - 3.1.1. "**communication**" means sending and receiving of information via either written or spoken word, through any medium, including letter, websites, email and all forms of telephone and mobile phone communication;
  - 3.1.2. "**junior sailors**" means those sailors engaged in RYA Scotland Junior class activity;
  - 3.1.3. "**youth sailors**" means those sailors engaged in RYA Scotland youth class activities;
  - 3.1.4. "**closed user group**" means the group of web users falling within the categories determined or identified by the administrator of a restricted access website usually consisting of sailors, their parents, coaches, RYAS support staff and class association representatives (where relevant).

## 4. PROCEDURES FOR JUNIOR SAILORS

The following procedures shall apply to communications from RYA Scotland coaches and support staff to junior sailors:

- 4.1. Protocols – the preferred method of communicating with young sailors within a class will be shared and discussed with parents at the land based introductory camp or first camp, whichever event occurs first.
- 4.2. Websites
  - 4.2.1. Public pages to be used only for general information of a non personal nature. General information includes information regarding team composition and programmes, results, grants and coaching groups.
  - 4.2.2. Restricted access pages may be used at junior level, see section 6.
- 4.3. Selection matters – selection letters will be addressed to sailors, which will include a paragraph reminding sailors to share the information with their parents.
- 4.4. Information letters – will normally be sent to the sailors (unless a parent specifically asks to receive copies).
- 4.5. Information emails – will normally be sent to sailors, copied to parents.
- 4.6. Telephone calls – are deemed appropriate exceptionally for information and coaching advice, via the home phone only, not mobile phone; depending on who answers the phone the call should be positioned with the parents or the sailor asked to relay the purpose of the call.
- 4.7. Texting – not appropriate for junior sailors.

- 4.8. Social networking sites may not be used at Junior level. These sites include MySpace, Bebo, and Facebook.
- 4.9. Disciplinary matters – to be discussed with parents, in person where possible; any additional written correspondence to be addressed to parents.

## **5. PROCEDURES FOR YOUTH SAILORS**

The following procedures shall apply to communications from RYA Scotland coaches and support staff to youth sailors:

- 5.1. Protocols – parents and sailors will be informed that RYAS will normally communicate directly with sailors, in order to develop independence and to coach and encourage sailors to take responsibility for their own sailing activities.
- 5.2. Websites
  - 5.2.1. Public pages to be used only for general information of a non personal nature. This includes information regarding team composition, results, grants and coaching groups.
  - 5.2.2. Restricted access pages may be used at Youth level, see section 6.
- 5.3. Selection matters – selection letters will be addressed to sailors, with a paragraph included reminding sailors to share the information with their parents.
- 5.4. Information letters – sent to sailors (unless a parent specifically asks to receive copies).
- 5.5. Information emails – sent to sailors (unless a parent specifically asks to receive copies).
- 5.6. Telephone calls – appropriate for information and coaching advice; sailors should be reminded to relay the purpose of the call to parents.
- 5.7. Texting – at youth level may be used for information dissemination only – not for social purposes.
- 5.8. Social networking sites may not be used at youth level. These sites include MySpace, Bebo, and Facebook.
- 5.9. Disciplinary matters – to be discussed with parents, in person where possible; if the parents are not present or available, then discussion should take place in the presence of another responsible adult. Additional, subsequent correspondence to be addressed to parents (unless sailor is over 18).

## **6. Restricted Access Websites**

- 6.1. Restricted access websites may be used at Junior and Youth level provided there is a closed user group.
  - 6.1.1. Where a Junior or Youth sailor is a member of a closed used group their parents must also be members of the group.
- 6.2. Content posted by website administrators must be visible to all members of the closed user group.
  - 6.2.1. Content may be in the form of video, photos and text for the purposes of communicating information or coaching advice relevant to the group or individuals.
  - 6.2.2. Content may only be published by website administrators which may consist of coaches and RYAS support staff. Only adults may become website administrators.
  - 6.2.3. All website administrators must be familiar with the RYAS Youth and Junior Communication Policy, RYAS Anti-Bulling Policy and RYAS Child Protection Guidelines.
  - 6.2.4. Website administrators are responsible for content they post and must not post any inappropriate content which could harm an individual or group either directly or indirectly.
- 6.3. All links to other sites or pages should have the content checked thoroughly, both for child protection reasons, and to ensure the content poses no risk to the organisation's reputation. Once a link is created the content should be checked periodically. It is not

- appropriate to use sites like YouTube where external links cannot be controlled and it is easy to navigate away from pages to external content.
- 6.4. Restricted access websites may be used to request information from the closed user group. Such information collected shall only be accessible by the web administrators. This fact shall be stated in the request for the information. The information requested may consist of feedback forms, sailor profiles, questionnaires, reports or online coaching (e-learning).
  - 6.5. The restricted access website shall clearly state how to report miss-use or concerns regarding the website to the relevant RYAS programme administrator.

## **7. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 7.1. This Policy will be monitored by the RYA Scotland High Performance Manager and the RYAS Child Protection Co-ordinator.
- 7.2. This Policy will be reviewed annually by the RYA Scotland High Performance Manager in consultation with the RYAS Child Protection Co-ordinator, Performance Committee and appropriate RYA Managers.