



ESSEX GLIDING CLUB
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

*Referenced from the BGA
Child Protection Policy and Procedures*

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BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW.

The statutory inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié highlighted the then lack of priority status given to safeguarding. The Government's responses to these findings included the *Every Child Matters* green paper and the 2004 Children Act. The body of legislation also includes..

- *Children Act 1989*
- *Children Act 2004*
- *Protection of Children Act 1999*
- *Human Rights Act 1998*
- *UN Convention on Rights of the Child*
- *Sexual Offences Act 2003*
- *The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010* document by the Department for Children, Schools and Families
- *The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012*

While the legislation referred to is essentially aimed at settings where children are in the extended care of adults, either family or institutions, and therefore may be deemed to be at risk: anyone and everyone who works with or around children and vulnerable adults needs to be aware of the laws that aim to protect children from harm.

Social media is virtually unregulated. It is apparent that grooming and inappropriate relationships can easily take place via Chat Rooms, Facebook, Txt, WhatsApp, Tiktok and other social media and emails. This cannot be regulated within a club setting and even parents find it hard to regulate their own children in this area. In a club setting it is possible that a child's peer group may stumble across suspicious Internet activity. If this is the case they need to be confident in reporting the issue.

The EGC recognises that we have a duty of care towards young and vulnerable participants and can help to protect them from abuse. In order to achieve this all volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults will have training and or relevant information and guidance made available to assist them in the recognition of abuse and fostering good working relationships with young people. They should also be aware of the referral process; sensible

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working practices; and to identify 'appointed persons' within the BGA and at club level, who staff can contact about child protection (CP) issues.

VOCABULARY

A CHILD.

The law defines a child as anyone who has not yet achieved his or her 18th birthday.

For practical purposes EGC regards a child who has not yet achieved their 16th birthday as requiring to be supervised by a parent or person having parental responsibility when on the EGC site. If the parent or person having parental responsibility does not intend to provide supervision then the club will accept responsibility, but in these circumstances we require written confirmation and authority for this arrangement, thereafter known as Advice for Parents (this does not to be specific to each occasion of attendance, this written authority could usefully be provided when the child first joins the club and when he/she subsequently renews their membership up until they reach the age of 18).

Between the ages of 16 and 18 (16yrs and 17yrs) a young person is still regarded by the law as a child and parents may allow their children to attend Ridgewell on trust; confident that their child is sufficiently mature and sensible to interact in that adult environment and find their own way home etc. If, in the view of the committee, this proves not to be the case then parents will be informed and for safeguarding purposes that child will revert to pre 16yrs status with the restrictions and supervisions that apply.

The club recognises that each child is different and reaches various milestones of maturity and self-reliance at differing ages. Essex Gliding Club therefore does not impose or declare there to be any minimum age for its members. However any child (and their parent/guardian) who joins the Club must fully understand that he/she is joining a multi-age club, not a youth club, and all members of any age come and go when they please with no formality. For children this means that, unlike going to school where teachers take on some parental responsibility for part of the day, coming to the Club is different. There is no one here who checks a child has arrived and who accepts a similar degree of responsibility for them. With this in mind children joining will first be placed in a Probationary category until the CP Lead in conjunction with the CFI and Officers of the Club are satisfied that the child shows a degree of maturity and awareness of the risks commensurate with participation in our sport. In the event of such maturity not being demonstrated after what the CP leads deems to be a reasonable period of time the membership shall be reviewed with the CFI, chairman and other Officers of the club, (such as

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are available). After this review and If necessary, the club reserves the right to then remove the said membership.

VULNERABLE CHILD

This relates less to age and more to emotional, social or physical issues. To a certain extent this is self-regulating in the EGC setting as to engage in the sport of gliding requires a medical certificate or self-declaration. In effect each situation will need to be taken on its merits. Society is becoming more aware of the autistic spectrum, which affects learning abilities and social behaviour in different ways. While unusual social behaviour may make demands on members within the remit of CP, in extreme cases a trainee's mood swings or an inability to relate personal actions to outcomes may cause the CFI deem them unsafe to fly solo. This of course supersedes CP concerns. Physical disability can in some cases be accommodated on training aircraft.

PARENT

Parents are defined as the mother (s) father (s), or an appointed guardian who looks after the Child as a Parent would.

DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE (DBS)

Set up in 2012 anyone involved in a REGULATED ACTIVITY must apply to be approved by the DBS. Any Body or Setting engaged in what is defined within *The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA)* as a REGULATED ACTIVITY may apply to the DBS for information about any new employee or volunteer. They also have a duty to inform DBS if they have cause to remove a person from a REGULATED ACTIVITY in their setting. The CP Lead and deputy will both apply for a personal DBS check and will make the results of such checks known to the chairman.

REGULATED ACTIVITY

We take the position that EGC does not conform to the definition of a REGULATED ACTIVITY as we do not meet the criteria of frequency or intensity as defined within the SGVA.

This arises firstly from gliding instruction on the ground taking place in full sight of at least one instructor, a Duty wing runner, the Launch point supervisor and other members supporting the launching and retrieving of gliders.

Secondly, all of our instructors are volunteers and give their time to instruct on an irregular basis according to the needs of the club and their other personal commitments. Pupils

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therefore receive flying instruction with a number of different instructors rather than the same instructor regularly.

The Club Committee recognises the limited risk flying instruction nevertheless presents and have determined that the proportionate and appropriate first response is to ensure that all instructors are fully aware of this issue. If however it is subsequently felt necessary the CP lead or CP deputy will ensure the instructor (s) in question apply for a DBS check.

Winch drivers have on occasion referenced the lonely and isolated nature of their post, therefore children will only attend the winch in the company of at least two adults.

BGA YOUNG PEOPLE IN GLIDING – Child protection Code of Practice or Blue Card

This invaluable guide folds down to the size of a credit card and can be kept in the wallet or purse of each club member. A copy is also displayed on the notice board in the Club house. It is also available via the Clubs website. The card presents a Code of Behaviour with a list of Do and Do Not's. And what to do if you have any concerns; specifically do not investigate but refer to the Club CP Lead.

We do not expect our members to be fully aware of CP issues without help from the club. Accordingly we will from time to time distribute relevant details and guidance to our members especially where legislation is altered. Club members are sensitive about CP issues and are fully aware of the expectation that they will bring any relevant issues or concerns to the attention of the CP Lead. It is not a taboo subject. We make available to club members the **BGA Blue Card** which succinctly outlines situations to avoid and makes the helpful observation that CP issues are not always as you might expect. Our aim is to become wiser in our dealing with those club members defined as children while involving them as fully as possible in all aspects of the club so that they continue to grow in self-confidence and maturity while not only feeling safe, but being safe.

EGC makes the following declarations

- The welfare of young people and vulnerable young adults is a primary concern.
- All young people whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.

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- Children aged below 16yrs are only allowed on the airfield and premises if they are in the continual care and supervision of their parents, an adult nominated by the parents or if a parent has signed a written authority (the Advice for Parents as described at Page 3).
- Children aged below 18 cannot stay at the club overnight unless formal supervision has been provided which is acceptable to both the parent and the Committee.
- Children aged 16 & 17yrs attend EGC on trust, recognising that club members will show every care and courtesy toward them (and expect such in return). Parents of this age group (refer to definition of A Child in Vocabulary section) must be confident that their child is sufficiently capable and mature to interact in that environment and find their own way home etc...
- Whilst it is the responsibility of CP experts to determine whether or not abuse has taken place it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns.
- All incidents of suspicious behaviour, poor practice and specific allegations will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

This policy is supported by the BGA Child Protection policy, January 2018 and set of procedures as set out in the BGA document *Child Protection Policy and Procedures* which is available from the club on request and can be downloaded from the BGA website.

Should you have any queries relating to this policy, please contact any of the following:

Club CP Lead

Name: Rob Brown

Tel: 07866522071

Club CP Deputy

Name Mrs Cathy Dellar

Tel: 07974820195

BGA Child Protection Leader

Tel: 07880 547 176

BGA Office

Tel: 0116 289 2956

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**This policy was reviewed at a meeting of the EGC Committee of Management
held on 18.03.2023**

Signed on behalf of the Committee of Management Mr John WHITWELL (Chairman)

John Whitwell

28/04/2024

Chairman EGC _____

Dated _____