

Poole Harbour Canoe Club – Guidance on participation of Children and Families in Club Activities and the Club’s Position on Non Club Paddlesport Activities.

Children and Families

As a Club we really want to encourage children and families to participate in Paddlesport. To do this safely we have agreed some guidance which is set out below. The guidance is designed to take into account the physical and mental development of children and also the reality that some trips/activities will not be suitable for them. We want children and families to have an enjoyable and safe time; and want them to come back for more.

Note: For all Club activities the Lead Coach has ultimate responsibility for deciding who can take part. They will take into account factors such as age, health, experience, water confidence, season, weather and water conditions etc.

General Guidance

1. Parents/Guardians of children under 16 years of age are asked to remain on site whilst their child is participating in Club activities. For children under 8 years of age the parent or guardian will normally be asked to be on the water with them.
2. If the activity involves a trip of any distance it will often be sensible and more fun for the child to be in the same boat as the parent or guardian – of course a good supply of food and warm clothes helps as well!
3. If inclusion of the child would prevent the trip or activity from achieving what was planned then unfortunately they will not be allowed to participate. (In reality, this applies to everyone who attends a Club Activity regardless of age)
4. Juniors participating in any club activities are subject to at least the same safety requirements as adults. Although Coaches will help and advise before getting on the water, It is the Parent/Guardian responsibility to make sure all safety equipment is appropriate and properly used throughout any activity e.g. Well fitting BA

Specific Guidance

1. **Lake Pier Junior Sessions** (Tuesdays evenings at Lake)- Children must be at least 8 years to be eligible to join in the activities of the Paddle Power group
2. Subject to weather and river conditions Children in their 8th year can normally attend **Racing Sessions** at Riverside Wimborne. Parent/guardians of children under 16 are asked to remain on site during these sessions.
3. With parent/guardian support our aim is that wherever possible **General Kayaking and Novice Club Sessions at Lake and Riverside Wimborne** will have activities to allow families to get afloat – i.e near to the Pier at Lake on Club Nights in the Summer, near to the Pontoon at Riverside in the Summer.

Non Club Activities Including Borrowing Club Equipment for Personal Use

The Club runs numerous skills development activities and Coach led trips to enable Members to experience and develop their skills in paddlesport across a range of disciplines. A major emphasis is placed on keeping safe. We also want to encourage people to get afloat as often as they want and recognise that to achieve this Members may paddle outside of organised Club activities.

Members participating in such activities do so entirely at their own risk even when borrowing Club equipment.

The Club urges Members to follow common sense rules for these non-Club activities. These include:

- Paddling in groups of 3 boats or more
- Ensuring that skills and equipment within the Group are sufficient to deal with water and weather conditions that maybe encountered including the need for rescues, summoning help and first aid
- Make sure the age, health and ability of those participating has been taken into account. This particularly applies where children are involved.
- Letting someone know the plans and what to do if the group/paddler is not back at the agreed time.

The measure of risk associated with all Junior activities in the club remains the responsibility of their Parent/Guardian. Please speak to a Coach or Trustee if you have any questions on this Guidance Note.

Note: PHCC has a welfare team who are always willing to advise parents/carers/juniors about any aspect of the welfare/safeguarding of children [all aged less than 18] and adults with special needs, in relation to paddlesport. Please contact Mark Taylor at mark.taylor@phcc.org.uk or on 07734 130339, or Cheryl Williams on 07817 317042.