



Adult Code of Conduct

Reviewed : 1st June 2026

1. Purpose

Kingston Kayak Club is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, respectful and inclusive environment for everyone involved in the club.

Canoeing and kayaking are assumed-risk activities. Good behaviour, clear communication and respect for coaches, pool controllers, session leaders, officials and volunteers are essential to keeping sessions safe and enjoyable.

The aim of the club is for all paddlers to improve their skills, develop confidence, enjoy paddlesport and have fun.

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected from all adults involved with Kingston Kayak Club.

2. Who This Code Applies To

This Code applies to all adults involved in Kingston Kayak Club activities, including:

- adult paddlers;
- parents and carers;
- spectators;
- coaches;
- pool controllers;
- session leaders;
- officials;
- volunteers;
- committee members;
- visitors and guests;
- anyone representing or supporting the club at training, competitions, events, trips or other club activities.

By attending, participating in, volunteering at, supporting or representing Kingston Kayak Club, adults are expected to follow this Code of Conduct and all relevant club policies.

3. General Standards of Behaviour

All adults must:

- treat everyone with respect, fairness and dignity;
 - show understanding and consideration towards other paddlers, parents, carers, spectators, coaches, volunteers, officials and members of the public;
 - behave in a way that reflects positively on Kingston Kayak Club;
 - follow the club's rules, policies and procedures;
 - co-operate with coaches, pool controllers, session leaders, officials, volunteers and committee members;
 - use appropriate language at all times;
 - avoid behaviour that may upset, intimidate, inconvenience or endanger others;
 - act as positive role models for children, young people and less experienced paddlers;
 - respect other water users, venue staff and members of the public;
 - take responsibility for their own behaviour;
 - raise concerns calmly, respectfully and through the correct club route.
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4. Adult Paddlers

Adult paddlers must:

- listen to and follow instructions from coaches, pool controllers, session leaders, officials and other authorised club volunteers;
- comply with safety instructions immediately;
- behave safely on and around the water;
- wear suitable clothing and safety equipment for the activity;
- use club equipment responsibly and only as intended;
- take care of all property belonging to the club, venue, members or other participants;
- treat other paddlers as they would wish to be treated themselves;
- control their temper and avoid behaviour that may upset, intimidate or disrupt others;
- support a positive, inclusive and encouraging club environment;
- respect the needs of paddlers of different ages, abilities and levels of experience;
- inform the coach or session leader if they are leaving a session early;
- avoid placing themselves or others at unnecessary risk.

Adult paddlers must not deliberately interfere with, endanger, intimidate, bully or provoke another paddler.

5. Parents, Carers and Spectators

Parents, carers and spectators are an important part of Kingston Kayak Club. Their behaviour has a direct impact on children, young people, coaches, volunteers and the wider club environment.

Parents, carers and spectators must:

- support their child's involvement and help them enjoy paddlesport;
- encourage effort, learning, improvement and good sportsmanship, not just results;
- never force a child to take part in paddlesport;
- never punish, belittle, mock or humiliate a child for making mistakes, losing, struggling or not performing as expected;
- set a good example by applauding good performances, effort and fair play from all paddlers;
- use correct and respectful language at all times;
- publicly accept reasonable decisions made by coaches, pool controllers, referees, officials and session leaders;
- allow coaches and session leaders to coach without interference;
- not enter coaching areas, poolside areas, pontoons, jetties, competition areas or equipment areas unless invited to do so;
- not distract paddlers while they are receiving instruction;
- not give conflicting instructions to paddlers during a coached session;
- raise concerns appropriately and away from the immediate session environment unless there is an urgent safety or welfare concern.

Parents, carers and spectators must not instruct, encourage or pressure any paddler, child, young person, parent or spectator to ignore, disregard or challenge the instructions of a coach, pool controller, session leader, official, referee or authorised club volunteer.

Where a parent, carer or spectator has a concern about a decision, they should raise it calmly with the coach, session leader, welfare officer, chair or another committee member at an appropriate time.

6. Coaches, Pool Controllers, Officials and Volunteers

Coaches, pool controllers, officials and volunteers must:

- place the wellbeing and safety of paddlers before the development of performance;
- develop appropriate working relationships with paddlers based on mutual trust and respect;
- ensure activities are suitable for the age, ability, experience and confidence of those taking part;
- display consistently high standards of behaviour, appearance and communication;
- follow Kingston Kayak Club, Paddle UK and relevant safeguarding, safety and welfare policies;

- hold appropriate and up-to-date qualifications, training and insurance where required for their role;
- encourage paddlers to value effort, learning, development and performance, not just results;
- never condone or encourage the use of prohibited substances;
- act fairly and consistently when dealing with behaviour concerns;
- report welfare, safeguarding, safety or conduct concerns through the appropriate club process;
- avoid behaviour that could be misinterpreted or place themselves or others at risk;
- maintain appropriate boundaries with children, young people and adults at risk;
- challenge poor behaviour where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Coaches, pool controllers, officials and volunteers have authority to manage the activity safely. This includes giving instructions, organising groups, managing equipment, pausing activity, removing someone from the water, or asking someone to leave an area where necessary for safety, welfare or good order.

7. Respect for Coaches, Pool Controllers and Session Leaders

During club sessions, the coach, pool controller, session leader or authorised club official is responsible for the safe and effective running of the activity.

All adults must respect this.

Adults must not:

- undermine the coach, pool controller, session leader or official;
- encourage others not to listen to them;
- give conflicting instructions during a coached activity;
- interfere with safety decisions;
- challenge instructions in a way that disrupts the session;
- argue with coaches or volunteers in front of children or paddlers;
- make comments that damage confidence in those responsible for the session.

This does not prevent adults from raising genuine concerns. If someone believes a decision is unsafe, unfair or inappropriate, they should raise the concern calmly through the correct route.

If there is an immediate safety or welfare concern, it should be raised straight away with the coach, session leader, welfare officer or another responsible club official.

8. Behaviour That Is Not Acceptable

The following behaviour is not acceptable at Kingston Kayak Club:

- swearing at, insulting, threatening, intimidating or abusing another person;
- shouting aggressively or using threatening body language;
- bullying, harassment, victimisation or discrimination;
- racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, ableist or otherwise discriminatory comments or behaviour;
- deliberately humiliating, belittling or excluding another person;
- spreading malicious rumours or making knowingly false statements;
- aggressive confrontation with coaches, volunteers, officials, parents, carers, spectators or paddlers;
- refusing to follow reasonable safety instructions;
- disrupting a session, event, competition or club activity;
- encouraging others to ignore coaches, pool controllers, session leaders or officials;
- damaging, misusing or taking club equipment without permission;
- attending or participating while under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- smoking or vaping where venue or club rules prohibit it;
- using social media, messaging apps, email or other communication channels to abuse, harass, intimidate, humiliate or discredit others;
- behaviour that brings Kingston Kayak Club into disrepute.

This list is not exhaustive. The club may act on any behaviour that affects safety, welfare, respect, good order or the reputation of the club.

9. Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking and Vaping

Adults must not take part in paddling activities while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Adults must not consume alcohol, smoke, vape or use drugs in breach of club rules, venue rules, event rules or the law.

The use, possession, supply or encouragement of illegal drugs or prohibited substances is not acceptable.

The club will never condone the use of prohibited substances.

10. Social Media and Communication

Adults must communicate respectfully when discussing club matters in person, by phone, by email, by text, through messaging apps or on social media.

Adults must not:

- post abusive, misleading, humiliating or inflammatory comments about the club or people involved in it;
- target coaches, volunteers, officials, parents, carers, spectators or paddlers online;
- share images or videos of children, young people or club members in a way that breaches consent, safeguarding or privacy expectations;
- use club communication channels to harass, pressure or intimidate others;
- use social media to escalate disputes that should be handled through the club's procedures.

Concerns should be raised through the appropriate club route, not through public criticism or online conflict.

11. Safeguarding and Welfare

All adults share responsibility for helping to create a safe club environment.

Adults must:

- act in the best interests of children, young people and adults at risk;
- report safeguarding or welfare concerns to the Club Welfare Officer or another appropriate club official;
- avoid behaviour that causes a child, young person or adult at risk to feel unsafe, pressured, humiliated or isolated;
- respect personal boundaries;
- avoid inappropriate physical contact, language or relationships;
- follow Kingston Kayak Club and Paddle UK safeguarding guidance.

Where a concern relates to safeguarding, child protection or an adult at risk, it must be handled through the club's safeguarding process and not treated as an ordinary conduct disagreement.

Where there is immediate danger, violence, threats or a crime in progress, the police should be called immediately.

12. Raising Concerns and Complaints

Kingston Kayak Club encourages adults to raise genuine concerns about behaviour, welfare, safeguarding, safety or breaches of club policy.

Concerns may be raised with:

- a coach;
- the session leader;
- the pool controller;
- a committee member;

- the Club Welfare Officer;
- the Club Chair.

Concerns should be raised calmly, honestly and as soon as reasonably possible.

Where possible, reports should include:

- what happened;
- when and where it happened;
- who was involved;
- who witnessed it;
- what was said or done;
- whether any immediate action was taken;
- whether there is any supporting evidence.

No person will be criticised or treated unfavourably for raising a genuine concern honestly and in good faith, even if the concern is not upheld.

13. Immediate Action During Sessions

Where behaviour creates disruption, distress, risk or a safety concern, a coach, pool controller, session leader, referee, official, committee member or authorised club volunteer may take immediate action.

This may include:

- giving a verbal reminder;
- asking the adult to stop the behaviour;
- asking the adult to move away from the activity area;
- pausing or suspending the session;
- removing a paddler from the water;
- restricting access to equipment or activity areas;
- asking the adult to leave the venue;
- contacting a parent, carer or emergency contact where appropriate;
- referring the matter to the committee, welfare officer or chair.

Immediate action is not necessarily a disciplinary sanction. It may be a practical step to protect safety, welfare and the smooth running of the session.

14. Breaches of This Code

Breaches of this Code may be dealt with informally or formally depending on the seriousness of the behaviour, the impact on others, any safety or welfare concerns, and whether there has been previous poor behaviour.

Possible action may include:

- a verbal reminder;
- an informal warning;
- a restorative conversation;
- a formal written warning;
- conditions on attendance or participation;
- removal from a session or event;
- temporary suspension from club activities;
- removal from a volunteer role;
- referral to the Club Welfare Officer;
- referral to Paddle UK, the venue, statutory agencies or the police, where appropriate;
- termination of membership or exclusion from club activities.

Any formal disciplinary action will be handled under Kingston Kayak Club's disciplinary procedure.

15. Final Statement

Kingston Kayak Club relies on respect, trust and co-operation between paddlers, parents, carers, spectators, coaches, volunteers, officials and committee members.

Adults set the tone for the club.

Everyone involved in Kingston Kayak Club is expected to help create an environment where people feel safe, respected, included and able to enjoy paddlesport.

The aim is for all paddlers to improve their skills, develop confidence and have fun.