

Broomfield Park Swimming Club

Child Protection Policy Statement

(version 2 – Released: 31 October 2017)

At Broomfield Park, we believe that all children have the right to enjoy and develop their swimming in a friendly, safe and secure environment. The children can develop their skills, self esteem and the ability to be a team player as well as the opportunities to achieve success and to reach their potential through good coaching and teaching skills. Broomfield Park S.C is committed to the SwimEngland Wave Power guidelines and procedures in achieving the best outcome for the children and to safeguard them from harm.

The Children's Act 1989 states that everyone who has the care of children should, "Do what is reasonable in all circumstances for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare". The welfare of all children is and must be paramount. It is the right of every child to be protected from abuse, regardless of age, disability or learning difficulty, gender, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 years old.

Broomfield Park S.C takes the issue of safeguarding the children seriously and any allegations of abuse or concerns will be dealt with quickly and appropriately. This will also include how to recognise abuse, how staff will respond to a disclosure, how they initially deal with it and whom to contact. We link with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (as and when necessary) and the statutory government guidance on 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006' and Every Child Matters.

At all times the children's safety and welfare is the overriding consideration.

Definitions of Abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child.

A child can be harmed by someone who:-

- Inflicts harm
- Fails to act to prevent harm.

A child could be abused by:-

- A family member.
- By a person within an institution or community setting.
- By a person known to them or by a stranger
- An adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

In swimming an example of physical abuse may be the imposed use of performance enhancing drugs or persistent training which is beyond the capacity of the individual leading to physical harm.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

- It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person.
- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. This may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Within swimming an example of emotional abuse may be when a coach continuously criticises a swimmer, uses sarcasm and name calling or generally belittles the child. Parents can emotionally abuse a swimmer by having too high expectations and placing unrealistic pressure on the child with negative constant feedback.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

- The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non penetrative acts.
- They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in viewing of or the production of sexual on-line images, watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Child sex abusers can come from any professional, racial or religious background, and can be male or female. They are not always adults; children and young people can also behave in a sexually abusive way. Usually the abuser is a family member or someone known to the child such as a family friend. Some individuals will target a sport that allows access to children specifically to commit acts of sexual abuse.

Abusers may act alone or as part of an organised group. After the abuse they will put the child under great pressure not to tell anyone about it. They will go to great lengths to get close to children and win their trust. For example by choosing employment that brings them into contact with children or by pretending to be children in Internet chat rooms run for children and young people.

Sexual abuse has been identified within swimming. Coaches and other club officers are in a position to form trusting relationships with swimmers and sexual abuse is most often based on abuse of that trust by an apparently trusted adult.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs and likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care providers).
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Neglect in swimming could be coach or official failing to ensure the safety of a young person, exposing them to undue cold or to unnecessary risk or injury and often highlights failure in duty of care.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated deliberate actions by one or more people that causes hurt to an individual or group and where it is difficult for the bullied person(s) to prevent or deal with the bullies actions.

The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to young people to the extent that it affects their health and development. In the extreme it causes them significant harm (including self-harm).

The anti bullying charity Kidscape defines bullying as a child encountering bullying attacks that includes:

- Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and other forms of violence or threats.
- Verbal: Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- Emotional: Excluding (sending to Coventry), tormenting, ridicule, humiliation.

Bullying can occur between:

- An adult and young person.
- A young person and young person.

- A parent and own child.

In all cases it is not acceptable within swimming.

The competitive nature of sport can create an environment that provides opportunities for bullying. Examples of bullying in swimming could be:

- A parent who pushes too hard.
- A coach who adopts a win-at-all costs philosophy.
- A young player who intimidates inappropriately.
- An older player who intimidates inappropriately.
- An official who places unfair pressure on a person.

Harassment

Harassment is an act that is unwanted by the recipient. It may be the provision of items or unwanted actions from another person but by definition it is the unwanted nature of the action or items that distinguishes the nature of the act to be harassment. It is for any given individual to determine for themselves what is acceptable to them and what they regard as offensive. Harassment can be deemed to be criminal offence in some circumstances and can lead to the use of a restraining order or criminal prosecution. Harassment can take many forms; some examples being suggestive sexual remarks, racist or religious insults or jokes, verbal abuse or foul language, exclusion and unwelcome attention. The impact of harassment on the individual can be profound. Harassment can lead to the child feeling unhappy demoralized or undervalued as a person. Harassment is often a constant ongoing type of abuse where the individual causes extreme distress by the repeated action, usual verbally.

SwimEngland is committed to prevent and deal with harassment incidents in the sport.

Children do not find it easy to disclose their concerns and some find it harder than others, possibly children from ethnic minority groups and children with disabilities.

Abuse is not always easy to identify. Children and young people can be bruised in everyday life by falling off bikes and playing with friends. In adolescence children can be moody and unpredictable in their behaviour. Children can react to external circumstances by a change in behaviour such as bereavement or parental divorce or separation. However, some signs may alert you to a view that a child may be being abused.

Some indicators are:

- The child or young person discloses a concern and describes what maybe an abusive act.
- Another person raises concern about the wellbeing of a child or young person.
- Unexplained or concerning injuries such as burns, cuts and bruises situated in areas of the child's body which are not normally prone to injury through for example play activity.
- Physical injury where the explanation given is inconsistent.

- Unexplained changes in behaviour such as a child becoming withdrawn, quiet, aggressive or verbally violent.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or behaving in a sexualised manner.
- Eating disorders i.e. a child is overeating or showing a loss of appetite.
- Excessive weight loss or weight gain for no obvious reason.
- Physical appearance becomes unkempt.
- The child or young person is withdrawn and has isolated themselves from the group and seems unable to make friends.
- The child or young person is prevented from socialising with other children.
- The child or young person displays a distrust of adults.
- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration or becoming withdrawn, clingy or depressed.

Indicators of abuse

- A drop in performance levels.
- Physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing, for example, on food, cigarettes or alcohol.
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.
- A high turnover of club members.

SwimEngland does not expect the adults involved in the club to decide a child has been abused but it is the responsibility of all adults to act upon their concerns.

Staff Child Protection Training

- All coaching & teaching staff and the welfare officer must have Safeguarding & Child Protection Training which is regularly updated.
- Both children and staff are able to discuss issues and raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices in confidence.
- Children will express themselves both verbally and non-verbally.
- Staff who work with them are in a position to observe or receive information or disclosures about abuse. Our staff will respond sensitively and carefully to what the children are saying and how they behave.
- **Although it is not the responsibility off the staff to decide if a child is being abused they have a duty of care to act on any concerns.**
- All incidences will be reported to the welfare officer or a committee member. Information will be recorded at all times. Confidentiality will be maintained and on a need to know basis only.
- The child's welfare and safety will be the main consideration when making any decisions.
- SwimEngland policy and procedures will be followed especially when dealing with allegations against members of staff and volunteers.
- The club's welfare officer offers advice, support and guidance to all club members on safeguarding issues. They will ensure that the procedures are followed and regularly monitored, reviewed and updated where necessary.

- Parents and carers have the main responsibility for safeguarding and promoting their child's welfare and the club recognises the importance of working in partnership with them to ensure this.
- A complaints system is in place to deal with any issues raised by parents and carers.

Safe recruitment

- The club recognises safe recruitment practices are an essential part of creating a safe environment for children.
- We will ensure that all staff working in the club are suitable and do not pose any kind of risk to the children.
- The club will carry out extensive checks on applicants for all positions, including voluntary and support roles.
- No staff member or volunteer will be allowed to take up posts until all checks have been satisfactorily completed.
- The club will ensure that all Enhanced CRB checks carried out on staff are renewed after 3 years of the original CRB disclosure.
- All job advertisements and application forms will clearly state that the role is a safeguarding role and that applicants will be expected to agree to undergo CRB and other checks as part of safe recruitment practice. The club will use a checklist to ensure all safe recruitment practices are carried out for every applicant applying for posts and records kept.
- Verify the applicant's identity and immigration status from their passport, including the sight of passports and any relevant Home Office documents.
- Check the applicant's qualifications and registration status; make extensive enquiries of at least 2 referees to include previous and recent employers.

Staff Induction and training

The club will ensure that all staff are fully trained and are made aware of the club's safeguarding policy and procedures are fully aware of their role in implementing them.

- The club expects staff and volunteers to follow the club's code of conduct by setting a good example through their own conduct and behaviour. Its aims are to protect them from the risk of allegations being made against them by ensuring that they, and the club, maintain high standards of professionalism.
- The committee will ensure that each member of staff, including volunteers, signs a code of conduct agreement on appointment that sets out club's expectations with regard to standards of professional behaviour and that all staff receive copies of relevant policies.
- SwimEngland procedures on Safe recruitment are followed when recruiting to posts.

Health & Safety

- The club follows SwimEngland and venues guidelines on safety. Risk assessments are in place for the safety of the children whilst swimming.
- Staff should be aware of and follow the Health & Safety procedures, laws and rules about what to do in an emergency concerning an incident or accident to a swimmer.

Parent/ Carers

'Working Together' 2006 sets out how organizations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004.

- Broomfield Park S.C. provides opportunities for parents and carers to discuss any concerns with relevant staff.
- The club will make parents aware of the club's role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child.
- Consult with and involve parents and carers in the development of policies to ensure their views are taken into account. The club recognises its duty to work in partnership with other professionals and agencies.
- The club's policies are available on the club's web-site or on request.
- The club has safeguarding policies and procedures in place.
- SwimEngland Wavepower guidelines will be followed at all times.

Disclosures

If a Child discloses to a member of staff that they are being abused, the member of staff will;

- calmly listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief and accept what the child is saying, allowing the child to talk freely, reassuring the child, but not making any promises they may not be able to keep, nor promise confidentiality, as a referral may have to be made. Reassure the child that what has happened is not their fault and that they were right to tell someone.
- Staff will not ask direct questions but allow the child to tell their own version and will not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
- Explain what will happen next and who has to be told.
- Record what was said or seen and pass this on to the welfare officer or a committee member.
- Staff are aware of their responsibilities and receive adequate training to enable them to carry these out.
- Any incidents, disclosures or signs of neglect or abuse should be fully recorded with dates, times and locations including what action was taken.
- Parents should also be made aware of the clubs duty to share information.

Physical Intervention and Restraint by Staff.

- The club's coaches and teaching staff will only use physical contact and restraint if it is absolutely necessary to prevent a child injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, or for the possible use of teaching development in line with the SwimEngland guidelines.
- Parent /carers are informed beforehand about the possible use of physical contact whilst teaching development techniques.
- Physical contact should take place in the open and in full view of others.

- Coaches should ask the child first and explain the nature and reason for the physical contact.
- Physical contact may happen on occasions where a child may need comforting or reassurance, or if celebrating a success or an achievement.
- The child should be asked first and have explained the nature and reason for the physical contact.
- Staff should always ensure that what is seen (and what is seen by others present) is normal and natural and never act in a way that can be misinterpreted or thought of as a sexual behaviour. Contact should be avoided with the buttocks, genitals and breasts.

Allegations against staff.

- In the event that an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, the club will follow the SwimEngland guidelines.

Whistle Blowing.

- All staff and volunteers have a legal duty to raise concerns where they feel individuals or the club are failing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Where it is not possible to raise concerns within the club they should report concerns to SwimEngland.
- The Club is responsible for ensuring that contact numbers are advertised on the notice board and available to staff and members.

Child Welfare

The Government's 'Every Child Matters' is about "Improving the life chances of ALL children and Young people, reducing inequalities and helping them to achieve" and is relevant to everyone working directly with them or providing a service which impacts on them.

Broomfield Park S.C. aims to work towards the five outcomes of Every Child Matters by being responsible for:-

- Staying Safe
- Operational and Emergency Plans and Health and Safety policies are in place for all our venues used.
- Risk assessments are in place for normal sessions, race nights, club championships, galas, training camps and transport, ensuring the safety of members and staff.
- Conduct procedures are in place for teaching staff, swimmers, parents and committee members.
- Anti bullying policy is in place.
- Safe recruiting practices are in place.
- CRB checks are in place for all staff.

Being healthy:

- The Club promotes healthy lifestyles, land training.

- The club positively discourages its members from taking illegal substances, smoking and the underage drinking of alcohol.

Enjoying and Achieving:

- Members enjoy attending the Club and taking part in its activities, developing their swimming skills as well as achieving social and personal development.

Make a positive contribution:

- Members develop positive relationships with others and choose not to bully or discriminate against others. They have the opportunity to help raise funds for both the club and other charities.
- Achieve economic well being:
- Members will be given the opportunity to acquire skills through good behaviour
- Feeling good about themselves.

The Club has high standards and good practices in the Safeguarding and Welfare of the children. It works in partnership with parent /carers and SwimEngland to maintain these for the enjoyment of all its members.

Please read the following for full SwimEngland Guidelines at www.britishswimming.org