



## Broomfield Park Swimming Club

### Lane Sharing Guidance

Swimming is a physical sport and like many physical activities there are inherent risks in taking part. Broomfield Park Swimming Club and Swim England are committed to ensuring that any risks to all participants are kept to an absolute minimum.

Swim England recognise that children and adults may train together if they are of a similar standard. However, it is necessary to consider the implications of children and adults sharing lanes in order to safeguard children in our sports.

Unfortunately, whilst incidents within training sessions are rare, Swim England has identified some problems arising from training activities and warmups where adults and children swim in the same lane. This includes allegations of sexual and physical assault, both intentional and accidental. Such situations have caused considerable concern and distress for the children and sometimes also for the adults involved.

Broomfield Park has a duty to safeguard members under the age of 18 alongside a duty of care to all Swim England members.

We recognise that children and senior swimmers aged 18 and over may train together if they are of a like standard. However, Swim England recognise that in some situations it is not possible or appropriate for swimmers to train separately. This could include the developmental need of the 16/17-year age group to train alongside 19/20-year-old adults and where lane availability is limited.

Safeguarding can even be made more effective by allowing an appropriate mix of masters swimmers and older children, which can actively prevent bullying and sexual advances between older children themselves. Co-training can also aid the vital transition between juniors and masters swimming. Swim England considers that in such situations, club officers and coaches must consider the risk involved and put procedures in place to ensure training activities are organised and concluded in as safe an environment as possible, minimising both the health and safety risks and any child welfare risks that these situations may pose.

When lane sharing is unavoidable BPSC coaches are required to conduct a thorough risk assessment of their training activities paying particular attention to the mix of swimmers in each lane and considering the following factors:

- Suitability of lane supervision at club sessions involving under 18s.
- The ages and sex of the swimmers.
- The relative sizes and abilities of the swimmers.
- The swimmers' lane discipline and precision of strokes.

- Any lane etiquette guides e.g. overtaking.
- The presence of lifeguards.
- The width of each training lane.
- The number of swimmers in each lane.
- Whether the session is open to spectators.
- Whether they have ensured that the club has an identified and publicised process by which concerns can be raised with an identified child Welfare Officer.

The above is not an exhaustive list but it provides a starting point for evaluating the risks to swimmers and the points to be considered to ensure training sessions are incident free. The

### **Swim England's statement on adults and children sharing lanes in training**

Swim England suggests that training sessions with both children and adults should not automatically be ruled out.

Swim England recognises that children and adults may train together in the same lane if they are of a like standard and physical size, but additional consideration to child safeguarding must be undertaken by the club.

Where separate lanes are impractical, it is vital that the club adopts a critical appraisal of the swimmers in the water and completes a careful risk assessment to ensure that the sessions are incident free.

During competition warmups that involve both children and adult swimmers, promoters should consider providing opportunities for groups of different abilities and physical sizes, or masters groups, to warm up at different times, or within separate lanes.

For clarity, masters who are training with younger swimmers do not require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, unless they are also taking part in an eligible role. When using changing facilities together please refer to the advice provided in the Changing Room Policy.