

Guidelines for Coaches, Teachers, Leaders (Volunteers), Committee Members

Adults in our aquatic activities should strive to create a positive environment for the children in their care. They have an overall responsibility to take the necessary steps to ensure that positive and healthy experiences are provided for young people.

Swim Ireland recognises the key role all leaders play in the lives of children involved in Swim Ireland clubs. These individuals should have as their first priority the children's safety and enjoyment of the sport and should adhere to the guidelines and regulations set out in the Code of Ethics, Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children 2008, and, where relevant, the Club Rules.

Adults must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every child and must treat everyone equally, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or ability.

All Leaders working with young people in any branch of the aquatic disciplines under auspices of Swim Ireland should be suitably and appropriately qualified for their role.

Leaders should act as a role model for young people and promote the positive aspects of sport and maintain the highest standards of personal conduct.

Leaders who become aware of a conflict between their obligation to a young person and their obligation to Swim Ireland must recognise that the welfare of a child is paramount.

Code of Conduct for Coaches/Teachers

Coaches/Teachers should ensure they:

- Are familiar with the Code of Ethics, these Guidelines, Swim Ireland Rules and any Club rules and are aware of and follow the required procedures contained in such
- Are qualified for their position and are up-to-date with the knowledge and skill required
- Create a safe environment for children, keeping attendance records, remember at all levels participation should be enjoyable and fun, skill development and personal satisfaction have priority over highly structured

competition. Winning should not be the only objective, success is achieved by reaching goals

- Plan and prepare appropriately and are positive during sessions. Praise and encourage effort as well as results and never ridicule or shout unnecessarily at any child
- Take care to avoid favouritism. Each child will require attention appropriate to their needs and stage of development
- Take care not to expose a child to persistent criticism, sarcasm, or hostility
- Set age-appropriate and realistic goals with the young person recognising their developmental needs and that certain procedures may affect a child physically or psychologically.
- Insist that young people respect the rules and play fairly ensuring an awareness that cheating or bullying behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Encourage the development of respect for opponents, leaders, coaches and other participants and avoid criticism of fellow coaches or other leaders
- Are aware of the boundaries of a working relationship that is based on openness, honesty, mutual trust and respect with young people
- Work in an open environment and avoid unobserved areas, ensuring adequate supervision including another parent/guardian or leader on duty at all times while teaching/coaching children.
- Involve parents where possible and inform parents and/or Children's' Officer /club committee when problems arise.
- Co-operate with the recommendations from medical and ancillary practitioners in the management of a child's medical or related problems. Coaches/Teachers may request a certificate of medical fitness to ensure safe continued participation
- Avoid carrying out any medical testing or giving advice of a personal or medical nature if not qualified to do so or undertake any form of therapy (hypnosis etc.) in the training of children. Any such activity, if qualified, must only be with parent/guardian consent
- Are aware that children may be sensitive to

- their height, weight etc and avoid anything that may heighten that sensitivity.
- Keep any information in relation to a swimmer of a personal or medical nature strictly confidential unless the welfare of the child requires the passing on of this information.
 - Never use physical punishment or physical force and never punish a mistake either by verbal or physical means or by exclusion.
 - Never engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games, never allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind or make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child.
 - Never exert undue influence over a participant in order to obtain personal benefit or reward.
 - Acknowledge the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco is incompatible with a healthy approach to sporting activity and must be discouraged. They should avoid the use of alcohol, before sessions, during events and on trips with young people

The following is the example declaration that must be signed by all Coaches and Teachers – (separate sign up sheet available).

Have you ever been asked to leave a sporting organisation? Yes No

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a caution; a Bound Over Order; or are you at present the subject of criminal investigations? Yes No

(If you have answered yes to either questions above we will contact you in confidence)

I have read, understood and agree to abide by the Code of Conduct for Coaches and Teachers, Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children 2008, the Rules of Swim Ireland.

If an allegation of abuse is made against me, I agree to step aside until outcome of any investigations are completed.

Signed _____ Date: _____

Print Name _____ Child protection number/date: _____

Club _____ Coach/Teacher position: _____