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Child Safeguarding Policy

Swim England believe that all children involved in its organisations have the right to stay safe and have fun. Amongst other things sport develops physical skills, self-esteem and the ability to be a team player, as well as providing an opportunity to achieve individual success.

Safeguarding children in your organisation should be an integral part of your activities and is about creating a culture that provides a safe and happy environment in which children can learn to swim and develop to a level appropriate for their ability. Aquatic sport should be enjoyable and fun, including the competitive aspect at whatever level undertaken, giving each individual a sense of achievement and satisfaction from taking part.

Swim England is committed to ensuring that all children who participate in our activities are able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be safeguarded from harm. It is the staff, officers, volunteers, clubs, swim schools, counties and regions who will ensure safeguarding at a local level.

Responsibility to safeguard children

The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Government document “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018” are clear that safeguarding children is the responsibility of all, including those who are employed or volunteer with children in whatever capacity. It is the organisations’ responsibility, through safe recruitment practice, to ensure that those who are deemed to be unsuitable to work with children are not allowed to do so in our sports. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is an important, **but not sole**, part of safe recruitment.

Swim England acknowledges, and requires affiliated organisations to acknowledge, that they have a duty of care to safeguard children from harm. Organisations and their members must follow the guidance in Wavepower to safeguard children from harm and act appropriately if a child is identified as being at risk of harm.

The key principles of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) are:

- safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility: for services to be effective each practitioner and organisation should play their full part; and
- a child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

Safeguarding children is everyone’s responsibility

- Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe; this includes teachers, coaches and all who are employed or volunteer to work with children in the sport sector.
- No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.
- In order that organisations and practitioners collaborate effectively, it is vital that every individual working with children and families is aware of the role that they have to play and the role of other practitioners. They should be aware of, and comply with, the published local arrangements as set out by the local

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safeguarding partners. Effective safeguarding requires clear local arrangements for collaboration between practitioners and agencies.

- Any practitioner with concerns about a child's welfare should make a referral to local authority Children's Social Care. Practitioners should always follow up their concerns if they are not satisfied with the response.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) sets out the key roles for individual organisations to deliver local arrangements for safeguarding. It is essential these arrangements are strongly led and promoted at a local level.

A child-centred approach

Effective safeguarding systems are child-centred. Failings in safeguarding systems are too often the result of losing sight of the needs and views of the children within them, or placing the interests of adults ahead of the needs of children. Children are clear about what they want from an effective safeguarding system:

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them.
- **Understanding and action:** to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon.
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them.
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not.
- **Information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans.
- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments, decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response.
- **Support:** to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family.
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views.
- **Protection:** to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee.

For more information please refer to the full document at [gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2).

Key principles

- Swim England is committed to ensuring that all children who take part in our activities are able to have fun and participate in an environment that keeps them safe from harm.
- The welfare of the child is, and must always be, paramount.
- It is every child's right to be protected from abuse irrespective of their age, gender, faith or religion, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, background, economic position, disability or level of ability.
- Allegations of abuse or concerns regarding children will be treated seriously and will be responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Swim England recognises the responsibilities of the statutory agencies and is committed to complying with safeguarding partners and the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) [gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2).
- Confidentiality will be maintained appropriately at all times and the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration when making decisions on whether or not to share information about them.
- Swim England will support all adults involved in our sports to understand their roles and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and protecting children in our sports.

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- Swim England will provide training and education to all adults involved in our sports to be aware of, and understand what best practice is and how to manage any child welfare concerns they identify or are informed of.
- Parents/guardians, children and all participants involved in our sports can access advice and guidance on child welfare matters from the Child Safeguarding Team, Swim England and NSPCC Swimline Child Protection helpline or from the statutory agencies.
- All Swim England organisations must adopt Wavepower and ensure that when they receive new information the manual is updated as appropriate.