

# Information sheet and emergency contact details

## **Welfare Officer**

Name:  
Tel:

## **Regional Welfare Officer**

Name:  
Tel:

## **Children's Services**

Tel:

## **Out of Hours/Emergency Duty Team**

Tel:

## **Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)**

Tel:

## **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Tel:

## **Police Child Protection Investigation Team**

Tel:

## **National Governing Body (NGB)**

Swim Wales, Wales National Pool,  
Sketty Lane, Swansea. SA2 8QG  
Tel: 01792 513636  
E-mail: [welfare@swimming.org](mailto:welfare@swimming.org)  
Website: [www.swimwales.org](http://www.swimwales.org)

## **Zita Cameron:**

Safeguarding Officer (SO)  
At the NGB address above.  
Tel: 01792 513641  
Mob: 07834946470  
E-mail: [zita.cameron@swimming.org](mailto:zita.cameron@swimming.org)

## **Swim Wales Disclosure and Barring Service**

Tel: 01792 513636  
E-mail: [welfare@swimming.org](mailto:welfare@swimming.org)  
Email: [Vibrant Nation admin@vibrantnation.co.uk](mailto:Vibrant Nation admin@vibrantnation.co.uk)

## **Other Services**

### **NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)**

Tel: 0116 366 5590  
E-mail: [cpsu@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:cpsu@nspcc.org.uk)  
Website: [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

### **NSPCC Helpline**

Tel: 0808 800 5000  
Website: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

### **ChildLine**

Tel: 0800 1111  
Website: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

### **Kidscape**

Tel: 020 7730 3300  
Website: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

### **Young Minds**

Tel: Parents/carers - 0808 802 5544  
For young persons - Text - YM to 85258.



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# SWIM WALES CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY





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# Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures (SWCSP)

## Section 1: Introduction to SWCSP

- Forewords
- Introduction
- Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policy

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# Forewords

## **Chief Executive Officer – Swim Wales**

Swimming is a wonderful activity, especially for young people. It allows them the opportunity to have fun with their friends while learning new skills, staying healthy and achieving goals.

It is also a vital skill that saves lives. Swim Wales is committed to ensuring that all children and young people are able to enjoy aquatics – whether swimming, diving, water polo or artistic swimming – in a safe and fun environment.

This revised version of SWCSP also includes a particular emphasis on the impact of new technology and the increasing use of social media, which is reflected in our guidance and policies. Everyone involved in sport has a responsibility to ensure that children and young people are able to enjoy themselves in a safe and non-threatening environment. Swim Wales Safeguarding Policy provides comprehensive guidance for coaches, teachers, parents, young people and all those involved in the running of clubs, but it is also important that we continue to listen to children and young people and act immediately on any concerns that are raised.

I would urge everyone involved in our sport to read the enclosed information and ensure they are aware of our policies so that together we continue to build a safe environment for our young people.

## **Aquatics for everyone for life**

## NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

All children and young people have the right to participate in their chosen sport in a safe and positive environment. National governing bodies of sport have a responsibility to ensure that there is appropriate support for volunteers and staff, including practical guidance, to assist them to safeguard children in an aquatic environment.

This revised version of the Swim Wales Safeguarding Policy takes account of changes in legislation, government guidance and learning across sports. The policy provides volunteers and staff with comprehensive safeguarding advice and current best practice guidance in a range of areas that will ensure children are protected from poor practice and abusive situations within the sport. This policy builds on learning from both within the different aquatic disciplines and the wider sports community, and sets out what everyone involved in aquatics in Wales should do to play their part in promoting the positive aspects of sport for children and young people.

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit Wales is pleased to endorse this revised version of the Swim Wales Safeguarding Policy. We commend the work that Swim Wales is undertaking to safeguard children within aquatics and with the wider sport sector in Wales.

NSPCC CPSU Wales

# Introduction

Swim Wales Safeguarding Policy 2021 (SWCSP) is the revised Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures publication which replaces all previous versions.

The SWCSP must be adopted by all Swim Wales affiliated aquatic clubs and organisations.

The word 'club' or 'organisation' will be used henceforth as a general term, to refer to any Swim Wales affiliated club, swim school, group event or activity, unless otherwise stated. Similarly, the word 'member' will be used to refer to any child or young person who is a member of a Swim Wales affiliated /accredited organisation, be that a club, swim school or other related organisation across all aquatic disciplines. For the avoidance of doubt, a 'young person' is anyone under the age of 18.

The aim of SWCSP is to safeguard all children in line with current child safeguarding legislation and guidance and is for use within any Swim Wales related organisation where children are present. SWCSP consistently emphasises that the responsibility for child safeguarding in our organisations belongs with all those involved in the sport and is not the sole responsibility of any one person at local, regional or national level.

Swim Wales Safeguarding Policy provides comprehensive information in one document for officers, members, members' parents and any other individual involved in aquatics. It is subdivided into specific sections to make it straightforward and easy to use. We will be updating the publication as and when required and we always welcome feedback from users.

The welfare officer, or the equivalent in each organisation, will be expected to make these policies and procedures available to all individuals who request to consult it and to pass it on to the new welfare officer should they resign their position.

The aim of such a comprehensive publication is to enable everyone in aquatics to know their responsibilities in safeguarding children. It offers practical guidance for those who are directly involved in aquatics with children, providing information on mandatory requirements and good practice.

Swim Wales Safeguarding Policy is also relevant to our regional members and will be made available to all regional welfare officers. This document will be revised every three years unless changes in legislation require Swim Wales to do so beforehand. Swim Wales will advise Welfare Officers of all changes in legislation, it is then the duty of the Welfare Officer or equivalent to communicate these changes within their organisations.

The information sheet and emergency contact details, which can be found at the front of SWCSP, contains the contact details for various child protection agencies which can be used either in an emergency or as a matter of course. Please contact the Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team if you are unsure of how to find any of these contact details and would like some assistance. Welfare officers and members may also contact Swim Wales should they have a problem or concern and are unsure on whom to ask for help.  
Email; [welfare@swimming.org](mailto:welfare@swimming.org)

# The Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policy

The Swim Wales Vision for Swimming in Wales states **Aquatics for everyone for life**. Swimming is a crucial life skill and anyone of any age or ability can participate. This vision is based on the belief that swimming and aquatics is, and should remain, accessible to all, regardless of age, gender, faith or religion, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, background, economic position, disability or level of ability. As such, the Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policy is applicable to anyone involved in aquatics, irrespective of their background.

## Safeguarding children in aquatics

Safeguarding in aquatics is based upon the provision of an appropriate environment that is tailored to the needs and requirements of all children.

The implementation of this safeguarding policy, associated procedures and practice guidelines will help to minimise the risk of abuse; foster an environment where concerns can be shared and inappropriate behaviour challenged; and provide parents and carers with reassurance that they are leaving their children in a safe setting. This policy is intended as a reference tool for Club Welfare Officers, who have responsibility to report to Club Management Committees in order to plan and embed safeguarding measures and activities within our clubs. The policy also includes information on how the case management procedures operate. However it should also be available to provide practical advice to all club members including parents, carers, children, coaches, and other club volunteers. The policy is based on legislation that is relevant at the time of publication.

Swim Wales is committed to ensuring that all children who participate in Welsh Aquatics 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 and regions who will ensure safeguarding at a local level.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

# The Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policy

## Objectives

The overall aim of the policy is to ensure that everyone participating in Aquatic sports does so in a safe environment that supports children and young people to meet their potential.

Swim Wales aim to work with Welsh bodies to:

- Provide a safe environment for children, young people and adults at risk participating in aquatic activities and try to ensure that they enjoy the experience and feel safe.
- Ensure robust systems are in place to manage any concerns or allegations.
- Support adults (staff, volunteers, Professionals, coaches, members and visitors to the club) to understand their roles and responsibilities with regard to their **Duty of Care** and protection of children.
- Provide appropriate level training, support and resources for staff, volunteers & coaches to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding and child protection issues and to fulfil their role effectively.
- Ensure that children and their parents/carers are informed and consulted and, where appropriate, fully involved in decisions that affect them.
- Ensure that everyone involved in a role with children have been through appropriate pre-recruitment checks.

## Responsibility to safeguard children

'One of the most important principles of safeguarding is that it is everyone's responsibility. Each professional and organisation must do everything they can, to ensure that children and adults at risk are protected from abuse'

Legislation in Wales is as follows;

The Children Acts (1989 & 2004) and the **Wales Safeguarding Procedures** detail the essential roles and responsibilities for practitioners to ensure that they safeguard those in their care.

The Procedures help practitioners apply the legislative requirements of the **Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) of 2014**. The Welsh Government has provided additional guidance to assist practitioners which can be found [here](#).

Additional useful information can be found at the **National Safeguarding Board in Wales**.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is an important, but not sole, part of safe recruitment.

Swim Wales 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 this document to safeguard children from harm and act appropriately if a child is identified as being at risk of harm.

## Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

- Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe; this includes teachers and coaches and all who are employed or volunteer to work with children in the sport sector.
- No single individual 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 professionals. In addition, effective safeguarding requires clear local arrangements for collaboration between professionals and agencies.
- Any professional with a concern about a child's welfare should make a referral to Children's Services. Professionals should follow up their concerns if they are not satisfied with the response.

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 have said that they need:

- **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 and 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. For more information, please read the full document at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguardchildren-2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguardchildren-2)
- All incidents, allegations or concerns of poor practice or abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All Clubs have a duty of care to all children.

Swim Wales is committed to working in partnership with the statutory agencies to enable them to carry out their duties to investigate each concern and protect all children from harm. To enable this to happen, Swim Wales is developing closer links with the LSCBs, Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs – also known as DOs) and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) teams.

Swim Wales is also committed to developing policies and procedures to assist organisations in Safeguarding children by linking with professional associations including the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU).

In addition to this, Swim Wales actively promotes the resources of Kidscape, the national anti-bullying charity, adapting the Kidscape anti-Bullying policy to further strengthen our commitment to preventing and dealing with bullying in our clubs.

The Policy is based upon the following fundamental principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- The needs and views of children are the central consideration in all decision making
- All children and young people, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, parental status, disability, religion or belief, race, gender reassignment, ethnic or national origins, or socio/economic background have a right to be protected from abuse.
- It is the responsibility of all involved in the delivery or planning of Aquatics for children to report any concern.
- Everyone has the right to be treated as an individual.
- There is a responsibility to safeguard children working in partnership with relevant stakeholders, (Police, Social Services, NSPCC, and other organisations and individuals) is key to meeting this responsibility
- It is the responsibility of safeguarding professionals to determine whether or not abuse has taken place, or if there is a perceived risk.

# SWIM WALES CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY





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## Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures (SWCSP)

### Section 2: Toolbox

- 2.1 Abuse, Duty of Care and Reporting Process
- 2.2 Training and Recruitment
- 2.3 Codes of Conduct
- 2.4 Policies, Procedures and Guidance

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# SWIM WALES CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY





## Section 2: Toolbox

### Subsection 2.1: Abuse, Duty of Care and Reporting Process;

- Using the toolbox
- Duty of care
- The Role of the Welfare Officer
- Responding to, recording and reporting concerns
- How you should respond appropriately?
- Confidentiality and information sharing
- Whistleblowing

## Using the toolbox

This section of SWCSP is designed to assist Swim Wales organisations and their members to meet their duty of care to safeguard all children who take part in aquatics.

It will help identify what needs to be done in order to demonstrate a duty of care, with clear policies and guidance on how to make this possible.

Officers, coaches, teachers, staff, volunteers and committee members are all responsible for developing, maintaining and reviewing safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance within the organisation.

As a welfare officer, you are the designated person who will help embed and assist in the development of good policies and procedures but you do not have sole responsibility for child safeguarding in your organisation. All individuals are responsible for child safeguarding; each individual will need to consider the content of this section and take action to ensure they are currently following the good practice outlined within it, as well as making sure that they are able to take appropriate action when poor practice or safeguarding issues are identified.

The toolbox contains guidance and policies for your organisation to adopt. For the welfare officer, it should be used as a practical aid to ensure the organisation is meeting the requirements of the Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policy and as a guide to procedures when dealing with any issues raised. We recommend that the organisation informs members and their parents that SWCSP is available to download from the Swim Wales website, [www.swimwales.org](http://www.swimwales.org)

Some organisations may also wish to put the full document on their own website.

You will need to ask Swim Wales to email you a copy or you can download and print yourself directly from the Swim Wales website.

If the organisation requires any assistance or advice, they can contact the Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team or their Regional Welfare Officer.

## Duty of care

A duty of care is a **legal obligation** which is imposed on an organisation or an individual that requires them to adhere to a standard of reasonable care when undertaking any task or act that could potentially cause harm to another.

All organisations and individuals have a duty of care to safeguard children when they are participating in their activities, and should acknowledge this duty of care. The CPSU has published a Duty of Care (revised in 2020) briefing, written by the NSPCC. This document highlights that a duty of care may be imposed by law or statute, by contract or by acceptance of the individual. While the welfare officer has specific duties, including dealing with and raising concerns regarding children in the organisation, they do not have sole responsibility for safeguarding children or promoting good safeguarding practice. Swim Wales recognises that a duty of care exists for all adults in a position of trust, and for those with a certain level of responsibility for young members, including coaches, teachers, poolside helpers and officers. The guidance in SWCSP has been designed to assist all Swim Wales organisations and responsible individuals within them to meet that duty of care.

To demonstrate a duty of care through proper safeguarding, certain measures must be put in place to minimise the likelihood of 'foreseeable harm' arising and all Swim Wales organisations that have members under the age of 18 must adopt the Swim Wales child protection procedures as set down in the Swim Wales Model Club Constitution. SWCSP sets out the principles of the Swim Wales child protection procedures and organisations must ensure that these principles and practices are known and followed by everyone to safeguard children.

### Advice

Anyone involved in Aquatic sport can contact the Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team for direct advice, including coaches, parents, volunteers, members and young people. If these services are unavailable for any reason, and the circumstances require immediate referral and to delay would fail to safeguard a child or place them at risk of harm, then immediate contact should be made with Children's Services, the police, the MASH team or the LSCB as appropriate.

To assist all organisations to meet their duty of care, SWCSP clearly identifies the policies and procedures that must be followed to provide proper safeguarding, the actions that must be taken when a concern is identified and details on the support that is available to all concerned.

**There are several actions that are required in order for organisations and individuals to meet their duty of care.**

### Organisations who are affiliated/accredited to Swim Wales::

- Must adopt SWCSP in full.
- Should promote to all members and parents that a safe environment is paramount.
- Should promote SWCSP and make it known to all members, parents, employees and volunteers as required.
- Should advise staff and volunteers that failures in safeguarding will be acted upon in line with the policy.
- Must follow the whistleblowing guidance on p. 34, and ensure that they promote an environment where legitimate concerns can be raised without fear of recrimination or victimisation.
- Must designate a person/s in the organisation who is responsible to ensure all appropriate DBS checks are completed.
- Must provide an open-door environment to everyone that upholds inclusion in sport..
- Must ensure that they are following the most up-to-date CPSU Duty of Care document: <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/duty-of-care/>
- Should promote and follow good practice in terms of recruitment of staff and volunteers:
  - Follow the Swim Wales Safe Recruitment Policy for staff and volunteers that work with children.
  - Appoint and train one or more welfare officer(s) in line with SWCSP recommendations.
  - Ensure staff and volunteers who have access to children at the organisation are DBS checked in accordance with Swim Wales policy and that safe recruitment procedures have been adhered to.
  - Ensure individuals have training as required for the role undertaken. Refresher training must be attended and applied in individual roles.
  - Ensure all relevant individuals who work directly with children attend an approved safeguarding children in sport course every three years. A face to face course must be attended in between an online course.
  - Must have an annually signed Code of Conduct for all teachers, coaches, poolside helpers, members and parents/carers and must follow Swim Wales Code of Ethics.
  - Must ensure equal opportunities for all.
  - Adopt Swim Wales good practice in terms of children and their parents:
  - Provide parents and members with a welcome/information pack including updated information about child safeguarding at the organisation and reference to SWCSP.

- The organisation, its staff and volunteers should recognise and adhere to the needs of children with a disability or special needs.
  - The organisation should regularly communicate with parents and members concerning child welfare and safeguarding matters.
  - The organisation must adhere to this policy at all times..
- Provide appropriate guidance to teachers and coaches:
    - Ensure that no child or adult (unless they are directly related) is put in a position where they are left on a one-to-one basis, except in an emergency when to abandon the child or young person would place them at risk of harm.
    - Ensure that all training sessions have at least two appropriate adults present as failure to do so puts all concerned at risk of allegation.
    - Ensure that all trips away follow the guidance on the supervision of members when away from the organisation and also the CPSU Safe sport events, activities and competitions (2017) document <https://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/away-trips-and-hosting/>
    - Ensure the provision of written consent, up-to-date health and contact details on each individual member and agreement to act in loco parentis if the parent is not accompanying the child.
    - The organisation should adopt the Missing Child Policy.
    - The organisation should adopt the Late Collection of Children Policy.
    - Ensure that the Photography Guidance and guidance on child abuse images/ indecent images of children, use of electronic communication, and use of social networking are adopted by the organisation.
  - Act upon any concerns appropriately:
    - The organisation must deal with all complaints in line with the rules on confidentiality and information sharing, and comply with Rules and Legislation.
    - The organisation must keep record of every concern or allegation of poor practice or child welfare related incidents and accidents, together with full details of the action taken using **MyConcern** which replaces all paper recording as of 1st April 2021.
- Offer support to any individual who raises a concern or allegation.
  - Use the services of Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team to advise, guide and take direct action as required.
  - Know how to contact the statutory agencies.

#### About MyConcern

**MyConcern** was introduced by Swim Wales in April 2021 and allows anyone responsible for the protection of children, young people and adults at risk to easily manage and record all safeguarding and wellbeing concerns using an online platform.

**MyConcern** was created and developed by child protection experts, with backgrounds in social care, education and policing.

**MyConcern** is GDPR compliant, DfE Cloud Services compliant and registered with the UK Information Commissioner. Swim Wales are delighted to introduce this improved means of documenting and recording safeguarding concerns ensuring confidentiality of personal details. All Club Welfare Officers have received training how to use the platform and **MyConcern** provide technical support for all users in Swim Wales affiliated clubs and organisations. The use of **MyConcern** is a mandatory requirement.

## The role of the welfare officer

It is a mandatory requirement for all clubs to have a Welfare Officer and a designated person responsible for safeguarding in all Swim Wales affiliated organisations.

The Welfare Officer role is essential in providing a first point of contact for children and adults within the club who have a child safeguarding or welfare concern.

In partnership with the club committee, the Welfare Officer must also ensure that the club is adopting and implementing the various safeguarding activities, which are necessary for it to demonstrate its duty of care to children.

Clubs may choose to have one or two Welfare Officers; often one male and one female is helpful.

## The role of the welfare officer For Swim Wales organisations

### Core tasks:

- To assist the club in embedding SWCSP.
- To assist the club to put plans in place for child safeguarding.
- To be the first point of contact for club staff, volunteers, young people and parents for any issues concerning child welfare, poor practice or potential or alleged abuse.
- To ensure that all incidents are correctly referred and reported in accordance with SWCSP.
- To act independently and in the best interests of a child at the club, putting their needs above that of others and the club itself.
- To ensure that all relevant club members, volunteers and staff have a DBS check if appropriate and the opportunity to access appropriate child safeguarding training. These should both be updated every three years.
- To ensure that SWCSP procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed.
- To be aware of, and have a note of contact details of, the LSCB, the police, the LADO, the MASH team, Regional Welfare Officer and Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team.
- To ensure that annually signed codes of conduct are in place for club staff, volunteers, coaches, competitors and parents and refreshed with all members annually.
- To attend the club management committee to advise on child safeguarding issues or be in attendance as necessary.
- To ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis.
- To record and report all safeguarding concerns on MyConcern as soon as it is feasible to do so.

### Skills and qualities required:

- Have a child-centred approach.
- Have basic administration and record maintenance skills.
- Have excellent communication skills.
- Have confidence when referring cases externally.
- Have the ability to ensure policies and procedures are effectively implemented.
- Be willing and able to fulfil all safeguarding duties.

### Training required:

- The NSPCC CPSU 'Time to Listen' child safeguarding training is required for welfare officers. Please refer to WSA website for details of courses running in your area. These courses are now organised as a generic Welsh sports course. Swim Wales must be notified upon completion of the course.
- The scUK Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop or approved LSCB equivalent.

### Additional courses available

- The NSPCC have their own online safeguarding course for those who may like to add to their training. For full details, please refer to [www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-experttraining/child-protection-sport-online-course/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-experttraining/child-protection-sport-online-course/).

### The role of the regional welfare officer

The regional welfare officer, appointed by the relevant Swim Wales region, will be required to offer support to club welfare officers as and when required.

### Core tasks:

- To assist the club welfare officers in implementing SWCSP.
- To assist the club to put plans in place for child safeguarding.
- To maintain contact with club welfare officers to ensure that all relevant members, volunteers and staff have a DBS check if appropriate and the opportunity to access appropriate child safeguarding training. These should be updated every three years.
- To ensure that SWCSP procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed by clubs and Regions.
- To be aware of, and have a note of contact details of, the LSCB, the police, the LADO, the MASH team and Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team.
- To ensure that codes of conduct are in place for clubs and county staff, volunteers, coaches, competitors and parents.

- To sit on the regional management committee to advise on child protection issues or be in attendance as necessary.
- To ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis.

### Core skills for regional welfare officers:

- Have a child-centred approach.
- Have basic administration and record maintenance skills.
- Have excellent communication skills.
- Have confidence when referring cases externally.
- Have the ability to ensure policies and procedures are effectively implemented.

### Training required:

- The UK Coaching Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop or approved LSCB equivalent.
- Participate in all Welfare Officer Forums and attend conferences when relevant.
- The NSPCC CPSU 'Time to Listen' child safeguarding training is available for designated persons. Please refer to Swim Wales Training [swimwales-training@swimming.org](mailto:swimwales-training@swimming.org) for all dates and venues .

### Guidance on appointing a welfare officer

Every club should have a welfare officer and every accredited organisation must have a welfare officer. The welfare officer role is essential in providing a 'first point of contact' for children and adults within the club who have a child safeguarding or welfare concern. In partnership with the club committee, the welfare officer must also ensure that the club is adopting and implementing the various safeguarding activities, which are necessary for it to demonstrate its duty of care to children. Clubs may choose to have one or two welfare officers; often one male and one female is helpful.

The importance of selecting the right person cannot be underestimated. The selected individual may be involved in the most private aspects of club members' lives. They may have to take part in meetings and discussions with the police and statutory agencies. They must show that they are able to handle matters of a child safeguarding nature in an appropriate and confidential manner

### How does a club select a welfare officer?

- The club should follow the safe recruitment guidance in Swim Wales Safeguarding Policy
- The position of the welfare officer is one that requires an Enhanced Disclosure DBS check.
- The welfare officer should be an appropriate person willing and able to fulfil the role.

### Who is an appropriate person?

The welfare officer should ideally be someone who:

- Is able to act independently and in the best interests of the child, putting their needs above that of others and the club itself.
- Holds no other position on the club committee.
- Is not an active teacher or coach in the club.
- Is not related to anyone in either of the positions above.
- Is able to attend the club frequently.
- Has the time to fulfil the role and is prepared to complete all of the core tasks.
- Can satisfy the requirements, core skills and knowledge areas needed for the role.
- Is prepared to undergo the training required.

The above recommendations are made to avoid difficulties that could arise should a club member wish to refer a concern to the welfare officer but feels unable to do so, or the welfare officer feels unable to deal with the concern, due to a conflict of interest. A conflict of interest could arise through the welfare officer being related to a member of the club committee or coaching team or if they themselves hold another role on the committee or coaching team.

It is important to note that should it not be possible to recruit a truly independent welfare officer then the club should appoint a second welfare officer. This means that should a conflict of interest arise, the first welfare officer can call upon the standby as and when required to deal with the concern. The standby could be someone else within the club able to meet the requirements of the role or by agreement with the regional welfare officer.

In all cases the names and contact details of the welfare officer(s) must be clearly communicated and publicised to all club members. This ensures that should anyone at the club have a concern they are clear on whom they can refer that concern to.

### The welfare officer can be:

- A person with a qualification or experience in child safeguarding.
- A person currently working with children.
- A person who no longer has children currently training (possibly a former parent or parent of a senior swimmer).
- Male or female.

As of 1st April 2021 Swim Wales Safeguarding Officer will conduct all new to post Welfare Officer inductions. Please contact [welfare@swimming.org](mailto:welfare@swimming.org) to book an induction.

## Responding to, recording and reporting concerns



Swim Wales is committed to ensuring that any child who attends a Swim Wales organisation, event or activity will be safeguarded from harm.

To make this possible, Swim Wales has developed a comprehensive and unambiguous set of policies and procedures to be adopted and acted upon if a matter regarding a child's safety or welfare is raised.

This section of the toolbox gives clear guidance on the steps to be taken and the procedures that must be followed.

The view of Swim Wales is that the protection and safeguarding of all children is paramount and that safeguarding should be based on prevention and best practice. The adoption of safeguarding policies and procedures by Swim Wales organisations has minimised, and will continue to minimise, the opportunity for acts of child abuse or harm to children to take place.

Swim Wales recognises that all possible risk cannot be removed and concerns will continue to be raised regarding child safeguarding or welfare, both as part of, and outside of, any Swim Wales organisation.

Concerns must always be shared with the Club Welfare Officer

### When you should act

There are several reasons why you might take action, which includes responding to:

- What a child has said.
- Signs or suspicions of abuse or potential abuse.
- Significant and/or unexplained changes in the child's

demeanour or behaviour, including self-harm.

- Concerns about the inappropriate behaviour of a child or adult.
- Allegations made against another member of the organisation, a member of staff, a teacher, coach or a volunteer.
- Allegations or observations of bullying.
- A breach of code of conduct or an incident of poor practice.

Please note that this is not a definitive list.

**In an emergency when a child may be at immediate risk of harm** and you are unable to contact the welfare officer or Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team, you should:

- Ensure the child is safeguarded at all times.
- Without delay, refer the concern directly to Children's Services, the MASH team or the Police Child Protection Investigation Team and inform the welfare officer at the earliest opportunity of the concern and any action taken. If none of these services or agencies are available, then contact the Out of Hours/ Emergency Duty Team for Children's Services, or the police using 999 or 101 as appropriate without delay.
- Take the name and contact details of the person spoken to and relay that information to Swim Wales Safeguarding Officer
- Contact the parents of the child but only if they are not implicated in the concern.
- All Safeguarding concerns must be logged on MyConcern by the club Welfare Officer.

# How should you respond appropriately?

There are three stages of action which Swim Wales have adopted: Respond, Record and Report.

- **Stage 1: Respond** to the concern, disclosure, suspicion or allegation in a timely and appropriate manner.
- **Stage 2: Record** the relevant information.
- **Stage 3: Report** the information to the appropriate person(s) and/or organisation(s). This process is appropriate in all cases, including where it is an emergency.

## If a child reports a concern to you:

- Ensure that the child is safe and feels safe.
- Keep an open mind.
- Do not ask any questions unless you need to clarify what is being said (e.g. when the incident occurred). It is important never to ask leading questions or to make comments or suggestions. Please see further guidance below.
- Do not make judgements or assumptions.
- Always take what they have to say seriously.
- It is important to be honest and explain that you cannot keep what they are saying secret and never promise to do so.
- Try to reassure them by explaining the actions that you will, or will not, be taking.
- Try to get another person to listen, if to do so would not stop the child disclosing the concern.
- Write down what they have said as soon as possible after the conversation, or during the conversation with the child's agreement.
- Always stay calm and listen patiently

## If an adult reports a concern to you:

- Listen to what they are reporting and consider what action you will need to take.
- Ask them if they have written down what they have observed in accordance to the guidance in the 'Recording' section.
- Ensure they understand the need for confidentiality.
- Information must only be shared when appropriate to safeguarding. Confidentiality should not prevent Safeguarding.

## Never

- Confront the alleged abuser.
- Promise to keep a secret.
- Take any action yourself other than to share the information appropriately.
- Act alone. Always try to ensure another responsible adult is present.
- Delay in reporting.

## Stage 2 – Record

Write down any information that has been shared with you, avoid personal opinions, keep it factual. Once the information has been recorded on MyConcern all paper copies must be securely destroyed following information sharing with the appropriate authorities. Accuracy is vital when recording personal details. Once the report is submitted on MyConcern an alert will be sent to the Swim Wales Safeguarding Team who will be in contact with to provide any support you require. Please ensure you complete as many of the details as possible from the information you have, but do not allow a search for the information to delay sharing the report with relevant agencies.

Your report should ideally contain as much of the following information as possible:

- Full details of the child concerned including age or date of birth, full name, gender, race, ethnic origin and address.
- Parent(s), carer(s) or guardian(s) details including names, addresses, contact details and any details of the concern that has been shared with them, if any.
- Full details of the concern that has been raised.
- Full details of the person about whom the concern/allegation is about, including full name, date of birth, address, relationship with the child concerned and position held at the organisation, if any.
- Details of any marks, injuries or bruising on the child that is visible to you, if applicable. If yes, note them down and if possible, create an outline drawing of where they were seen on the child's body.
- Full details of the child's account, as accurately as possible to what the child actually said.
- Details of any witnesses.
- Any other relevant information including, but not solely, any other incidents and the dates on which they occurred, if possible.
- Any information which has been passed to you as hearsay, second-hand information or opinion, clearly noting it as such.
  - Avoid opinion, keep information factual.

Some of the information you require will be available at the organisation if you do not already have it to hand, such as parents' contact details. This information must only be obtained while ensuring confidentiality is maintained.

## Incident Recording

As from April 1st 2021 all Safeguarding concerns must be recorded using MyConcern.. Further updates must be added as they occur.

## Stage 3 – Report

Remember, it is the duty of everyone involved in the sport to report potential child safeguarding concerns in order to protect children, but it is only for the professionals to decide whether or not abuse has taken place.

If the concern is regarding a child who is or may be at risk of harm, do not hesitate. Contact Children's Services, the MASH team or the Police Child Protection Investigation Team and inform the welfare officer of the action taken.

Please contact Swim Wales Safeguarding Team as soon as you can to advise them of the referral.

The concern may relate to an incident from within the organisation, or it could relate to an incident that is external to the sport, such as at home, or in a public place.

If the child is not considered to be at immediate risk of harm, please contact the welfare officer or Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team with details of the concern at the earliest possible opportunity. Details must also be reported on MyConcern.

See flow chart below

Swim Wales expects all concerns to be referred to the relevant person or organisation so that the appropriate action can be taken.

You do not have to decide that a concern or incident is or is not child abuse or a failure to safeguard. You do have to refer the concern to the appropriate agency so that they can make that decision.

A Swim Wales member is considered to be your responsibility if they are a member of the organisation you work or volunteer for.

The welfare officer has the primary responsibility to receive and manage child safeguarding issues for your organisation. If they are not available and you have a safeguarding concern you need to disclose, speak to another volunteer or staff member as long as they are not implicated in the concern.

The welfare officer can involve the regional welfare officer for guidance.

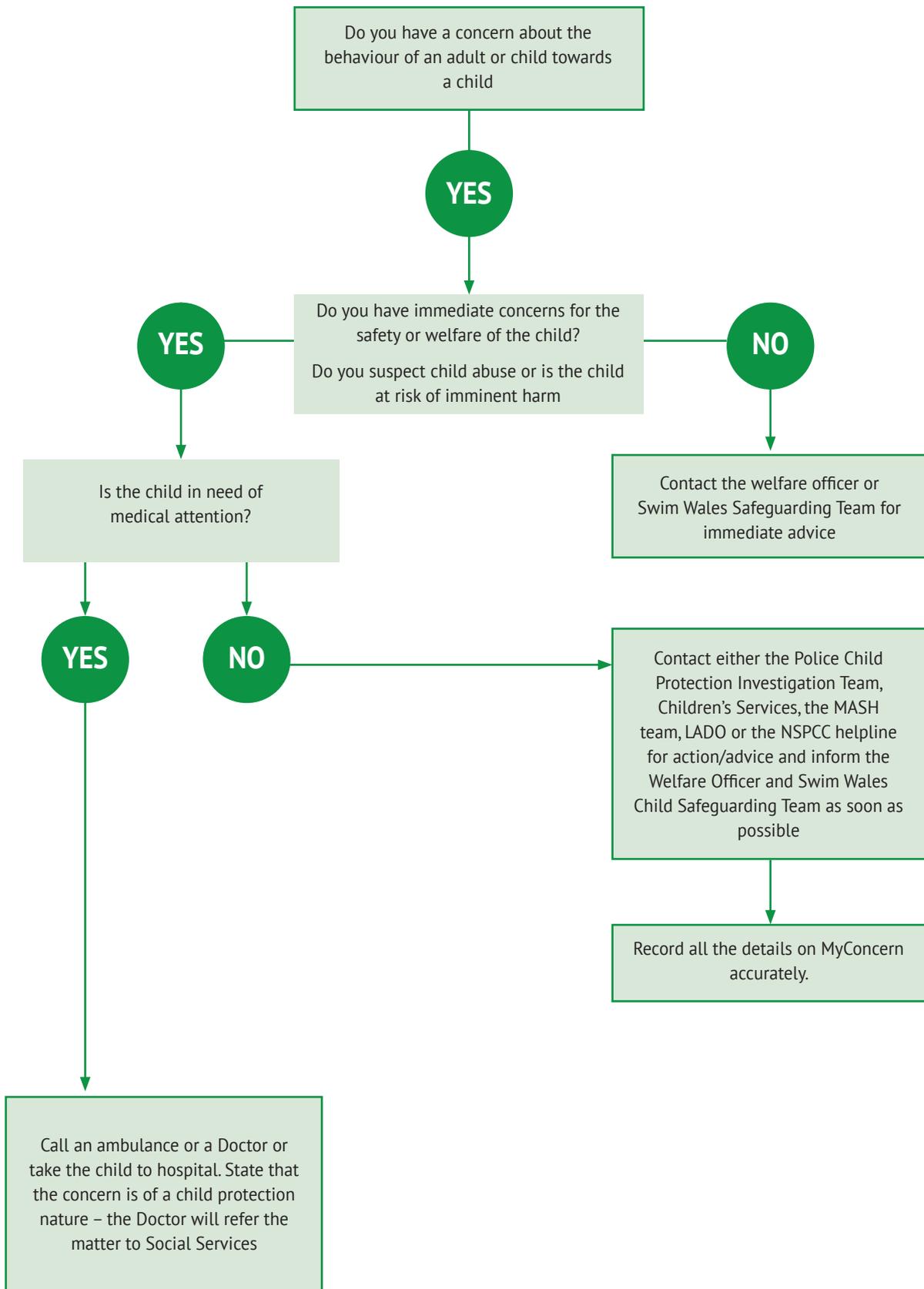
### Referrals

- **At a regional event** refer safeguarding concerns to the regional welfare officer or, if they are not available, the Meet Manager.
- **At national level competitions** e.g. School Games or the Youth Championships, contact the welfare officer. Event Manager designated for that event, who will refer the matter to Swim Wales Safeguarding Officer.
- **Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team:** The welfare officer, a member of staff or any parent or member of Swim Wales can refer a concern appropriately.

If you are concerned about the behaviour of an adult to a child who is a member of your organisation, follow the guidance above even if the concerns are taking place outside of a sports activity, e.g. you suspect abuse may be taking place at home.

Following the report of an incident involving a member of Swim Wales, the appropriate welfare officer will take action and follow the policy and procedures in this document.

If you have a concern for a child who is your responsibility, please follow the actions below.



## Confidentiality and information sharing

Confidentiality must be maintained at all times when an allegation has been made and is being investigated. Organisations should only tell individuals who need to know and can help in managing the concerns. If parents/carers are not implicated in the concern ensure they are made aware at the earliest opportunity.

Consider the best method of communication to maintain confidentiality and be mindful of the environment. For example, who else is around you, can you make a phone call without others overhearing your conversation?

Swim Wales recognises and supports that issues involving child safeguarding must be kept confidential. However, confidentiality must never prevent an individual from sharing information with appropriate and relevant persons when to not do so may prevent appropriate safeguarding and place a child or children at risk of harm.

## Whistleblowing

Blowing the whistle is more formally known as 'making a disclosure'. Whistleblowing allows individuals to raise genuine concerns about any potential incident of poor practice, wrongdoing, illegal or unethical conduct by individuals without fear of reprisals, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

The concept of whistleblowing is important in any organisation that is committed to maintaining appropriate levels of safeguarding and good practice. Whistleblowing allows individuals to raise the alarm on any potential incident of poor practice or misconduct by members and employees.

Swim Wales is committed to:

- 1 Developing a culture that is safe.
- 2 Encouraging a culture of openness.
- 3 Protecting all members.
- 4 Upholding the reputation of the organisation.
- 5 Maintaining our sports' and the public's confidence.

### When is it necessary to whistleblow?

A member or employee may witness or be told about a situation of poor practice, a failure to safeguard or even an incident of abuse within the sport in which a colleague is implicated.

While you may be the first person to become aware of an issue, it is not always easy to raise a concern as to do so may appear to be disloyal to your colleague(s) and you may be fearful that you will be victimised or disadvantaged as a result of taking such action. That is an understandable fear, but you must remember that all children have a right to be protected and that it is often the most vulnerable children who are targeted and who

are least able to act or defend themselves, or disclose what is happening. They need you and others like you to protect their wellbeing and safeguard them from harm or potential harm.

Everyone involved in aquatics has a responsibility to raise concerns appropriately to individuals who can act upon them whether that is the welfare officer, Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team or the statutory agencies.

Swim Wales acknowledges that 'blowing the whistle' on a colleague or friend will be difficult but it is important you do so rather than allow a child to become or remain at risk.

Once the concern has been raised, the welfare officer, Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team and/or the statutory agencies will take action as deemed appropriate.

Swim Wales are committed to maintaining a culture where it is safe, and acceptable, for all those involved in Aquatics to raise concerns about unacceptable practice and misconduct.

It is recognised that any individual may be the first to recognise that something is wrong, and that they may not feel able to express their concerns out of a belief that this would be disloyal to colleagues, or for fear of harassment, victimisation or disadvantage.

These feelings, however natural, must never result in a child or vulnerable person continuing to be unnecessarily at risk. Remember, it is often these individuals who are targeted. The vulnerable rely on adults, their peers and senior leaders to safeguard their welfare. Those involved in our sport must acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of the relevant people and/or agencies. Although this can be difficult, it is particularly important where the welfare of the vulnerable may be at risk.

Swim Wales assures all involved in concerns that they will be treated fairly and that all concerns will be properly considered. In cases where suspicions prove to be unfounded, no action will be taken against those who report suspicions/allegations, provided they acted in good faith and without malicious intent. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects whistle blowers from victimisation, discipline or dismissal where they raise genuine concerns of misconduct or malpractice.

Swim Wales, your Club Welfare Officer and the management committees have a responsibility to protect all those identifying issues within an organisation. Should an individual make an allegation/referral in good faith, no action shall be taken should the concern prove to be unfounded.

There are many reasons why people may be afraid or anxious about 'blowing the whistle' on activities or behaviours that are inappropriate, poor practice or even

damaging. Swim Wales actively encourages everyone within its structure to identify and report such instances, whatever the level within the organisation.

Everyone has responsibility for raising concerns about unacceptable practice or behaviour:

- To prevent the problem worsening or widening
- To protect or reduce risk to others
- To prevent becoming implicated themselves

Should an individual report an incident or concern, all referrals will be treated in confidence and they can expect to be kept up to date regarding the investigation of their concern on a regular basis where appropriate.

During the process of investigating the matter, every effort will be made to keep the identity of those raising the concern unknown, except to the minimum number of individuals practicable. It should be remembered however that the welfare of children is paramount (Children's Act 1989) and that if absolutely necessary, disclosure of details will be made – but not before the individuals involved are fully briefed in advance.

It is the responsibility of everyone within the Swim Wales, their affiliated organisations structure to report any information that indicates there is a risk to children or the vulnerable. Failure to do so would raise questions regarding the individual's integrity and honesty and may lead to disciplinary procedures.

There is no directive regarding where concerns must be directed. It is recognised that concerns may be at any level and as such individuals should consider the following options...

- If anyone has any welfare concerns relating to the work/activities of an organisations Welfare team they should report them to the Chair of the club/Swim Wales CEO or Safeguarding Officer
- Any welfare concerns relating to the work/activities of a club should be reported to Swim Wales CEO or Chairperson.



## Section 2: Toolbox

### Subsection 2.2: Training and Recruitment

- **Swim Wales Safe Recruitment Policy**
- **The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**
- **Safeguarding and protecting children: workshops and courses**

# Safe Recruitment Policy

Safe recruitment policy applies to both voluntary and paid staff and states that all staff and volunteers for any Swim Wales organisation should go through an appropriate vetting process prior to appointment in order to establish their suitability to work with children.

## Role profile

The relevant person(s) in the organisation should draw up a 'role profile' or job description in order to identify the main responsibilities of the job that is being recruited for. They will need to clearly identify the skills and experience required to fulfil the role and draw up a person specification. The role specification must include that a DBS check will be required if applicable. For examples of role profiles, if you need assistance please speak to your Regional Development Manager or contact Swim Wales Safeguarding Team

A recruitment process must also be developed by each organisation to ensure every applicant is treated in a fair and consistent manner.

## Application form

Each organisation should develop and use an application form to collect the information required for the post in question. The form should be developed by more than one individual and should include verification of the applicant's identity.

## Meeting and interviewing the applicant

It is important that all suitable applicants are interviewed and that the information obtained on the application form is explored appropriately. Questions asked of the applicant should be prepared in advance and it is important that each applicant has the opportunity to discuss their experiences and qualifications for the role, as well as be asked for examples of how they would manage some hypothetical situations including some child safeguarding situations.

In assessing the applicant's suitability you should:

- Consider their relevant qualifications and experience.
- Ascertain if they have previously undertaken a role in either a Swim Wales organisation, other sports organisation, club or any other role that involved working directly with children.
- Consider their previous experience (if any) of working with children both inside and outside of the aquatic environment.
- Consider their attitudes and commitment to child safeguarding.
- Give the applicant a hypothetical child safeguarding scenario such as a child not being collected after a swimming session, and ask what they would do in that circumstance.

- Ask them if they have ever been refused work that involved having contact with children.
- Ask them if there is anything else that the organisation should know that could affect their suitability to work with children.

## References

At least two references should be obtained even if the person is known to the organisation, e.g. a parent, carer or guardian of a member.

- References should not be from a person who is related to the applicant.
- One of the references should be from the applicant's current employer. If the applicant is not employed a professional reference should be sought including past employer.
- If the current employer for either employed or volunteer role is not a Swim Wales affiliated organisation or similar, then a reference must be obtained from the current or most recent sports organisation or club in which the applicant has been employed by or volunteered at.
- If the applicant has not previously volunteered or been employed in a sports organisation or club of any kind, then the applicant should be asked to provide a reference from someone who knows them personally, and if possible, who has some knowledge of their attitude to children's wellbeing and child safeguarding.
- Both references should contain a statement to illustrate that the referee is aware of the post the applicant is applying for.
- All references should be followed up prior to any offer of appointment being made.

All staff and volunteers must be formally made aware and sign the relevant Code of Conduct, abide by SWCSP and be registered in the correct category on the membership data base. If a DBS is required the applicant should be made aware of this.

Within three months of taking up post attend a Swim Wales approved Safeguarding course additionally for all new to post Welfare Officers attendance at a Time to Listen course within three months of taking up their role is mandatory.

New Welfare Officers should be introduced to Swim Wales Safeguarding Lead Officer who will conduct an induction into the role with them. Email; [welfare@swimming.org](mailto:welfare@swimming.org)

- It is suggested that a period of mentoring, supervision and observation or monitoring should be put into place to support the new recruit.

## Recruitment decisions

Organisations are required to consider all the information they have about an applicant at each stage of the recruitment process. The information to consider will include:

- The application form.
- The interview.
- All qualifications seen and confirmed.
- The references including the follow up prior to recruitment.
- The outcome of the DBS check.

The decision can then be made either to appoint the applicant and agree a start date or to reject the application.

# The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

The Disclosure and Barring Service) enables Swim Wales and their organisations to make more informed recruitment decisions for vacant positions. Any individual who wishes to work with children or adults at risk is required to undertake a DBS check, which is to be renewed every three years. The minimum age for a DBS check is 16 years old. (Swimmers do not require a DBS when they reach age 16.)

## Types of Criminal Record Check

As a Swim Wales organisation, **the minimum level of DBS check required, where applicable, is the Enhanced Disclosure only check.** However, for many roles within aquatics, the more thorough level, Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List check, would be required. Further guidance around DBS checks in sport can be found at [gov.uk/government/publications/ dbs-guidance-leaflets](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-guidance-leaflets).

### Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List check

An Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List check is the highest level of check available. It is a legal requirement for any individual applying for a position which is categorised as a 'regulated activity'. The list of regulated activities differs, depending on whether the applicant would be working with children or with adults. This check will show whether or not the applicant is barred from working with individuals at risk.

It is **against the law** to request this kind of check for an individual who is not eligible (i.e. who will not be undertaking a 'regulated activity').

It is also **against the law** to employ someone or allow someone to volunteer for work of this kind if it is known that they are on one of the barred lists.

The definition of regulated activity is important and it is vital that organisations understand what this definition is, in order to comply with the law.

### Duty to refer to DBS

Organisations who employ individuals, paid or unpaid, who carry out regulated activities are known as a regulated activity provider (RAP). Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act

Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 this brings a legal obligation upon the organisation. As a RAP, you have a legal duty to refer an individual to DBS when you have concerns that someone has either caused harm or has the potential to cause harm to vulnerable groups.

#### Condition 1

You withdraw permission for a person to engage in regulated activity with children and/ or adults at risk. Or you move the person to another area of work that isn't a regulated activity. This includes situations when

you would have taken the above action, but the person was re-deployed, resigned, retired, or left. For example, a teacher resigns when an allegation of harm to a student is first made.

#### Condition 2

You think the person has carried out one of the following:

- Engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults. An action or inaction has harmed a child or adult at risk or put them at risk of harm.
- Satisfied the harm test in relation to children and/or adults at risk. For example, there has been no relevant conduct but a risk of harm still exists to a child or adult.
- Been cautioned or convicted of a relevant offence (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations).

Referrals can be made online or via post. Details can be found on [www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/making-barring-referrals-to-the-dbs)

Anyone making a referral must notify Swim Wales Safeguarding Officer.

Referrals must also be recorded on MyConcern.

#### Update service

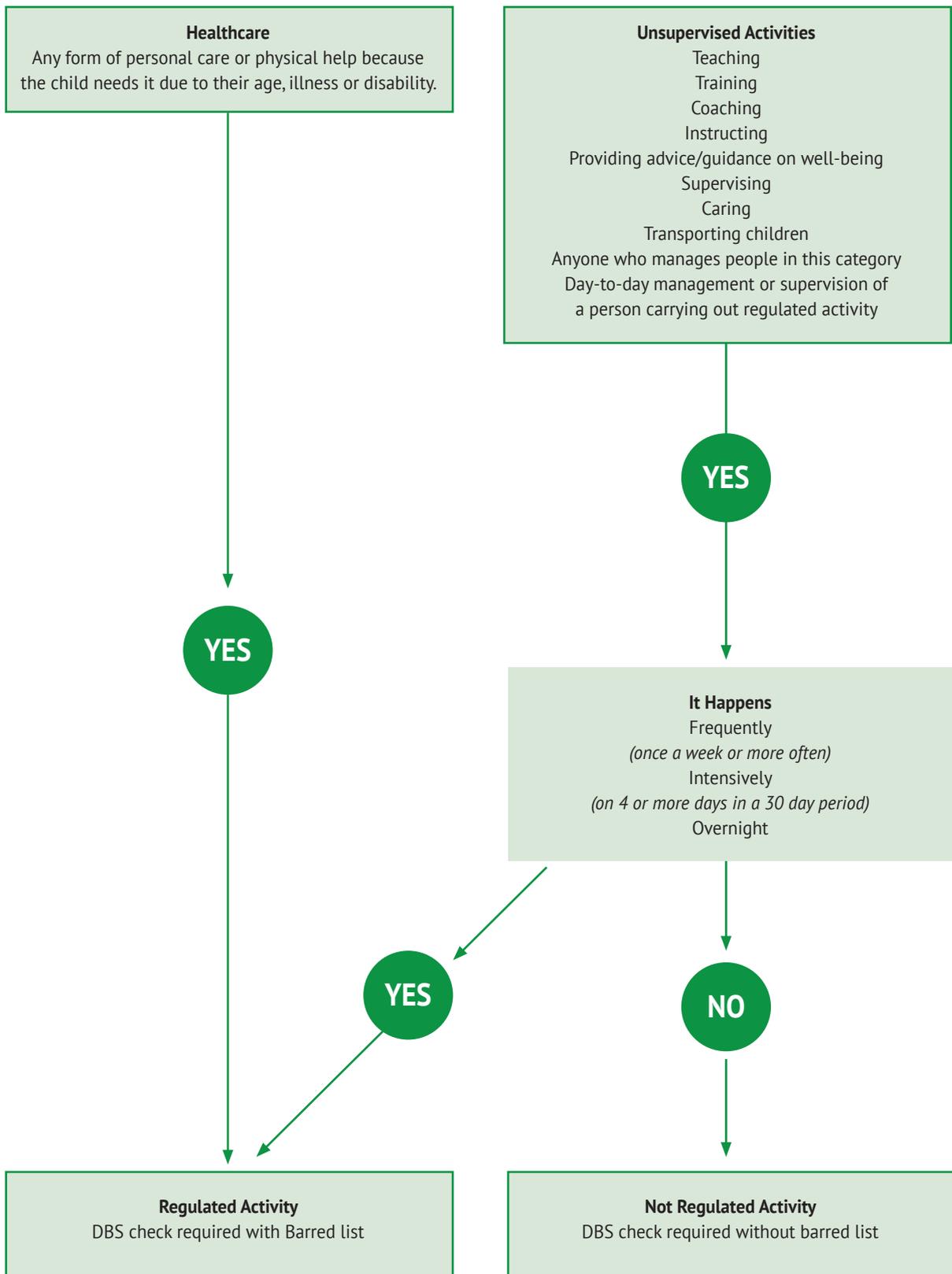
Swim Wales are not currently registered for the Update Service..

#### DBS checks for someone from overseas

The application process for DBS checks or "Certificates of Good Character" for someone from overseas varies from country to country. You will have to apply in the country or to the relevant embassy in the UK.

Further guidance can be found at

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants)



## Enhanced Disclosure only

An Enhanced Disclosure is a record of all warnings, reprimands, cautions and convictions from local and national police records. Information may also be disclosed at the discretion of the Chief Police Officer if that information is deemed relevant to the role the individual is applying for.

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, a person with a criminal record is not required to disclose any spent convictions unless the position they are applying for, or are currently undertaking, is listed as an exception under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

Before any organisation considers asking a person to complete an application for an Enhanced Disclosure only check, they are legally responsible for ensuring they are entitled to ask that person to reveal their criminal record. It is **against the law** to request this kind of check for an individual who is not eligible.

Under the guidance provided by the DBS, positions eligible for Enhanced Disclosure only checks includes:

**Any position which otherwise involves regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of children.**

This change in eligibility means that there are some positions that no longer require an Enhanced Disclosure only check.

Individuals applying for committee roles such as Chairman, Club Secretary or Treasurer, will only require an Enhanced Disclosure only check if that individual has an additional role which does meet the eligibility requirements, above.

Here are some scenarios to illustrate when an Enhanced Disclosure only check may or may not be required:

- A committee member, in addition to their Committee role, acts as a supervised chaperone for the organisation once a week, or overnight on away trips. In this situation, the individual would require an Enhanced Disclosure only check, for the eligible role of chaperone rather than for their committee role. (If they are chaperoning on an unsupervised basis, they would need an Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List check rather than an Enhanced Disclosure only check).
- A poolside assistant who is only on poolside to hand out equipment and secure lane ropes would not require an Enhanced Disclosure only check, despite being on poolside and in contact with children. However, if they are acting in a training or supervisory capacity, assisting the qualified coaching team, then they would require an Enhanced Disclosure only check as a poolside helper.

- A photographer taking photographs of the children at an event would not require an Enhanced Disclosure only check. If the photographer were left in sole charge of the child/children they are photographing, then they would require an Enhanced Disclosure only check.

If the individual does have a supplementary role that involves the activities above, then the Enhanced Disclosure only check would be for their supplementary role, rather than for their main role.

### Which level of DBS check do I need?

You need to check whether or not the role being applied for is categorised as a 'regulated activity'. If the role is categorised as a regulated activity, you will need an Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List check.

If the role is not categorised as a regulated activity, you may still need to request an Enhanced Disclosure only check, for applicants applying for a position which involves regularly caring for, training, supervising or being solely in charge of children.

### The DBS process

Swim Wales has a contract with Welsh Sports Association (Vibrant Nation) for the processing of DBS checks for their affiliated organisations. The person with the role of welfare officer will be responsible for coordinating the DBS checks for your organisation as part of the safe recruitment procedure. Organisations can however appoint another person to support the Welfare Officer for DBS applications but must ensure clear lines of communication are in place. You should have already been contacted and given information on how to request a DBS check. If not, or if you require advice or guidance on how to carry out a DBS check, please contact Swim Wales.

Further enquiries can be made to our DBS service provider Welsh Sports Association [admin@vibrantnation.co.uk](mailto:admin@vibrantnation.co.uk)

As soon as an applicant has been DBS cleared Swim Wales will update the member's record for reference.

DBS checks can only be carried out for members of your organisation and for organisations affiliated to Swim Wales.

# Safeguarding and protecting children: workshops and courses

## Swim Wales requires all volunteers to attend safeguarding training regardless of their role

Swim Wales follows the recommendations of the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit with regard to safeguarding training for our members with regular responsibility for children.

There is a vast range of child safeguarding training courses that have become available in recent years. Some of these courses provide an introduction to child safeguarding and some are at a more advanced level.

Swim Wales provides all courses related to safeguarding training for both adults and young people - Swim Wales Training <swimwales-training@swimming.org>

Training should outline the core principles of safeguarding good practice, responding to concerns and provide understanding of child protection legislation and responsibilities.

It should:

- Ensure awareness of the categories of abuse and the potential signs and symptoms of abuse.
- Describe what to do if there are concerns for a child.
- Explore the legislative context and statutory framework of safeguarding.
- Include skills development around identifying, responding to and reporting concerns.
- Provide signposting for further information and sources of support.

This training should contain a face-to-face element the first time that a person attends it, with possible refresher training available in an online format. Every other three years a face to face course is required. This training allows learners to ask questions in a safe environment facilitated by a qualified safeguarding tutor, enables individual experiences to be explored, judgements challenged and different opinions and perceptions discussed. It also facilitates learners to develop networks and obtain support from others in similar roles.

Safeguarding training includes complex and sensitive information where learners' values, assumptions and experiences can affect their interpretation of learning materials

## Approved training

The recommended approved training for our members is the UK Coaching (previously SCUk) Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop. This workshop is delivered by a Swim Wales tutor and uses learning scenarios and references SWCSP throughout. Further details on the workshop, availability and booking a workshop in your area can be found at [www.swimwales.org](http://www.swimwales.org) or email [swimwales-training@swimming.org](mailto:swimwales-training@swimming.org)

## Sports Coach UK Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop

UK Coaching also runs a generic Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop. This workshop is not specific to Swim Wales and it is therefore important that any member who attends this workshop ensures they are familiar with SWCSP and speaks to their Welfare Officer to ensure they understand the reporting procedures for our sports. Further information can be found on the UK Coaching website at [www.ukcoaching.org](http://www.ukcoaching.org)

Swim Wales also accepts child safeguarding training, which has been delivered (or accredited) by the following:

- Local Safeguarding Children Boards' (LSCB) safeguarding courses for those in regular contact with children.
- National Health Service child safeguarding training for those in regular contact with children.
- Safer Activities For Everyone (SAFE) CIC standard safeguarding training, which has to be completed every two years.
- Child Safeguarding training delivered by the Football Association or England and Wales Cricket Board.

## Time to Listen

Time to Listen training is only available for those undertaking the role of welfare officer. TTL training is only available to those who have already attended the approved training shown above and is mandatory.

To arrange a place please contact - Swim Wales Training [swimwales-training@swimming.org](mailto:swimwales-training@swimming.org)

It is recommended that refresher courses for TTL are attended every 3 years to ensure relevant knowledge is refreshed and up to date.

TTL is mandatory training for all Swim Wales Welfare Officers, regardless of their professional background in child safeguarding.

## Other courses

Quality-assured child safeguarding training that has been delivered or accredited by an LSCB and/or the National Health Service (NHS) is also approved by Swim Wales

Trainees will have to repeat the course every three Years. Refresher courses are available on line through Welsh Sports Association. Certificates must be registered with Swim Wales on completion of course .

Online refresher courses are only permitted following a face to face course. Therefore in between each online course you must attend a face to face course.

A small number of members may have attended child safeguarding training delivered by the Football Association or the England and Wales Cricket Board. This training is also approved by Swim Wales

## Coaches, teachers and swim school providers

In the case of coaches and teachers that undertake child safeguarding training within their professional training they will be required to provide evidence of the course(s) they have attended.

Attendance of a safeguarding workshop is also a criteria of Swim Wales accreditation scheme.

Further details and information on courses running in your area can be obtained from the Swim Wales website at [www.swimwales.org](http://www.swimwales.org) or contact the Swim Wales Education team. Swim Wales Training [swimwales-training@swimming.org](mailto:swimwales-training@swimming.org)

## Child safeguarding training for members under 18 years

Swim Wales offers a workshop for young volunteers between the ages of 13 and 17 to help them understand how to keep themselves and other children safe.

It is designed to introduce young coaches, officials, volunteers and sports leaders to the concept of “good safeguarding practice” and develop their confidence in how to identify what abuse of a child in sport may look like and the appropriate action to take.

This course is not mandatory to Swim Wales members. As a minimum any volunteers under the age of 18 should receive child safeguarding information from their Club Welfare Officer so they understand the reporting procedures at the club and who to contact should they have any concerns for either themselves or other children.



## Section 2: Toolbox

### Subsection 2.3: Codes of Conduct

- **Swim Wales Code of Conduct for Aquatic participants (applicable to club members and Swim Wales Associate Members)**
- **Swim Wales Code of Conduct (applicable to Club Committees, Accredited Organisations, Coaches, Teachers and Volunteers).**
- **Swim Wales Code of Conduct for Aquatic Parents and Carers**

# Swim Wales Code of Conduct for Aquatic participants (applicable to club members and Swim Wales Associate Members)

1. Put the wellbeing, health and safety of members above all other considerations.
2. At all times, adhere to Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policy, Swim Wales Adults at Risk Policy, Swim Wales Code of Ethics and Swim Wales Rules and Laws
3. Support others to feel welcomed, included, valued and not judged.

4. Consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.
5. Treat all members with respect, value their worth and treat everyone equally.
6. Develop appropriate relationships based on mutual trust and respect.
7. Always identify and meet the needs of the individual member as well as the needs of the team/squad.
8. Treat all information of a personal nature about individual members as confidential, except in circumstances where to do so would allow the child to be placed at risk of harm or continue to be at risk of harm.
9. Obey the spirit of the rules and regulations both in and out of the pool.
10. Respect the privacy of others in the changing rooms.
11. Not use any device to take photographs of others in the changing areas.
12. Use social media positively and never to criticise the sport and/or other members.
13. Observe the authority and the decision of the officials and only question those decisions in the appropriate manner.
14. Treat all competitors and teams of other organisations with respect, whether that is in victory or defeat, and encourage all members to do the same.
15. Tell someone if you have a concern about or if you are concerned about someone else.

As a participant you have the right to:

- Enjoy yourself and feel safe.
- Be told who to talk to 'if something's not right'
- Be listened to
- Be involved in your organisation's decisions and activities.'
- To be looked after if you have an accident or need help.
- Be encouraged positively to develop your skills.
- To be treated fairly.

Signed:

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Print Name:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We expect members of an organisation to follow the behaviours and requests set out in this code. If any participant behaves in a way that contradicts any of the points set out above we will address the problem straight away and aim to resolve the matter.

Continued issues and repeated breaches of this code may result in us regrettably asking you to leave the activity, event or organisation permanently for the welfare of other young people and volunteers. This is something we never want to do.

This code is an extension to Swim Wales Code of Ethics. Both should be followed.

# Swim Wales Code of Conduct (applicable to Club Committees, Accredited Organisations, Coaches, Teachers and Volunteers).

Note: Where we refer to 'parents we mean parents and carers inclusively. The term 'child' or 'children' describes anyone under the age of 18.

1. Put the wellbeing, health and safety of members above all other considerations.
2. At all times, adhere to Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policy, Swim Wales Adults at Risk Policy, Swim Wales Code of Ethics and Swim Wales Rules and Laws
3. Support others to feel welcomed, included, valued and not judged.
4. Consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.
5. Treat all members with respect, value their worth and treat everyone equally.
6. Develop appropriate relationships based on mutual trust and respect.
7. Always identify and meet the needs of the individual member as well the needs of the team/squad.
8. Be fair and equal in team and training squad selection.
9. Never exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward. In particular, coaches must not use their position to establish or pursue an improper relationship with an athlete, member or someone close to them.
10. Continue to seek and maintain relevant professional development.
11. Complete a child safeguarding training course every three years in line with the guidance in SWCSP (if applicable to your role).
12. Treat all information of a personal nature about individual members as confidential, except in circumstances where to do so would allow the child to be placed at risk of harm or continue to be at risk of harm.
13. Have a child centred approach and focus on the best interests of the child.
14. Obey the spirit of the rules and regulations of Aquatics both in and out of the pool.
15. Co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g. other coaches, officials, sport scientists, doctors or physiotherapists) in the best interests of the member.
16. Use social media positively and never to criticise Aquatic sport or an individual.
17. Never encourage or condone members, volunteers, officials or parents to violate the rules of the organisation or the sport, and report any violations appropriately.
18. Observe the authority and the decision of the officials and only question those decisions in the appropriate manner.
19. Treat all competitors and teams of other organisation's with respect, whether that is in victory or defeat, and encourage all members to do the same.
20. Refer all child safeguarding concerns in accordance with the procedures detailed in SWCSP.

As a member, we understand you have the right to:

- Enjoy the time you spend with us
- Be informed of our safeguarding and reporting procedures and what to do if something is not right.
- Have access to ongoing training in all aspects of your role
- Be listened to.
- Be involved with activities within the organisation.
- Be respected and treated fairly by us and the National Governing Body.
- Feel welcomed, valued and not judged.
- Be protected from physical and emotional abuse from children or parents and be supported to resolve any issues.

Signed:

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Print Name:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We expect everyone to adhere to follow the behaviours and requests set out in this code, if anyone behaves in a manner that may contradict any of the points set out above we'll address the matter straight away and aim to resolve the issue

Continued issues and breaches of the code of conduct will result in disciplinary action being taken against you which may involve the NGB and ultimately your dismissal from the organisation

This code is an extension to Swim Wales Code of Ethics. Both should be followed.

# Swim Wales Code of Conduct for Aquatic Parents and Carers

Note: Where we refer to 'parents' we mean parents and carers inclusively. The term 'children' or 'child' describes any person under the age of 18.

1. Make sure your child has the right kit for the session as well as enough food and drink
2. Make sure your child arrives to sessions on time and is picked up promptly, or let us know if you're running late or if your child is going home with someone else
3. Complete all forms as requested and update us straight away if anything changes
4. Maintain a good relationship with your child's coach or teacher and catch up with them as much as you can about your child's development
5. Talk to us if you have any concerns about any part of your child's involvement – we want to hear from you
6. Learn about your child's sport and what it means to them
7. Take the time to talk to your child about what you both want to achieve through sport
8. Remember that children get a wide range of benefits from participating in sport, like making friends, getting exercise and developing skills. It's not all about wins and losses
9. Listen when your child says they don't want to do something
10. Behave positively as a spectator – shout encouragement, say 'Well done' and let your children know you're proud of what they're doing
11. Consider the way you react and behave and the affect not just on your child but other children too
12. Accept the official's decision and do not enter poolside
13. Use all social media responsibly when talking about what goes on at our club, by behaving in the same way online as you would in person
14. Talk to your child about embracing good etiquette and sportsmanship
15. Encourage your child to play by the rules and ensure that your child understands their code of conduct
16. Report any concerns that you may have or see to the club Welfare Officer in line with our Safeguarding Policies
17. Understand the rules, policies and club procedures – this includes the recording of all concerns using MyConcern which is a GDPR compliant online platform introduced to all Swim Wales affiliated organisations in April 2021
18. Advise the club if your child has any medical concerns or conditions

As a parent, we understand you have the right to:

- Be assured that your child is safeguarded during their time with us
- See any of our policies and procedures at any time
- Know who the welfare officer responsible for your child is and have their contact details
- Be involved and contribute towards decisions within the club or activity
- Know what training and qualifications our staff have
- Be informed of problems or concerns relating to your child
- Know what happens if there's an accident or injury, be informed if your child is injured and see records of any accidents
- Have your consent sought for anything outside of our initial consent form, such as permission to go on trips or photography
- Have any concerns about any aspect of your child's welfare listened to and responded to

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We expect all parents to follow the behaviours and requests set out in this code. If any parent behaves in a way which contradicts any of the points set out above, we'll address the problem straight away with the parent and aim to resolve the issue.

Persistent concerns or breaches may result in parents being asked not to attend if their attendance is considered a risk to the welfare and enjoyment of young participants.

Continued issues and repeated breaches of this code may result in us regrettably asking your child to leave the activity, event or club permanently, something we never want to do.

This code is an extension to Swim Wales Code of Ethics. Both should be followed.



## Section 2: Toolbox

### Subsection 2.4: Policies, Procedures and Guidance

- **Swim Wales Equality and Diversity Policy**
- **Swim Wales Anti-bullying Policy**
- **Guidance on self-harm concerns**
- **Swim Wales Changing Room Policy**
- **Guidance on child abuse images/indecent images of children**
- **Guidance on the use of electronic communication**
- **Guidance on communicating with children and young people**
- **Guidance on the use of social networking**
- **Swim Wales Photography Guidance**
- **Guidance on lane sharing between adults and children**
- **Guidance for young people and adults training and competing together in water polo**
- **Late Collection of Children Policy**
- **Missing Child Policy**
- **Transport Policy**
- **Guidance on the supervision of members when away from the organisation**

## Swim Wales Equality and Diversity Policy

The organisation is committed to treating everyone equally regardless of their age, level of ability or disability, gender (including gender reassignment), marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or any other relevant characteristic.

The organisation will ensure that equality is incorporated in all aspects of its activities and also recognises and adopts the Swim Wales definition of Equality and Diversity in sport:

Swim Wales believes sporting opportunities should be open to all and are committed to:

- Developing a culture that enables and values everyone's full involvement
- Creating an environment in which everyone has opportunities to play, compete, officiate, coach, volunteer and run community sport.
- Overcoming potential barriers for those wishing to play sport, particularly if they are from groups who are currently underrepresented in sport.

The organisation also seeks to fulfil Swim Wales Equality and Diversity Policy objectives which states:

*Swim Wales is fully committed to the principles of equality of opportunity and is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee or volunteer receives unlawful less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, gender, colour, disability, ethnic minority, parental or marital status, nationality, religious belief, social status and sexual preference. Swim Wales will ensure that there will be open access to all those who wish to participate in the sport and that they are treated fairly.*

Swim Wales is committed to cultivating and preserving a culture of inclusion in Aquatic Sport. We welcome the unique contributions that everyone can bring to Aquatic in Wales.

All members of the organisation have a responsibility to challenge discriminatory behaviour and to promote equality of opportunity.

The organisation will deal with any incidents of discriminatory behaviour seriously, in accordance with the organisation's disciplinary procedures.

The full Swim Wales Equality and Diversity Policy can be requested by contacting Swim Wales.

# Swim Wales Anti-bullying Policy

## Statement of intent

Swim Wales is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can learn to swim or train in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at all of our affiliated organisations. If bullying does occur, all members should be able to speak out and feel reassured that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING organisation. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the welfare officer, coach, teacher or another officer or employee of the organisation.

## What is bullying?

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as “the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace”.

## Why is it important to respond to bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Members of the organisation who are bullying others need to learn to behave more appropriately.

Organisations have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Most bullying incidents are not crimes. But some types of bullying are illegal and should be reported to the police. This includes bullying that involves violence, assault and theft; harassment or intimidation over a period of time including calling someone names or threatening them, making abusive phone calls and sending abusive emails or text messages (one incident is not normally enough to get a conviction); and anything involving hate crimes.

## Procedures

- Report incidents of bullying to the welfare officer, coach, teacher or another officer or employee of the organisation.
- In cases of serious bullying, the incidents are to be recorded by that person and referred to the welfare officer if he/she is not already aware.
- In serious cases, parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- If necessary and appropriate, the police will be consulted.
- The bullying behaviour, or threats of bullying, must be investigated and the bullying must be stopped quickly.

- If bullying is found on the ‘balance of probability’ to have taken place, then appropriate action will be taken. This includes attempting to help the bully/bullies to change their behaviour.

## Outcomes

- The bully/bullies may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered.
- If possible, the members will be reconciled.
- After the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

## Other helpful organisations:

**Swimline:** 0808 100 4001

**Kidscape Parents Helpline:**

**ChildLine:** 0800 1111

**Youth Access:** 020 8772 9900

**Family Lives:** (formerly Parentline Plus)

**BullyingUK:** (part of Family Lives) [www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Visit the Kidscape website [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) for further support, links, advice and downloads.

## Guide for welfare officers: how to deal with bullying

- Initially, try to reconcile the parties through mediation. The mediator could be you and/or the coach or teacher.
- Where any member under 18 is involved, ensure a parent/carer, or another adult nominated by the parent, is present when the member is spoken to.
- If a resolution cannot be amicably reached then seek advice from Swim Wales Safeguarding Officer

## Prevention

Everybody within the club has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying. It is mandatory for all Swim Wales clubs to have a written constitution and adhere to the Swim Wales Code of Ethics and accompanying Codes of Conduct. SWCSP provides Code of Conduct templates for clubs to use and adapt. We would recommend all club members sign a copy of the Code of Conduct annually so they are aware and understand acceptable standards of behaviour.

Clubs should promote and implement the Codes of Conduct and Anti-Bullying Policy. Many organisations have free resources that clubs can access to help raise awareness and some useful links have been provided at the end of this policy for clubs to use.

We would urge clubs to encourage and facilitate children at the club playing an active part in developing and embedding the Code of Conduct for members.

Some clubs have a representative group of children, youth forums, club captains and young leaders that could assist the club in this role. Their views, feedback and input can help clubs put in place a Code of Conduct that is relevant to the age group and promotes positive relationships within the club and prevents bullying behaviour.

Some clubs through their youth forums, club captains, young leaders or other such groups promote a “buddy” system. This is where young people in the club act as a “buddy” to another child to help them feel supported, promote friendship and to help that child have a greater sense of belonging within the club. “Buddies” can be really helpful for children joining a club as well as for children who have had issues or struggle to interact and make friends.

# What to do if you suspect someone is self-harming

If an individual has concerns, has noticed marks on an individual's body or has received a disclosure, it is important that these concerns are referred to the Welfare Officer and to the Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team so appropriate advice can be provided.

In most cases the parents/carers of the child would be informed of the concerns so the club can establish that the parents/carers are aware and the young person is receiving appropriate professional support. Occasionally parents/carers may be aware but don't know where to turn for help. Clubs can provide appropriate signposting to the professional help available as listed at the end of this guidance.

In cases where it is felt that the self-harm may be due to an issue at home and where it is felt that talking to the parents/carers could make the situation worse for the young person concerned a referral can be made to Children's Social Care in order to take further advice.

In all cases the Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team will support and provide guidance to any club or individual with a concern of this nature.

## Who can help?

In most cases individuals may find help and support through their GP. The GP may refer the young person to specialist mental health services depending on availability. The GP may refer the young person to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). CAMHS provide specialist NHS children and young people's mental health services.

As mentioned, discovering that someone is self-harming and supporting them can be extremely difficult and upsetting. Research suggests that children exposed to others' self-harm may be more likely to begin harming themselves, so it's important that siblings, friends and those around the individual self-harming receive support as much as the person affected.

## Will the self-harm continue?

It is important to understand that self-harm may not stop when you approach a young person to discuss what you have seen or because they have felt able to tell you that they are self-harming. Some individuals will find self-harming addictive and some may become dependent on it. Telling somebody to stop is unlikely to work and could push the young person to self-harm secretly.

Recovery can often be a long process and professional support will often provide young people with the opportunity to talk about how they feel and to look at new ways of coping.

## What is self-harm?

Self-harm, also sometimes referred to as self-injury, is a term used to describe a wide range of behaviours where individuals intentionally hurt themselves; it is often seen as a physical response to an emotional pain. There are lots of different forms of self-harming. Some individuals may use the same method of self-harm all the time, whilst other individuals may use different ways at different times.

## Who self-harms?

The World Health Organisation state one in five young people will self-harm by the age of 25. 13 per cent of young people have self-harmed by the time they sit their GCSEs.

The Good Childhood Report 2018 published by the Children's Society identified that of 11,000 14-year-olds surveyed, 16 per cent reported they had self-harmed in the last year. Based on these figures, nearly 110,000 children aged 14 may have self-harmed across the UK in the same 12 month period. This report also highlighted that girls are more than twice as likely to self-harm as boys, 22 per cent of girls, compared to 9 per cent of boys. Whilst the report suggests girls are more likely to self-harm, boys are more likely to engage in behaviours such as punching walls which isn't always recognised as self-harm.

## The self-harm cycle

Self-harm is often used as a coping mechanism. The physical pain of self-harm might feel easier to deal with than the emotional pain that's behind it. When an individual self-harms, chemicals are released into the brain, which can become addictive, and provide the individual with a temporary relief. This relief is often short-lived and can very quickly be replaced by feelings of guilt and shame. The individual may be unable to deal with these emotions and therefore start the cycle over. This is how the cycle begins and can become the individual's "normal" way of dealing with their feelings.

Support and guidance on how to deal with self-harm is available from the Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team

It is important to remember that club officers, coaching staff and the Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team are not trained professionals in the field of self-harm and there is no expectation on individuals to provide counselling services to either the young person or their family. Self-harm requires appropriately qualified medical expertise to support the young person and their family.

# Organisations that support and provide advice on self-harm

## YoungMinds

YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

They have a parent helpline on 0808 802 5544

[www.youngminds.org.uk/](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/)

## selfharmUK

selfharmUK is a project dedicated to supporting young people who are impacted by self-harm, providing a safe space for them to talk or ask questions, and to be honest about what's going on in their lives.

selfharmUK is part of Youthscape, a registered UK charity that's been working to support young people since 1993.

[www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)

## Harmless

Harmless was established at the beginning of October 2007. It is a national voluntary organisation for people who self-harm, as well as for their friends and families and for professionals.

[www.harmless.org.uk/](http://www.harmless.org.uk/)

## ChildLine

ChildLine is a private and confidential service for children and young people up to 19 years of age.

Contact can be made with a ChildLine counsellor about anything, Calls are free on 0800 1111.

[www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Self-harm/Pages/about-self-harm.aspx](http://www.childline.org.uk/Explore/Self-harm/Pages/about-self-harm.aspx)

## NSPCC

Calls can be made to the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 trained counsellors are used to dealing with the effects of self-harm and calls can be made anonymously.

[www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keepingchildren-safe/self-harm/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keepingchildren-safe/self-harm/)

## Kooth.com

Free online support for young people. Kooth is a service from Xenzone, leaders of online counselling. Online counsellors are available on Monday-Friday from 12pm-10pm and at the weekends from 6pm-10pm.

[www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

## Mind

Provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.

You can call them on 0300 123 3393

(Monday-Friday, 9am-6pm, except bank holidays) or text them on 86463.

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

## Samaritans

Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair. Call their free 24-hour, 365-days-a-year helpline on 116 123.

[www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)

## NHS information on self-harm

Information from the NHS about self-harm, along with some more helpful links.

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/self-injury/Pages/Introduction.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/self-injury/Pages/Introduction.aspx)

**This is not an exhaustive list. Families can also speak to their GP and child's school to enquire about local advice and services that may be available.**

The links provided are owned and operated by third parties. These links are provided for your information only. Swim Wales has no control over the contents of any of the links and is not responsible for these links, content or availability.

# Swim Wales Changing Room Policy

To ensure the safety of all members whilst using changing rooms Swim Wales advises organisations to work with facility providers and plan an agreed approach to reduce the risks.

It is imperative all members of the organisation, including employees and volunteers, understand the individually harmful and legal consequences of a child being sexually assaulted, or having indecent images of them taken. We reinforce that such behaviour is illegal and will not be tolerated in any form. All such incidents should be acted on.

Anyone (including other children) sexually assaulting others, or taking indecent images of children, including over/under adjoining cubicles, for example, renders themselves liable to arrest, prosecution and registration as a Sex Offender.

We strongly recommend that clubs engage locally with pool providers to create simple barrier systems, or make use of natural barriers between cubicles (e.g. lockers) to enable mixed "changing villages" to be used only as separate changing areas for either sex. Children of different sexes should change in separate areas, never in the same cubicle, or adjoining cubicles. This is likely to help prevent crimes involving covert use of cameras or phones. This is particularly applicable in squads comprising secondary school age children. The reinforcement of clear facility signage about mobile phones or devices being taken into changing rooms is also recommended.

## Responsibility

Under the duty of care to safeguard children, the club has a responsibility for the wellbeing of children in the changing rooms. This does not mean that parents/carers have no responsibility, but parents/carers are often not in the pool complex at the time when children are swimming and training to exercise their duty of care. For this reason, clubs must be clear to parents/carers under what circumstances they require parents/carers to remain at the pool throughout a session. For example, children who require assistance with changing, or for those children with a disability who may require additional help that the club is unable to provide.

**Responsibility during a club session** While a child is training or being taught, they remain under the responsibility and duty of care of the person who is teaching or coaching them at that time. If a member goes out of the pool area, the coach or teacher should be aware of this. If the child fails to return within a reasonable time, or appears to be upset upon leaving the poolside, the coach/teacher should request a suitable official to check on them. It is best practice for two persons to look for the member (the second person could be a senior member or a parent/carer).

If a complaint is received about an incident that has

occurred in the changing room between a member of the club and any other person, the club has a duty to act upon that concern as appropriate. If the incident involved possible risk to children, it is advisable also to make pool management aware.

If the incident involves a person not associated with the club, the pool manager should be made aware. Clubs should check with facility providers for their policies and procedures and minimise the risk by not permitting the use of mobile phones in the all changing areas.

Information for parents/carers regarding changing facilities

- Ensure that parents/carers are made aware that changing facilities at venues may be shared by both club members and members of the general public.
- Ensure parents/carers are made aware of the type of changing room in use, i.e. separate for male and female or mixed changing villages (and what segregation measures are in place).
- Ensure that the behaviour of members in changing rooms is part of the member's Code of Conduct. Masters (adult) members should be encouraged to use their own area wherever possible, when changing at the same time as children. Where this is not possible adults are to be reminded to change in an appropriate fashion, and to be mindful that they are changing with children.
- Ensure parents/carers are aware that they should not be alone in the changing room whilst children are changing, unless their child is of an age where help is required from parents/carers or if the child requires additional specific assistance. This is generally at an age that is stipulated by the pool hirer, usually seven or eight years of age. In such circumstances, the parent/carer must be the same gender as the child, unless the facility has family changing facilities or is a mixed changing village.
- When organising an event where other clubs or schools are involved, ensure that parents/carers and competitors are advised (via the event information) whether or not the facilities are likely to be open to the general public at any time during the event.

### Responsibility after a session is completed

The view of Swim Wales is that each affiliated club has a reasonable duty of care to their members, which extends to an awareness on the part of the club that their junior members have been collected, in so far as is possible, at the conclusion of a session, i.e. that a member is not left unsupervised if a parent/carer is late. This has to be age appropriate, i.e. a 17-year-old is capable of getting themselves home, but a 12-year-old is not.

However, if a club uses changing rooms that are also accessible to non-club members for public swimming lanes, it would be extreme to expect a club to search the changing areas in case a junior club member was there. Best practice would be for a club to make all junior members and their parents/carer aware that if children are not collected by a parent/carer, then they should make that known to the Welfare Officer, coach or whoever the club deems to be appropriate, and for the nominated individual to ensure that the member is supervised appropriately until a parent/carer arrives or they communicate alternative arrangements.

If a parent/carer fails to collect a child, the club should follow the procedure outlined in the Swim Wales Late Collection of Children Policy.

If a child's whereabouts cannot be accounted for, while under a club activity, then members should invoke the Missing Child Policy

# Guidance on child abuse images/indecent images of children

## Risks

Organisations must recognise this is a high risk area, the taking and sharing of indecent images is a criminal offence and should be reported to the Police

Some children have tried and succeeded in taking images (video and still photographs) of other children in the process of changing, in changing villages or under/over changing cubicles. Some children, only known to each other through the sport have shared these indecent images with others. Indecent is not defined in legislation but can include an image of a child in a state of undress in the changing room.

These images can be used to isolate and embarrass a child amongst their peer groups, exploit them, and in serious cases, make demands of children to carry out acts against their wishes. Any use of these child abuse images, or indeed the threat of such, can have devastating consequences for any child. It can also significantly affect the mental health and social interactions of young people, including trust amongst a peer group. Once the image is in the public domain, it is difficult to control, to know who has seen it and what they have done with it. This can lead to feelings of paranoia and isolation at a time when teenagers in particular need to build up their self-esteem during a crucial stage of their development.

The risks to victims, bystanders and perpetrators are different but all three contain a degree of risk that can leave a young person in a vulnerable state.

## Experimental

If the concern relates to a member of the organisation aged 13 or above who has voluntarily (with no suggestion of coercion/ exploitation/threats, etc.) taken an indecent image of themselves, and then shared this, we will determine whether the act may be seen as experimental (e.g. for teenagers within a relationship this might not be seen as unusual behaviour).

In this case, parents should be informed that Swim Wales will not be referring the concern direct to police (in line with CEOP/ACPO guidance), but will refer the matter to the relevant Children's Services/ MASH team, for assessment by them. This may be done without the absolute need for parental consent (for example, if it is a criminal offence which may lead to significant harm). This is to ensure that the professionals involved can make a suitable decision around supporting and guiding each child, based on any background information which will not be known to Swim Wales, and to help parents manage that behaviour. Where both parties (sender/ recipient) are at the same organisation, the welfare officers and other staff can also work with parents to monitor the children's behaviour, to prevent recurrence, in the environment of the organisation.

The request to send an indecent image (child abuse image) is also an offence. If, however, a child aged 13 or over asks another child of the same age within a relationship context for such an image, without any of the following aggravating factors, then the matter will be referred as above.

Never view or show the image to another unless there is a clear reason to do so (e.g. police request), or send, print, share, move or save the image anywhere, or allow a child to view, send or share the image.

## Prevention of incidents

There are several ways that an organisation can work to reduce the risk of an incident occurring.

All members of the organisation, including employees and volunteers, should be educated about the consequences of taking, sharing or using indecent images. It reinforces that the possession or taking of indecent images is illegal, and will not be tolerated in any form. The reinforcement of clear guidance about mobile phones or devices being taken into changing rooms is also advisable.

Consultation with pool providers or operators in particular, about how changing villages/cubicles are used, may prove useful. For example, if the organisation can impose separate single sex changing areas, this will prevent the possibility of covert filming of children of the opposite sex. Pool providers may assist the organisation in creating single sex changing areas by simply moving lockers or introducing a temporary barrier, etc.

Organisations will find excellent resources from the National Crime Agency's CEOP Command (formerly the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) and the NSPCC Share Aware Campaign to assist them. Further advice can be sought from Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team.

Further guidance is referenced at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/indecent-images-of-children-guidance-for-young-people/indecent-images-of-children-guidance-for-young-people>

All incidents must be recorded on MyConcern

## Guidance on the use of electronic communication

This guidance applies to all images and videos, which are not suspected of falling under the guidance on indecent/child abuse images of children, taken on any type of camera or recording device (including mobile/smart phones). It applies to all training sessions, activities and events run by a Swim Wales affiliated organisation.

### Guidance on filming children during training sessions

Filming during training sessions is not recommended unless there is a legitimate need or purpose for the filming. For example wishing to film children to assist in their stroke technique.

If there is a legitimate need or purpose parents/carers must be provided with full information such as when the filming is proposed, its purpose, who is filming, how the film will be used or published and an agreement on what will happen once the film has served its purpose. This allows parents/ carer to provide informed consent or otherwise. Written consent to the filming should be requested from the parents/ carers. Invite parents/carers to be present at the filming; if this is impractical allow them to view the film before publication.

### Mobile/smart phones

Members must be made aware that while Swim Wales does not support the banning of phones, as children may need them to keep in touch with parents/carers, particularly in emergencies, we do support the requirement that phones should emit a "noticeable sound" if the camera facility is used.

Clubs should also remind members that any photos taken should fall within our guidelines and that if devices are taken into changing rooms, the facility to take photos must not be used.

It is vital that any suspected misuse of mobile/ smart phone devices is reported in accordance with SWCSP guidance.

### Should photographs or footage of children be posted on an organisation's website or social media platform?

It is recommended that photographs or footage of individual children should not be kept on an organisation's website or social media platform if the site is publicly "open for the world to see", particularly images of a child with their name displayed, that could lead to that child being identified, approached and placed in a vulnerable position. The same could apply to printed materials such as an organisations' annual report or kit.

Many organisations have member only areas on their website or have privacy settings on social media platforms to allow and control access so that only members and their families can see the content.

It is recommended that children are not fully identified on such sites. Many organisations use just a first name, a surname or a nickname or simply just refer to the squad name. If an organisation wishes to publish a child's

name this should only be done with the consent of the parent/carer.

Parental consent may be withdrawn at any time and the organisation should take all reasonable steps to respect the wishes of the parent/carer.

## Online contact and communication with children

When an adult communicates with children they must do so in an appropriate and safe manner whether that is in person, by phone or text, online or via a social networking/messaging website.

SWCSP provides guidance on how to respond to a child if they disclose concerns or abuse to you in person. However, you may find a member uses other forms of communication to do so, even if you have followed Swim Wales guidance and not shared your phone, email address or social networking details with that person. Should that happen, we do not want you to stop that communication, but you should advise the Welfare Officer of the contact immediately and follow the guidance in SWCSP as to how to deal with any disclosure or concern raised.

Generally speaking, if you do not share your contact information with members, they will not find your phone number, email or social network site details. However, if this should happen and they are not disclosing concerns as outlined above, it is important you make them aware that you will not be communicating with them on this medium and inform the Welfare Officer immediately. The Welfare Officer will take action as required, ensuring contact by the member is not repeated.

### Electronic messaging

Mobile phones, text messaging, email and other forms of electronic communication have become a regular feature of the sporting landscape and there is a need to define what is and what is not permissible when communication is required between adults and children.

### Peers and those in a position of trust

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a recommendation of best practice, maintaining a professional standard for swimming, para-swimming, diving, high diving, artistic swimming, water polo and open water, swimming teachers, coaches and those in a position of trust, regarding:

- The use of mobile phones whilst having responsibility for the supervision and safety of children.
- Direct communication between coaches or teachers and children of the organisation via mobile phone, email and social media messaging.

The guidance on the use of social networking applies to phones as well as tablets, laptops, desktop computers or other applicable devices.

### Phoning, texting, emailing or messaging a child

Coaches and teachers should not personally hold the mobile phone numbers or email addresses belonging to children. This includes apps such as WhatsApp where a child's number is displayed and visible to a group. This is particularly important where any coach/teacher may hold a position of trust over a child.

Coaches can hold the phone numbers and email addresses of members' parents/carers with their consent, in order to get messages to members. It is then the responsibility of the parent/carers to inform the child.

There are a number of team communication systems used by clubs, which allow a "non position of trust" administrator(s) to ensure messages to children are copied in to parents/carers, or are openly visible on a team feed, which allows instant messaging. They also include "push notifications" for immediate attention of a recipient. Systems such as this can prevent direct messaging from a person in a position of trust, preventing suggestions of misconduct.

In limited circumstances, it may be necessary for coaches, team managers or chaperones to have mobile phone contact details of the members, e.g. at an away camp for safeguarding reasons. In such circumstances, the individual holding the contact details must be Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked, have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training and have the consent of each member's parent/carers to temporarily hold that information for the purpose of the event. The members' phone numbers should then be deleted after the event.

Organisations and/or coaches may wish to have the ability to contact members on a group basis. This may be required in order to inform members of changes to training or lesson times, for example. It is recommended that organisations develop a secure page on their website, or similar system for this purpose, which is open for members to view and is accessible through a variety of devices such as mobile phones, tablets and laptops. This page could be accessed by either the member themselves, or by their parent/carers if preferred, as no direct one-to-one contact is available to individual members.

Coaches of elite athletes under 18 but over 16 may, with the consent of the athlete's parent/carer, use text messaging or email to communicate with the athlete for training and competition purposes only. It is recommended that such communications are also copied to a parent/carers to safeguard the member and the coach, or a system as described above is used.

Apps or social media messaging which are not capable of storing messages, such as Snapchat is NOT recommended in order to communicate with children, as they have limited safety functionality. Nor indeed are platforms that reveal children's numbers and online identities such as WhatsApp and Instagram.

### Those adults not in a position of trust with children

Chairs, Club Secretaries, Membership Secretaries or those involved in other administrative roles are not deemed to be in a position of trust with children. As such, they generally have a lessened position of power and trust over a child, which is recognised under the DBS and Swim Wales's interpretation of a position of trust.

It is recognised that there may be a necessity for individuals performing these roles to contact children, and they are best advised to use a platform such as Team Unify on the basis that any messaging is unlikely to be urgent. A system is recommended where any messaging to under 16s is copied to parents/carers, and for 16-17-year olds it is also copied to parents/carers. There are other systems available.

If the 16/17-year-old also has a club or employment role, such as teacher or lifeguard, then best practice would be to ensure any message is also copied to another adult club member such as Club Secretary or Membership Secretary.

## Guidance on the use of social networking

There is a growing awareness of the increasing communication between adults and children and indeed their peers on social networking sites. There are risks associated with these developments and Swim Wales has identified a number of issues that have led to both disciplinary and safeguarding concerns stemming from the improper or inappropriate use of such sites by its members.

Swim Wales recognises that the use of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and instant messaging tools such as WhatsApp, TikTok and Snapchat, continue to grow rapidly and are increasingly being used as the communication tools of choice by children.

Increasingly, many sites provide a platform for uploading and viewing video clips, which with the latest cameras and mobile phones, becomes ever easier and can be instantaneous. More recent apps, such as Periscope, allow mobile phone users to stream content directly from their phones, bypassing some of the steps required in uploading videos to YouTube or to social networks such as Facebook.

Whilst the ever developing technologies provide exciting opportunities for our members, they are accompanied by dangers and negative consequences if abused by users.

It is important to note that misuse/abuse conducted on social media may result in a criminal investigation and members are encouraged to directly refer criminal activity to police. This also includes action between members while engaged in a Swim Wales activity and in those circumstances such action may also breach the Codes of Conduct or Codes of Ethics and result in disciplinary action.

If "out of sport" inappropriate social media activity emerges, members are encouraged to report this directly to the social media platform provider.

## Guidance for coaches, teachers and other staff

As a coach, teacher or other employee or volunteer of the organisation, you should not be in contact with children through social networking sites if they are a member of the organisation you work for.

Should a child in your organisation request to become “friends” via your personal social networking site, you should decline if:

- You are in a position of responsibility in respect of that child.
- You hold a position of trust and/or responsibility at the club.
- Your contact with the child is through a Swim Wales club and the parent/carers of the child does not give their consent to such contact.

Social networks should never be used as a medium by which to abuse or criticise members or Swim Wales organisations and to do so may be in breach of Swim Wales Rules and breach the code of conduct.

The publishing of a photograph or video footage on any social networking site is governed by the same requirements as those contained in Swim Wales Photography Guidance .

## Coaches, teachers and other staff who are under 18

Swim Wales recognises that social networking sites can be a useful tool for teachers, coaches and other staff within the organisation to share information with other teachers, coaches or staff. If, however, the teacher, coach or staff member is under the age of 16, while they may be a colleague, the requirements under guidance for coaches, teachers and other staff must still be adhered to.

If the coach/teacher/staff member is aged 16 or 17, it is the view of Swim Wales that to restrict the ability to share professional information with them from other coaches, teachers or staff may be detrimental in their professional development.

Therefore, if a parent/carer of a child in a position of responsibility and they themselves request to have contact with an adult member of staff for the purposes of sharing professional information relevant to their role, the organisation should:

- Gain written consent from the parent/ carers and young person to have such contact, naming the individual adult and social networking site concerned.
- Ensure the named adult signs an agreement to keep contact with the child to the discussion of matters relevant to the child’s role in the club.
- Ensure all such communications are shared with an identified third person (e.g. the child’s parent or Club Welfare Officer).
- Ensure that if the child or the adult is found to breach the above agreement, action must be taken by the club to address the concern and/or ensure that the breach is referred to Swim Wales or the statutory agencies if appropriate.

## Coaches aged between 18 and 21

Swim Wales recognises that many young coaches aged between 18 and 21 will have been members themselves before becoming a coach and have been friends with their fellow members, some of whom will be between the ages of 16 and 17. It is therefore plausible they will have contact details for those members and be friends with them on social networking sites, and be able to communicate via other methods of electronic communication.

In this circumstance, Swim Wales accepts it would be inappropriate to require such friends to be removed from their social networking sites.

Therefore, in such cases:

- If a coach aged between 18 and 21 had friends on their social networking site that were/are members aged 16 or 17 prior to undertaking the role of coach, Swim Wales does not expect them to remove those members from their listed friends.
- In such circumstances the coach is advised to inform the Welfare Officer and Head Coach.
- The Head Coach should make every effort to ensure the coach is not the primary coach for those specified young persons except on an occasional basis.

## Guidance to members of the organisation under the age of 18

- Do not ask your coach or teacher to be your friend on any social networking site – they will refuse as that would breach good practice.
- Use the internet positively and do not place yourself at risk. Have a look at <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>“thinkuknow.co.uk for some useful tips.
- Consider who you are inviting to be your friend and follow the good advice of the social networking sites to make sure you are talking to the person you believe you are talking to.
- Always remember that any communication, comments, photos and video clips posted on a social networking site may be shared with more people than you originally intended.
- Never share pictures of yourself or your friends that you wouldn’t be happy for your family to see. Also, never post or send any photographs, videos or make comments that:
  - May be hurtful, untrue or upsetting or that you may regret sharing later on.
  - May be used by other people in a way you did not intend or want.
- Other people may find inappropriate.
- Tell someone if you receive an indecent image or if you receive a friend request from an adult

- Do not upload images of other members taking part in your organisation's training, activities or events as you may breach Swim Wales Photography Guidance. If you do wish to upload such content, you must first seek the advice and consent of your parents/carers, the consent of the other child and their parents/carers, and an officer of the organisation before taking any action.

This will not prevent you having images of your friends from the organisation on your personal social networking site, as long as they were taken outside of the sporting arena. Even so, it is still a good idea to check that any person in the image, and their parents/carers, are happy for you to upload the image.

- Always be aware that social networking websites are a method of communication like letter writing and the spoken word. They are bound by the same laws and rules. The delivery of social networking content is instantaneous and this can sometimes result in users reacting in the "heat of the moment", and your content/comments may spread far from that of your own social network of friends. This is a major difference between the present and the past in which you would have written a letter which would have taken time and allowed for you to think again before sending. So never place a comment on the internet that you would not put in writing or say out loud to someone. To do so may breach Swim Wales Policies and the Code of Conduct.

### Parents/carers of members under the age of 18

There have been occasions where parents/ carers of members have used social networking sites to criticise or verbally abuse an organisation, its officers, officials, coaches, teachers, and/or members in an inappropriate and unacceptable manner. This has, in some cases, led the person who is the subject of the abuse to take action through statutory agencies or statutory legislation to address the comments made.

It is recommended that parents/carers actively monitor their children's online activity, in line with Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP) advice, which is proven to help prevent the risks of harm children may face online from peers and others they may know from a club environment.

Swim Wales has a parent's/carers Code of Conduct which can be found in SWCSP. This includes expectations of behaviour in club activity online, and as a spectator at all training sessions, events and activities, in treating members, coaches, committee members and parents/carers of other members of any of our sports' organisations, be that your child's organisation or not, with due respect.

Parents/carers should be aware that posting any content on a social networking site that breaches the above requirements may breach the parent's/carers Code of Conduct.

### Parents/carers who work at the same organisation attended by their children

Many parents/carers are becoming "friends" with their children on social networking profiles for security reasons, to ensure the wellbeing of their own child by being able to view their child's profile. This may then give the parent/carers access to the profiles of other children listed as "friends" of their child. It would not be appropriate for Swim Wales to prevent a parent/carers who is also an employee at the organisation where their child is a member from using this form of protection for their child's online activities.

Therefore, in such cases:

- The parent/carers concerned should not have direct contact with members through the social networking website.
- Where the parent/carers has access to their child's social networking website (i.e. knows the user name and password) they must not contact any other children under the pretence of being their child.
- The parent/carers should not accept their child's friends as friends on their own social networking website.
- The parent/carers should inform the Welfare Officer of this arrangement.

## What to do if you have concerns

As a user of a social networking website, whether you are a child or an adult, you may have a concern about what you are seeing or being told by another user. Here is a list of agencies that you can contact, anonymously if you wish, where you can raise such concerns.

O2 and NSPCC Online Safety website

<http://o2.co.uk/help/nspcc> [o2.co.uk/help/nspcc](http://o2.co.uk/help/nspcc)

NSPCC Share Aware Resources <http://nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety>

Childline

<http://childline.org.uk/get-involved/childline-social-media>

Child Exploitation and Online Protection

Command

<http://ceop.police.uk/safety->

Thinkuknow

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

Our Safety Centre

<http://oursafetycentre.co.uk/>

NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit <http://thecpsu.org.uk/help-advice/topics/online-safety>

Internet matters

<http://internetmatters.org>

Childnet International

<http://childnet.com>

HM Government advice on keeping children safe online

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-safety-online-a-practical-guide-for-parents-and-carers/child-safety-online-a-practical-guide-for-parents-and-carers-whose-children-are-using-social-media>

# Swim Wales Photography Guidance

This guidance applies to all images and videos taken on any type of camera or recording device (including mobile phones). It applies to all training sessions, activities and events run by a Swim Wales affiliated organisation.

## What are the risks?

Children may be identified, contacted or groomed. Including the child's personal information (full name, address) alongside their image can make them identifiable and therefore vulnerable to individuals looking to locate, contact or 'groom' children for abuse.

Even if personal details are kept confidential, other details identifying the sports organisation, school or club, or their favourite sportsperson or team, can also be used to groom the child.

There's increased risk of identification of, and contact with, a child:

- by someone in circumstances where there are legal restrictions – such as if the child is in local-authority care or placed with an adoptive family where it's potentially dangerous to reveal the child's whereabouts to an estranged parent due to previous concerns about domestic violence

## Recommended best practice

- The publishing of a photograph of a member under 18, either on a notice board or in a published article or video recording (including video streaming) of a competition ('Publication') should only be done with parental consent and in line with Swim Wales guidelines.
- A parent or carer has a right to refuse to have their child photographed. The exercise of this right of refusal should not be used as grounds for refusing entry into a competition. Therefore, any photo that may go to press or on a notice board, be it through a member of the organisation or an official photographer, should receive parental consent before being published or displayed, preferably in writing.
- In the case of any event or competition where the host organisation has an official photographer, all parents of members who are attending should be made aware of this in the event details. If photos are to be published anywhere, each individual parent should be given the opportunity to withhold their consent. Their right to do so should be specifically drawn to their attention.

Swim Wales guidelines state that all photographs for publication must observe generally accepted standards of decency, particularly:

- Action shots should be a celebration of the sporting activity and not a sexualised image in a sporting context.
- Action shots should not be taken or retained where the photograph reveals a torn or displaced swimming costume.
- Poolside shots of children should be above the waist only in a swimming costume, Full length shots are permitted if the children are fully clothed.

- Photographs should not be taken from behind the starting blocks or that show young participants climbing out of the pool.
- Photographs must not be taken of a distressed child.

Published photographs may identify the individual by name and organisation but should not state the member's place of residence or school attended. Swim Wales does not wish to stop parents photographing their child if they wish, but all organisations must ensure they do all they can to safeguard each child's wellbeing, helping parents/carers understand why they should refrain from including other individual children in such shots.

You should establish and clarify many of these points as part of the commissioning or contracting process:

- inform parents and children that a photographer will be in attendance
- ensure parents and children consent to both the taking and publication of films or photos – see our sample filming and photography consent form
- check the photographer's identity, the validity of their role, and the purpose and use of the images to be taken
- issue the photographer with identification, which must be worn at all times
- provide the photographer with a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of image content and their behaviour
- clarify areas where all photography is prohibited (toilets, changing areas, first aid areas, and so on); for more on this, click on the 'Mobile phones and cameras in changing rooms' tab above (or below, on mobile devices)
- inform the photographer about how to identify – and avoid taking images of – children without the required parental consent for photography
- don't allow unsupervised access to children or one-to-one photo sessions at events
- don't allow photo sessions away from the event – for instance, at a young person's home
- clarify issues about ownership of and access to all images, and for how long they'll be retained and/or used

## Responding to concerns

All staff, volunteers, children and parents should be informed that if they have any concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography (in terms of the way, by whom, or where photography is being undertaken), these should be reported to the event organiser or another official.

There must be a safeguarding procedure in place to ensure that reported concerns are dealt with in the same way as any other child-protection issue.

Ensure that your club or event organiser, or lead child protection or welfare officer is informed. Concerns about professional photographers should also be reported to their employers.

If there are concerns or suspicions about potentially criminal behaviour this should include referral to the police.

### Guidance on filming children during training sessions

The filming of children during training sessions is not recommended. The requirement for any filming must be justified by the organisation, (e.g. to assist in stroke development).

If there is a legitimate need or purpose parents/carers must be provided with full information such as when the filming is proposed, its purpose, who is filming, how the film will be used or published and an agreement on what will happen once the film has served its purpose. This allows parents/carer to provide informed consent or otherwise. Written consent to the filming should be requested from the parents/carers. Invite parents/carers to be present at the filming; if this is impractical allow them to view the film before publication.

Once the footage has served its purpose, it should always be destroyed, unless the need to keep it can be justified.

### Mobile phones

Mobile phones should be registered as a camera if it has that facility in order to adhere to our policy on cameras. All organisations need to make their members aware that while Swim Wales does not support the banning of phones, as children need them to keep in touch with parents, particularly in emergencies, we do support the requirement that phones should emit a 'noticeable sound' if the camera facility is used.

Organisations should also remind members that any photos taken should fall within our guidelines and that if

mobile phones are taken into changing rooms, the facility to take photos **must** not be used.

It is vital that any suspected misuse of mobile/ smart phone devices is reported in accordance with SWCSP guidance.

### Should photographs or footage of children be posted on an organisation's website?

It is recommended that photographs or footage of individual children should not be kept on an organisation's website or social media platform if the site is publically "open for the world to see", particularly images of

a child with their name displayed, that could lead to that child being identified, approached and placed in a vulnerable position. The same could apply to printed materials such as an organisations' annual report or kit.

Many organisations have member only areas on their website or have privacy settings on social media platforms to allow and control access so that only members and their families can see the content.

It is recommended that children are not fully identified on such sites. Many organisations use just a first name, a surname or a nickname or simply just refer to the squad name. If an organisation wishes to publish a child's name this should only be done with the consent of the parent/carer.

Parental consent may be withdrawn at any time and the organisation should take all reasonable steps to respect the wishes of the parent/carer.

## Policy for lane sharing between adults and children

Swimming is a physical sport, and like many sports, there are inherent risks in taking part. Swim Wales is committed to ensuring that any risks to participants are kept to an absolute minimum.

We recognise that children and Masters (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 sport.

Unfortunately, whilst incidents within training sessions are rare, Swim Wales has identified some problems arising from training activities and warm ups 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 distress and concern for the children and sometimes also for the adults involved. Swim Wales has a duty of care to all Swim Wales members alongside a duty to safeguard members under the age of 18.

Clubs may believe that the best solution would be to have adults training separately to children. However,

Swim Wales recognises that, in some situations, it is neither appropriate nor possible for swimmers of different ages to train separately. This could include the developmental need of older children to train alongside adults, where training together can greatly enhance the experience for both parties, or at times where lane availability is limited. We recognise that an increase of participants in Masters swimming creates added pressure on pool availability.

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 Wales considers that in such situations, 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 between children and adults is unavoidable, coaches and clubs are required to conduct a thorough risk assessment.

On occasion this can lead to injury therefore forward planning is paramount.

They must pay particular attention to the mix of swimmers in each lane whilst taking the following factors into consideration:

- 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 individual swimmers' lane discipline and precision of strokes.
- Any lane etiquette guides, e.g. re 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 list is not exhaustive but is intended to provide clubs with a starting point for evaluating the risks to swimmers, and highlights certain factors they should be considering to ensure their training sessions are incident free.

### Swim Wales statement on adults and children sharing lanes in training

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

Swim Wales 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.

Where competition warm ups involve both adult swimmers and children, promoters should consider providing opportunities for groups of different abilities/physical sizes, or Masters groups, to warm up at different times, or within separate lanes.

For clarity, Masters who are training with younger members do not require a 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.

Adults and children must not change in an open area together or share a closed cubicle

# Guidance for young people and adults training and competing together in water polo

Swim Wales recognises that during water polo training sessions and competitions, it is likely that children and adults, and male and female players, may take part in activities together. Consideration must be given that on occasion that injuries can occur therefore forward planning is essential to minimise potential risks.

Often, senior water polo players will teach the junior players how to deal with certain situations in the sport. This is a commonly accepted way of passing on knowledge and skills. The junior players benefit from this approach as they learn from the older players, and their skills improve due to the experience of training at a higher level. The training of adults and children in the same session can be seen as contrary to child safeguarding recommendations. It is therefore necessary to have good practice guidelines in place to both prevent and deal with any concerns that arise.

It is also acknowledged that water polo is a contact sport and as such, not all risks can be removed in terms of physical contact or allegations. However, best practice can minimise the risks and ensure the sport is safe for all.

In training sessions, games and competitions referees or those responsible for the water polo activity must report any violent or sexual behaviour towards a child, deemed to be a potential criminal assault, outside of the rules governing the sport to police. They should advise the Child Safeguarding Team of the incident as soon as possible and advise the club Welfare Officer.

For the purposes of this guidance, junior players are aged below 18 years of age and senior players are aged 18 years and over.

## Training sessions

- All teachers, coaches, referees and chaperones should be DBS checked in line with the guidance provided in SWCSP.
  - Any senior player who has water-based contact with any junior player should also be DBS checked if they are acting in a coaching capacity. Advice on what constitutes a coaching capacity, based on how often that role is fulfilled, can be obtained from the DBS section.
  - In all sessions where junior players and senior players are training together, it would be desirable and best practice to have a 'chaperone' on poolside, whose only duty is to ensure the safety of the junior players by providing extra supervision. This person(s) should not normally be the lifeguard or coach, who have other duties. They should not have any direct access to the junior players unless they have been DBS checked and should report any concerns to the coach. Smaller clubs must have a lifeguard to fulfil this function if no other solution is available.
  - The coach is responsible for ensuring all sessions are planned and well organised.
  - Where junior males and females train together, the coach must be aware of the heightened risk that this may present. To minimise any risk, it would be best practice to have a chaperone on poolside whose only duty is to ensure the safety of the junior players by providing extra supervision as described in point three above.
- Junior players and senior players should not train together when there is a substantial age difference, unless the situation is unavoidable due to time, space, competition rules which cover the situation and/or acceptable training practices. If they do train together, the coach must be aware of the heightened risks and should address those risks accordingly.
  - The session should be appropriate for the ages and abilities of all participants.
  - All coaches, junior and senior players must be made aware of, and adhere to, the codes of conduct in training at all times.
  - During sessions, the coach may add to or vary the standard rules of a game for the purposes of training, to benefit all participants or to meet a duty of care.
  - The coach should make appropriate considerations when planning drills to ensure minimum contact between junior and senior players. If possible, all contact drills should be undertaken by same gender juniors with seniors completing the drills separately.

## Games and competitions

- The coach has a duty of care to take all factors into account when selecting a team, including, but not exclusively, the age, gender, physical capability and skills of all players in the team and of the opposition's team.
- Where junior males and females play together the coach must be aware of the heightened risk that this may present. To minimise any risk it would be best practice to have a chaperone on poolside whose only duty is to ensure the safety of the junior players by providing extra supervision.
- Junior players should not play competitively with senior players when there is a substantial age difference between them, unless the situation is unavoidable due to time, space or competition rules which cover the situation.
- The rules of water polo should be strictly adhered to when seniors and juniors play competitive matches together.
- If a referee has concerns about a junior player's ability to compete, these should be raised with team managers and coach prior to the start of the game. Referees should be aware of their duty of care to each junior player, e.g. if a player is significantly younger and/or smaller than the remaining squad members, that may leave them open to unacceptable risk.
- Referees should be aware of best practice in that they are in total charge of any game and that they have a duty of care to the players in their charge.
- Referees and coaches should not tolerate any inappropriate activities between players.

## Swim Wales Late Collection of Children Policy

Occasionally, parents may be delayed or unable to collect their child from training or after an event on time. The list of emergency numbers for the parents is to be used in such situations. Parents should be asked to inform the appropriate officer of the organisation if they are going to be delayed, with clear guidance on what the organisation will be required to do, e.g. the parent must give consent if they wish for another parent to transport their child home. The officers must never leave a child or young person alone unless they are over 16, and then only with parental consent. Swim Wales recognises that some young people aged 16 and over will take themselves home, so the officer must assess each situation as they arise in an appropriate manner.

Emergencies do happen and parents may be late due to an incident out of their control.

Until a child is collected, to maintain the wellbeing of all concerned, two appropriate officers or parents must remain with the member.

Parents who persistently fail to collect a child on time or who have not arrived after a reasonable period of time, and have given no prior notice or informed the organisation that they are delayed, may be failing in their duty of care to their child. The organisation should use the emergency numbers they have for the child to try to arrange for a nominated person to collect them. If the nominated person(s) is unavailable to collect the child, and the parent has still not contacted the organisation after a reasonable period of time, the organisation should consult the police or Children's Services/MASH for advice on action to take.

If a parent arrives to collect a child and the officers are concerned at their ability to take appropriate care of the child (i.e. they are considered to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs to the level where they are unfit to drive, and/or take care of their child) the organisation should gain advice from the police or Children's Services.

### Emergency procedures

In the event that a child has not been collected at the expected time and no contact has been made by the parent/carer.

The organisation should:

- 1 Use the emergency numbers they have for the child to try to arrange for a nominated person to collect them.

- 2 If there is no answer from those contacts ask the child if they have contact numbers for any other family members who may be able to help.
- 3 If there is no reply or response from the above and after 20 minutes you are unable to contact anyone else the organisation can seek advice from police or Children's Social Care or Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- 4 If following either points 2 or 3 the child has to be transported to a place of safety by an adult club officer or coach in an emergency situation it is recommended that two Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked adults from the club transport the child. In all cases the child should be seated in the back seat.
- 5 The officers must never leave a child alone, unless they are over 16 and parents/carers have agreed with the club previously that their child can make their own way to and from training.
- 6 Until a child is collected, to maintain the wellbeing of all concerned, two appropriate officers (ideally who hold a DBS check) or parents/carers must remain with the child.

### You should avoid:

- Taking the child home or to another location.
- Asking the child to wait in a vehicle.
- Waiting with the child at the organisation on your own.
- Sending the child home with another person without permission.

### Persistent failure to collect a young person on time

If a parent/carer fails to collect their child or young person on several occasions, with no contact from them or reasonable explanation for the delay, the welfare officer and another officer should arrange to meet with them and discuss the matter. It may be that the parent/ carer can be assisted in arriving promptly.

If over the next few weeks there is no change, the welfare officer should either contact the Regional Welfare Officer, Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team, Children Service's or MASH team for further advice.

## Swim Wales Missing Child Policy

It is hoped that no child will ever go missing from your organisation. If they do, remember that most children are found within a few minutes of their disappearance.

**However, if a child for whom your organisation has responsibility for goes missing, the following guidelines have been devised to clarify the actions that should be taken.**

Immediately respond, inform the Police, a description of the child including when they were last seen and what they were wearing must be provided to the Police.

- Ensure the other young people in your care are looked after appropriately while you organise a search for the missing young person.
- Inform the young person's parents if they are present at the event, or nominate an appropriate person to telephone them and advise them of the concern. Reassure them that you are doing all you can to locate their child.
- Divide up all the available responsible adults into areas to be searched. It is best to take a short time to organise the search properly so that all places are searched fully.
- Search the area in which the child has gone missing, including changing rooms, toilets, public and private areas and the organisation's grounds.
- Request all those searching to report back to you or to a nominated adult at a specific location and time.
- The police may recommend further action to be taken before they get involved; you should follow any guidance they provide.
- If the police decide to act upon the concern, follow their guidance in respect of further actions to take, if any.
- At any stage of the investigation, if the young person is located, ensure that you inform all adults involved including the parents, searchers and police if by they are already involved.
- Refer the concern as soon as possible to Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team.

## Swim Wales Transport Policy

This advice should be read in conjunction with the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit document, Safe sport events, activities and competitions.

- Parents and carers are responsible for the safe delivery and collection of their child to and from any training session or competitive event, except when the organisation is providing transport for the team.
- It is not the responsibility of the coach or other poolside staff to transport, or arrange transport for members to and/or from any training session, event or gala.
- Arrangements made between parents to transport the children of other members are at the sole discretion of the parents concerned.
- The driver is responsible for ensuring that a child has and uses a seat belt. You should not use vehicles without seat belts or exceed the recommended number of passengers for the vehicle.
- When transport is provided by the organisation e.g. by minibus or coach, the organisation should ensure written consent is obtained by each parent or carer.
- Contact details for the parents should be checked to make sure they are up to date.

Where the organisation has agreed to transport the team to an event, the team manager will provide parents and carers with written details of:

- The type of transport being provided, e.g. coach, minibus, etc.
- The departure time and the expected time of arrival back.
- The venue for members to meet the coach, and if different, the venue from which they can be collected upon their return.
- The contact number of a nominated officer at the event for emergency use only.

Coaches and officers unrelated to a member under 18 years of age should not transport members alone in a car or other transport except where to fail to do so would cause the child to be placed at risk of harm. In an emergency, if a child has to be transported without a relative present, two suitably DBS checked adults should be present and the child should always be placed in the back seat with the adults in the front. If possible, parental/ carer consent should be obtained in advance.

## Policy on the supervision of members when away from the organisation

### The rule of two adults in attendance must always be applied.

Organisations have a duty of care to safeguard children for whom they are responsible. This requires appropriate supervision when training at 'home' and at away events.

Some members may attend galas and meets on a regular basis, some of which will be a few hours, a day or events requiring overnight stays.

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit has produced "Safe sport events, activities and competitions". This document helps organisations to ensure they meet their safeguarding responsibilities for an event and take appropriate steps to promote the wellbeing of all participants and other children involved, including volunteers and officials.

It is recommended that organisations download this document, keep it with SWCSP and use it every time they are planning an event. The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) has also made the document available as an interactive planning tool on its website at: <http://thecpsu.org.uk/event-management>

In addition to the guidance below the requirements of the Safe Recruitment Policy, Transport Policy and the Codes of Conduct must be adhered to.

#### Trips away without an overnight stay

Regardless of whether the event is a league gala, a county meet or a national competition, it is important that the same level of care and safeguarding is made available to all members. If the event requires transport, it is important that the Transport Policy is followed.

Some parents may choose not to attend galas even when they are at, or local to, the home organisation for a variety of reasons. Therefore, it is best practice to collect the parents' contact details and the member's medical form as outlined in Safe sport events, activities and competitions prior to the event, regardless of the location.

Parents who do attend may choose to leave the venue and their children in the care of the poolside team. It is therefore important to be clear to parents that they should:

- Inform a member of the poolside team if they are leaving the venue and therefore their child's care with the coach and other staff/volunteers.
- Be there to receive their child back after their swim, performance or after the gala.
- Allow their child to remain on poolside throughout the event.
- Ensure the consent of a member of the poolside team is obtained by their member if they wish to go to see their parent/leave the event with parents before the event ends.
- Ensure the child knows to inform a member of the poolside team if they need to leave poolside for whatever reason.

#### Trips away with an overnight stay

The event team is responsible for the wellbeing and safeguarding of members under 18 years of age at the event, from the moment of handover by the parent to the moment of return to the parent. When parents do not attend, this will include the care of the children day and night at the event venue and accommodation.

The following staff are the core members of the event team;

- Event welfare officer
- Team manager
- Chaperone
- Coach

In addition to this, we recommend the event team appoints a 'home contact' for the organisation who will not be attending the event itself but who can contact parents and/or statutory agencies on behalf of the event team if required.

#### Event welfare officer

The welfare officer appointed for a specific event will not necessarily be the welfare officer of the organisation, but they should still meet the requirements of the welfare officer role as set out in SWCSP, including the requirement to attend a child safeguarding course. We would also recommend they have completed the NSPCC Time to Listen course for welfare officers. They should have a copy of Safe sport events, activities and competitions. A copy of the travel insurance details should also be available to the Team Manager if appropriate.

Additionally, they should:

- Ensure that all members, staff and volunteers on the trip have knowledge of their role and refer any safeguarding/welfare concerns to them.
- Obtain and hold securely the contact details of parents/carers/guardians.
- Obtain and hold securely the personal and medical information forms completed for each member.
- Take action (with other officers and volunteers) on any concern raised, at the time and/or subsequent to returning home if required.
- Refer ongoing concerns to the organisation's welfare officer if that person is not acting as the event welfare officer.
- Have a supply of sanitary products available

## Team manager

Swim Wales conducts team manager training and it is advised that all persons regularly acting in this role should undertake this training. The advice below is a summary of the learning obtained from the course but is not a substitute for it.

The role includes regularly communicating with parents, verbally and in writing, to ensure they are aware of:

- The purpose of the event.
- Any required qualifications to attend, e.g. qualification times.
- Where the event is to be held.
- The meeting points for departure and arrival (if the parents are not expected to transport their own children).
- The time of departure and return.
- The mode of transport that is to be used.
- The staffing arrangements for the event, with details and role descriptions of staff and volunteers attending.
- The cost, including arrangements for members to have money to spend while away.
- The kit requirements.
- The overnight venue and accommodation arrangements.
- The required codes of conduct that members and parents of members under 18 must sign.
- Any arrangements for food and drinks, including specific dietary requirements for each member.
- The name and phone number of a contact at the organisation and details of their role.

## Chaperone

The role of the chaperone, together with the event welfare officer is to:

- Take on the role of a responsible parent, acting 'in loco parentis', for the members for whom they are nominated as chaperone.
- Ensure the general care and wellbeing of members while on the trip and to monitor their adherence to the code of conduct for the events.
- Discuss any issues of child welfare with the designated welfare officer and assist the welfare officer as requested in matters involving child safeguarding and welfare.

In addition to the above, chaperones:

- Must adhere to SWCSP.
- Should not be in a coaching role or Team Manager at the same time.
- Must hold a current DBS certificate issued within the last three years.
- Must have completed Child Safeguarding Training within the last three years.
- Must have an induction into their role before undertaking the role for the first time.

- Must meet in advance of the event with other staff members attending the trip to clarify all staff roles and responsibilities.
- Must have a list of children for whom they are responsible as chaperone and full written details of those members and any specific medical information or special needs they may have.
- Together with the Event Welfare Officer must be aware of any medical or special needs relating to any child they chaperone on the trip.

## General guidelines:

- One chaperone to a maximum of 10 members is the minimum supervision requirement for children over the age of 11.
- Ratios should be higher if children are younger than 11.
- Where the group is of mixed gender, there should be at least one male chaperone and one female chaperone.
- There must be enough chaperones to deal with an emergency to ensure children are not unaccompanied should there be the need for a chaperone to attend to an emergency.

Before travelling (alongside other staff attending) the chaperone should:

- Meet with parents and the members for whom they are to be chaperone.
- Ensure parents have the relevant information which will be supplied by the meet organiser/ manager.
- Have details of the accommodation (address and telephone number).
- Have details of the room allocations, including where their room is in relation to the members for whom they are acting as chaperone.
- Have details of transport arrangements and the event venue.
- Have a full itinerary of the trip.
- Have knowledge of the insurance provision for the trip.
- Hold information of the agreed spending money, protocol for phoning home and for parental contact with members.
- Sign the trip code of conduct and have a copy of the member's code of conduct, team guidelines and any other relevant information.

Upon arrival:

- Chaperones should have a room on the same floor as the members if possible and be as close to the members' rooms as possible.
- Members should be made aware of the chaperone's room number(s) and how to contact them.
- Chaperones should check all rooms on arrival for any damage and to ensure the doors can be locked from the inside.
- Chaperones should check room access to unsuitable TV channels and ask for them to be blocked if necessary.

- Chaperones should check that telephones are working in each room.
- Chaperones should ascertain the location and contact details of the nearest medical facility.
- Chaperones should be aware of the location of the first aid kit, medicines, accident forms and medication checklist.
- If a member of the team requires transport to hospital, a chaperone must accompany them, taking medical information and any medication with them.
- Chaperones should check to see if there is a fire drill practice, and locate the emergency exits and assembly point.

Ensure the following information has been given to the members:

- Details of the emergency procedures (fire, accident, illness or other incident).
- Curfew and room rules.
- Money if appropriate.
- Code of conduct and team rules.
- Itinerary and maps.
- An orientation of the venue.
- Guidelines on meal timetable.
- Know where medication is kept and who is responsible for distributing it.

### The Event Team

Together, the event team should:

- Identify suitable venues for any overnight stays and risk-assess that venue prior to the event, either in person or by obtaining information from the venue management.
- Make a suitable room sharing plan for members as laid down in Safe sport events, activities and competitions and ensure that the child's and parents' preferences are met as far as possible.
- In all hotel/hostel accommodation, ensure that you follow the guidance in Safe sport events, activities and competitions including:
  - Facilities are suitable for any special needs or requirements of individuals attending.
  - If the room has a TV ensure no unsuitable programmes can be accessed by members.
  - If there is a phone in the room, have an agreed policy on the use of that phone for external use.
  - In room sharing, members are always placed with like age and same sex members in separate beds.
  - Ideally, those rooms are all on one floor, and that staff and volunteer rooms are nearby and preferably at either end of the members' rooms.
  - That members know how the staff can be contacted or located, for information or in an emergency.
  - Establish and make known the rules for going out of the hotel and lights out time

- Identify whether this event will require parents to transport and supervise their own children, and if not, to identify any transport that may be required (ensuring the Transport Policy is adhered to).
- Consider if additional staff and/or volunteers are required.
- Agree an emergency plan – see below.
- Agree that this is to be a 'dry' camp for all volunteers, staff and over 18 year olds attending as participants, Swim Wales does not permit the use of alcohol whilst travelling/having responsibility for children .
- Ensure all documentation as outlined in Safe sport events, activities and competitions has been received by parents and members, and relevant forms have been completed, signed and returned to the nominated event team member.
- Ensure that a home contact for the organisation has been appointed and that the relevant contact details have been shared.

### General guidance around supervision ratios

In all cases organisations should follow the detailed guidance provided in the Safe sport events, activities and competitions document. The document provides factors for the organisation to consider in their risk assessment to ensure they have a sufficient ratio of event staff to children attending the trip.

### Emergency Plan

If an emergency occurs, the event team must:

- Establish what the emergency is and clarify the details of those involved.
- Establish what action needs to be taken to manage the emergency, ensuring the wellbeing of all members attending the event.
- Establish if anyone is hurt and call for medical assistance as required.
- Nominate a member of the event team to attend any medical treatment centre or other venue (e.g. police station) with the individual(s) concerned.
- Ensure the rest of the members are safe and under the supervision of a suitable person.
- If necessary, inform the police as soon as possible of the incident.
- Contact the organisation's home contact and report the details of the emergency.
- If necessary, contact the home contact and ask them to contact the relevant parents of any members involved.
- If necessary, contact Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team for advice and guidance including whether or not insurers should be informed or action to take if the media is involved.
- Ensure a written record is recorded as soon as possible of what has happened and the actions taken.

# SWIM WALES CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY





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## Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures (SWCSP)

### Section 3: Child Safeguarding Responsibilities

- Responsibility for child safeguarding within Swim Wales

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## Responsibility for child safeguarding within Swim Wales

The responsibility for child safeguarding within Swim Wales belongs with all adults who work with, or have responsibility for, children in our sport.

Shown below are the roles within Swim Wales who have specific responsibility for safeguarding children in Welsh aquatics.

### Swim Wales Chief Executive

The Chief Executive, has the ultimate responsibility for child safeguarding, together with the Swim Wales Group Board and Swim Wales Sport Governing Board.

Swim Wales Safeguarding day to day management is led by Swim Wales Head of Governance.

Swim Wales Boards ratify any changes to Swim Wales Rules and Regulations in respect of all matters including child safeguarding and protection.

The Chief Executive is the only person in Swim Wales with the power to suspend an individual Swim Wales member either temporarily or for a specified term in respect of a child safeguarding issue. The Chief Executive will do so on the advice of Legal Affairs, and Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team, and Swim Wales Head of Governance

All Swim Wales organisations and members can discuss their concerns with the Swim Wales Safeguarding Team and will be offered advice and guidance on action to be taken in safeguarding and welfare issues. In some situations, the Safeguarding Team may become directly involved with the organisation, normally through the welfare officer, to try and resolve the issues.

Swim Wales holds the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) Advanced Standard for Safeguarding Children in Sport, Level 3. Swim Wales Safeguarding team are responsible for maintaining and embedding that standard across all Welsh Aquatics.

At any time, should Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team believe their advice has been dismissed, and/ or believe that the advice in SWCSP has been dismissed, then Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures have been breached it may result in a complaint being raised against the organisation or individual member involved.

### Club and Regional Welfare Officers

The volunteers who perform the role of welfare officer are a vital part of Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team. They are often the first point of contact for Swim Wales members and parents of members who have a child safeguarding concern, and they ensure that any such concerns are addressed by following the procedures and practices in SWCSP and Swim Wales Rules and Regulations. Many welfare officers have experience in child safeguarding through their professional employment outside of Swim Wales and this knowledge and experience can be invaluable when handling the wide range of concerns and enquiries they are faced with.

At the request of Swim Wales regional welfare officers can become directly involved with child safeguarding issues often to support an organisation's welfare officer. They may meet with the individuals involved, or lead meetings with parties to try to directly resolve the issues presented.



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## Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures (SWCSP)

### Section 4: Guidance for Coaches, Teachers and Poolside Helpers

- Safeguarding members
- Relationships with members aged 17 and under
- Grooming
- Managing challenging behaviour

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# Guidance for Coaches, Teachers and Poolside Helpers

Swim Wales recognises the commitment of all those who work directly with children in aquatics, whether paid or unpaid. Training sessions, galas, competitions and events at all levels could not take place without coaches, teachers and the many poolside helpers and officials who give their time so generously.

Earlier in this document, it states that the responsibility to safeguard children in our sport belongs to all those who work directly with, or have responsibility for, children in our organisations. Section 2 of SWCSP gives details of policies, procedures and guidance to enable all who work with children to do so in a safe and appropriate manner. Swim Wales has produced relevant codes of conduct which must be signed and adhered to.

All those who work directly with children on poolside must adhere to the child safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance of the organisation and Swim Wales to ensure they safeguard children at all times.

In recent years, a great deal has been written in the media about the 'bad and abusive coach' and very little about the vast majority of good and caring coaches without whom SWCSP would not be a practical document. Coaches and teachers are often 'chosen' by young members as a safe and trusted adult to whom they can confide in to disclose concerns about abuse, in the knowledge that the trusted person will help get that concern addressed in a proper and confidential manner. Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Team wishes to acknowledge the importance of the role undertaken by our coaches and teachers over and above that expected of them to safeguard our young members, and the important role that they, and all staff play in putting Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures into practice.

This section of SWCSP, which has been written with the help of the British Swimming Coaches Association (BSCA) and a representative group of coaches and teachers, provides clear and specific guidance to enable best practice (already being applied by the majority) to be implemented by all.

## Safeguarding Members

All those who work directly with children must ensure that:

- Children are treated with dignity and respect.
- Good practice is promoted, in order to reduce the possibility of abusive situations occurring.
- They, along with every coach, volunteer, official and member of staff continually reflect upon their own coaching, supervisory style, philosophy and practices to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children at all times.
- They always work appropriately and openly with children in the organisation.
- They are an excellent role model, which includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- They always put the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- They build a balanced relationship based on mutual trust, which empowers young people to share in the decision-making process.
- They refer and deal with concerns regarding child safeguarding appropriately.

Coaches and teachers should:

- Keep up to date with their technical skills and qualifications.
- Complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check upon commencing a new post and update that check every three years.
- Complete a Swim Wales-approved Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport course upon commencement as a coach and attend a refresher course every three years. The refresher course is now available online. The refresher can only be used in between tutor led courses.
- Know and understand Swim Wales Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.
- Ensure parents and members obtain appropriate information regarding training and competitions.
- Work in partnership with officers and event organiser(s).
- Not exceed the level of their competence and qualifications.
- Have open and regular communication with the young members' parents/carers.
- Ensure that activities are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the young member.
- Promote honesty, teamwork and a good sporting environment.
- Follow Swim Wales guidance on coaching young people. All coaches should follow the guidance from their awarding body relating to coaching/ teaching children.
- Report any concerns they may have in relation to young people following reporting procedures laid down in SWCSP.
- Recognise the expectations on members to undertake other activities outside of the sport including the demands of school sports and school examinations.

Swim Wales coaches, teachers, officials and helpers should not:

- Take children to their home or other secluded places where they will be alone.
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Share a room with a child.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Make sexually suggestive remarks to a child or young people.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language or behaviour unchallenged.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Leave the pool venue before all members have been collected or are continuing to be supervised by appropriate officers.
- Abuse their position of power or trust with children or adults.
- Resort to bullying tactics or verbal abuse.
- Cause a child to lose self-esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual.
- Spend excessive amounts of time with one swimmer to the detriment of the squad/team.
- Do things of a personal nature for young people that they can do for themselves.
- Smoke or consume alcohol while working with children and young people. To include travel away
- Engage in a sexual relationship with any athlete under 18.
- Use social media to criticise Aquatic sport or an individual who is involved in Aquatics.

## Relationships with members aged 17 and under

The relationship between coaches, teachers or members of staff who hold a position of trust and responsibility and members of the organisation under 18 must be professional and appropriate at all times. In some situations, legislation may reflect this requirement as outlined below in the sections on the Relationship of Trust and Grooming. However, the importance of the relationship between a coach and a member must never be forgotten. Not only does it develop a child's sporting potential and self-esteem, but it also allows them to develop an appropriate and trusting relationship with a responsible adult. Research of child safeguarding cases in aquatics has shown that it is this relationship that has enabled many young people to disclose their concerns.

The coach/member relationship is a complex one for both parties. It is important that the coach acknowledges that children often develop feelings for people in positions of trust, often identified as 'a crush' or 'hero worship'. In the case of a sports coach, this may result from a young person's admiration of the coach's previous achievements, e.g. as a national level athlete, representative of their country, etc. If this should happen to you, always inform the welfare officer to note the matter, and ensure that concerns are discussed and managed in an open and transparent manner. The welfare officer will be able to advise you on how to manage the issue and any action to take, if required.

You and the welfare officer will be able to deal with such situations ensuring you and the young person are safe from harm or allegation.

Coaches may develop stronger relationships with some young members than with others. It would be unrealistic not to acknowledge that it is possible to like one person more than another. However, the professional nature of the coach's position requires them to never favour one member or group of members over another. If one member requires more attention for reasons identified by the coach (e.g. the member is preparing for a national level event) then that is totally acceptable, but such preferential treatment or extra attention must be justifiable as being necessary to a member's professional development, and should not be to the detriment of other members.

Some coaches have considered it acceptable to give rewards to members who do well, and it is acknowledged that in the vast majority of cases gifts were given with no ulterior motive other than to reward success or improvement.

Our clear advice to coaches is to not give members gifts in any form. It is recommended that if a the coach feels that a member has attained a level of achievement that should be rewarded, then it is the organisation that should recognise that, on the coach's recommendation, and that any reward, gift or recognition given is then from the organisation and not one individual.

Where a coach does wish to carry out a rewards system, they should inform the relevant personnel within the organisation to make them aware of this, and provide details of the infrastructure around it. This may protect the coach from potential allegations of favouritism or grooming. In all cases, the reasoning behind creating the rewards system, and the justification for awarding a reward to an individual should be done on an open and transparent basis, for the sake of all concerned.

It is important that coaches work within the Code of Ethics and follow good practice as outlined in the relevant Code of Conduct to ensure their behaviour towards their members is appropriate. All coaches are in a position of trust over young members and the general rule is to act professionally at all times. If an action you take could be deemed to be unprofessional and inappropriate, then do not take that course of action.

### Relationship of trust

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 states: 'It is an offence for a person aged 18 years or over to involve a child under that age in sexual activity where he or she is in a specified position of trust in relation to that child. This includes those who care for, advise, supervise or train children and young people.'

Swim Wales has adopted this policy into the Swim Wales codes of conduct and the Swim Wales Code of Ethics, and any relationship of this nature may result in disciplinary action.

The power and influence a coach or teacher has in a professional relationship with a young person cannot be underestimated. It is vital for all coaches and teachers, as well as other volunteers, to recognise the responsibility they have and ensure that they do not abuse that position of power and trust.

Therefore, the position of Swim Wales is that no sexual relationship should exist between any young member of the organisation and their coach or teacher, and that the relationship between coach and member must be appropriate at all times.

Please note that children aged 16/17 years can legally consent to some types of sexual activity. However, in almost all provisions of legislation (under the Children Act 1989) they are still classified as children.

Positions of trust legislation is due to change in 2021/2022

## Grooming

Section 14 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 specifies that it is an offence to arrange a meeting, or to facilitate a meeting, with a child under the age of 16 with the intent of sexually abusing the child or with the intent of another person sexually abusing them.

Grooming can be committed by a male or female and a child can be groomed online or face to face, by a stranger or by someone they already know. Sexual grooming is often carefully planned and can take place over weeks, months or years, with the ultimate goal of meeting the child for committing a sexual offence.

Sexual grooming is the process by which a person with a sexual interest in children builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking.

People who sexually abuse children may use many techniques to prepare their victims. Some of these techniques include:

- Offering services and/or assistance that is inappropriate from someone in a position of trust.
- Paying inappropriate attention to certain children in a group situation.
- Giving gifts.
- Having an inappropriate and intrusive interest into a child's physical and sexual development.
- Having inappropriate social boundaries (e.g. telling the potential victims about their own personal problems, etc).
- Sexualising physical contact, such as inappropriate tickling and wrestling.

This can lead to:

- Manipulating a child through threats or coercion.
- Gradually exposing the victim to nudity and/ or sexual material in order to 'normalise' inappropriate behaviour.

This is not an exhaustive list and other exploitative strategies can be used and adapted to the individual child that the potential abuser has targeted.

Swim Wales recognises the importance of the positive coach/member relationship. It is the positive nature of that relationship that has led to many coaches being 'the trusted adult' that young people disclose their concerns of abuse to. The vast majority of coaches behave professionally and develop the coach/member relationship with young people in a responsible and appropriate manner. However, it is clear from experience and research, that a small minority of persons in positions of trust, including sports coaches, abuse their position and groom young people, and in many cases their parents too, prior to committing acts of sexual abuse.

Swim Wales is clear in its expectations that Swim Wales coaches have a responsibility to maintain that relationship of trust within the boundary of professionalism as outlined in the Swim Wales Code of Ethics and codes of conduct. Coaches who breach that professional relationship in a manner that may be considered as possible grooming, even without police action being taken, are not only placing the young person at risk but also placing themselves at risk of allegation and possible action under the Swim Wales Disciplinary and Child Protection Regulations for a breach of the Code of Ethics and codes of conduct.

# Managing challenging behaviour

Individuals who deliver sports activities to children may, on occasions, be required to deal with a child's challenging behaviour.

Every child should be supported to participate and only in exceptional circumstances, where the safety of a child or of other children cannot be maintained, should a child be excluded from activities.

## Planning activities

Good coaching practice requires planning sessions around the group as a whole but also involves taking into consideration the needs of each individual within that group. As part of session planning, coaches should consider whether any members of the group have, presented previously or are likely to present, any difficulties in relation to the tasks involved, the other participants or the environment.

Where potential risks are identified, strategies to manage those risks should be agreed in advance of the session, event or activity. The planning should also identify the appropriate number of adults required to safely manage and support the session, including being able to adequately respond to any challenging behaviour and to safeguard other members of the group and the staff/volunteers involved.

When children are identified as having additional needs or behaviours that are likely to require additional supervision, specialist expertise or support, this should be discussed with parents/ carers and the young person, where appropriate. The organisation should seek to work in partnership with parents/carers, and where necessary, external agencies, to ensure that a child or young person can be supported to participate safely.

Advice and guidance can be found on the following links:

- Child Protection in Sport Unit briefing paper on Managing Challenging Behaviour <http://thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/best-practice/managing-challenging-behaviour>
- UK Coaching provide an e-learning module to help coaches and teachers develop skills to manage disruptive behaviour at <http://ukcoaching.org/courses/learn-at-home/inspiring-positive-behaviour-in-sport>
- Connected Coaches is an initiative by UK Coaching, a charity established in 1984, to drive the development of sports coaching in the UK. They provide resources on how to inspire good behaviour in sessions at <http://connectedcoaches.org>
- Mencap provide advice and guidance for parents/ carers and professionals for challenging behaviour at <http://mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-explained/conditions/challenging-behaviour>
- The Challenging Behaviour Foundation are a charity providing advice and guidance to professionals for individuals with a severe learning disability at <http://challengingbehaviour.org.uk/supporting-you/for-professionals/for-professionals.html>

# GLOSSARY

## Types of abuse

Social Services and Wellbeing Act (and Wales Safeguarding Procedures ) describes physical, sexual, psychological, emotional/or psychological or financial abuse (and includes abuse taking place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place).

### Physical abuse

This happens when a child is deliberately hurt. This can cause injuries such as cuts, bruises, burns and broken bones. It can involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/ carer, carer or other adult fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. 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 causing severe adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may include:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate.
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, e.g. interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, overprotection and/or limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction.
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- 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, although it may occur alone. Emotional abuse could include a coach who continuously criticises, uses sarcasm and/or name-calling or who generally belittles the young person. Parents can emotionally abuse a child by having excessively high expectations which places unrealistic pressure on the young person, or by consistently giving the young person negative feedback.

### Financial abuse

Financial abuse includes theft, fraud, pressure about money, misuse of money.

### 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.

It could:

- Involve physical contact, including penetrative acts (e.g. rape; intentionally penetrating the vagina, anus or mouth of another person with a penis with or without consent, or serious sexual assault; intentionally penetrating the vagina or anus of another person with a part of the body or anything else, with or without consent) or non-penetrative acts (e.g. intentionally touching another person sexually with or without consent).
- Include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, being sent, being asked to send or be in any way involved in the production of graphic, sexual or otherwise indecent images of themselves or others, watching graphic, sexual or otherwise indecent activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Be perpetrated by children as well as adults, and women as well as men.
- Be perpetrated by individuals of any professional, racial or religious background.
- Be perpetrated by a family member, someone known to the child such as a family friend or by a stranger.
- Be perpetrated by an individual who targets voluntary organisations, including sporting organisations, which allows access to children specifically to commit acts of sexual abuse.
- Involve perpetrators who act alone or as part of an organised group.

The abuser will often:

- Put the child under great pressure not to tell anyone about the abuse after the event.
- Go to great lengths to get close to a child and win their trust.
- Try to gain acceptance by a family or organisation by being helpful and willing to assist.
- Exploit a child by demanding that they perform certain acts in exchange for any type of reward, e.g. money, drugs, gifts, or by not sending the images to peers, etc.

Sexual abuse has previously been identified within aquatics. Coaches and officers of the organisation are in a position to form trusting relationships with young members and sexual abuse often occurs when that trust is exploited.

## Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs and can be intentional or unintentional. This is 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 the parent or carer failing to:

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

An example of neglect could be that a coach or official fails to ensure the safety of a young person by exposing them to undue cold or to unnecessary risk or injury.

Neglect often highlights a failure in fulfilling a duty of care.

**These are additional recognised categories which are important**

## Bullying

Bullying may be defined as deliberate action or hurtful behaviour by one or more people that is repeated over a period of time and which is difficult for the bullied person to defend themselves from.

Bullying causes hurt to an individual or group and the damage inflicted by bullying is frequently underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to young people, to the extent that it affects their health and development or, in extreme cases, causes them significant harm (including self-harm and/or suicide).

The main types of bullying as defined by Kidscape are:

- **Verbal:** Name calling, persistent teasing, mocking, taunting and threats.
- **Physical:** Any form of physical violence, intimidating behaviour, theft or the intentional damage of possessions. This includes hitting, kicking and pushing.
- **Emotional:** Excluding, tormenting, ridiculing, humiliation, setting people up and spreading rumours.
- **Cyber:** Cyber bullying is the misuse of digital technologies or communications to bully a person or a group, typically through messages or actions that are threatening and/or intended to cause offence, anxiety or humiliation.
- **Racist:** Bullying based on ethnicity, skin colour, language, religious or cultural practices.
- **Homophobic:** Discrimination based on sexuality and/or gender identity.
- **Sexual:** Unwelcome sexual advances or remarks that are intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation. This could include pressure to send images of a sexual nature.

- **Disablist:** The bullying of children who have special educational needs and disabilities.
- **Based on 'difference':** Bullying based on any real or perceived difference. This can include, but is not limited to factors surrounding the way someone looks or dresses, hobbies and interests, family situation or social behaviour.
- **Sexual:** unwelcome sexual advances, comments that intended to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation.

Bullying can occur between:

- An adult and young person.
- Children
- A parent and their own child.

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

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

Bullying in aquatics could include a young person being ostracised by others in his or her lane or age group, refusing to talk to them and/or encouraging others to treat them with contempt.

## Harassment

Harassment is an act that is unwanted by the recipient. It may be through the provision of items or by unwanted actions from another person but by definition it is the unwanted nature of the action or item that defines the act as harassment. It is for any given individual to determine for themselves what is acceptable to them and what they regard as offensive, although any other individual affected by such conduct can also report the behaviour as harassment.

Harassment can be deemed to be a 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 include suggestive or sexual remarks, racist insults or jokes, verbal abuse or use of foul language and unwelcome attention. The impact of harassment for the individual can be profound. Harassment can lead to the child feeling unhappy, demoralised or undervalued as a person. Harassment is often a constant ongoing type of abuse where the perpetrator causes extreme distress by repeated actions. Swim Wales is committed to preventing and dealing with incidents of harassment in aquatics.

## Grooming

Children can be groomed face to face or online, by a stranger or by someone they know. Groomers can be male or female and could be any age. They will hide their true intentions and may spend months or years gaining a child's trust and in some cases the trust of the child's family to allow them to be left alone with a child. Those who work with children may use similar tactics to gain the trust of the child and their colleagues.

Tactics a groomer may use are:

- pretending to be someone they are not
- offering advice and understanding
- buying gifts
- giving a child attention
- using their professional position or reputation
- taking them on trips, outings and holidays.

Once they have gained a child's trust groomers will exploit that relationship often by isolating the child from their family and friends so the child becomes dependent on them. They may introduce secrets as a way of controlling or sometimes scaring the child not to tell. This can include blackmailing the child or making them feel guilty or ashamed.

Groomers use online social networks to connect with children. They can easily hide their identity in the online world and can spend time learning about children from their online profiles. They may pretend to be a child and chat or become friends with children they are targeting. Groomers do not need to meet children in real life to abuse them and increasingly children are being sexually exploited online after being persuaded to engage in online sexual activity.

## Common Indications of abuse

All individuals involved in sport have a responsibility to be able to recognise and respond to signs and indications of abuse and malpractice.

It is important to acknowledge that the majority of children do not find it easy to disclose their concerns and that some groups in society will find it harder than others, specifically children from ethnic minority groups and children with disabilities. It is known that the majority of referrals to the statutory agencies are from adults who are expressing concerns for a child or children identified by them as a result of the child's behaviour or presentation.

### Abuse is not always easy to identify

Children and young people can be bruised in everyday life by normal activities such as falling off bikes or 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/separation. However, some signs may alert you to the possibility that a child may be being abused.

### Some indications of abuse include:

- Unexplained or concerning injuries such as burns, cuts, or bruises situated in areas of the child's body which are not normally prone to injury through play.
- Physical injury where the explanation given is inconsistent.
- Physical appearance is unkempt.
- The child or young person discloses a concern and describes what may be an abusive act.
- Another person raising a concern about the wellbeing of a child or young person.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour and/or inappropriate sexual awareness.
- A distrust or fear of adults.
- An excessive fear of making mistakes.
- Difficulty making friends, or is stopped from socialising or making friends.
- Shows a tendency to have variations in his or her eating pattern or sudden loss or gain of weight which may possibly indicate an eating disorder.

The presence of one or more of these concerns does not mean abuse is taking place, however there may be need to report a concern.

Increasingly, there is a range of specific areas of concern that children may be being abused, in a variety of environments and communities, which are summarised below:

- **Child sexual exploitation:** the request/demand/ performing of any sexual act of an under 18 year old, in exchange for any type of reward, monetary or otherwise, including a threat not to carry out an action (e.g. sending pictures of the child to others). Larger police services have specific units to deal with these concerns.
- **Faith' or 'belief' abuse:** carried out, often as a result of a belief that it is a necessary act to perform on the child e.g. witchcraft/Kindoki (predominant in central African countries) where a child might be physically harmed by cutting/beating/water treatments, to 'release' the child from spirits.
- **Female genital mutilation:** Female genital mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons The FGM mandatory reporting duty is a legal duty provided for in the FGM Act 2003 (as amended by

the Serious Crime Act 2015). The legislation requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police if they have reason to believe a girl under the age of 18 years has been subject to FGM. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases or in cases where the woman is over 18. In these cases, local safeguarding procedures should be followed.

- **Radicalisation:** there is increasing evidence of children being swayed by others to follow a variety of radical beliefs and communities, often leading to the forced taking, or by their own instigation, of the children leaving the UK to be recruited into terrorist organisations, potentially with extremist behaviour. Further advice can be found at [gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty).
- **Self-harm:** self-inflicted cutting, scratching, injecting, or other types of self-physical harm, including drug misuse (see the guidance on self-harm concerns).
- **Gang/youth violence:** the recruitment of children into organised gangs usually based in a street culture, involving serious violence/drugs and higher level criminality. Further advice can be found at [nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/gangs-criminal-exploitation/](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/gangs-criminal-exploitation/).
- **Cyberbullying:** term used for acts of bullying (even criminality) carried out in a child's virtual world, via text, phone, internet or social networking sites (see Anti-bullying policy).
- **Racist or homophobic abuse:** commonly verbal, and threatening in its use.

This is not an exhaustive list of indications and cannot be seen to provide definitive proof that a child or young person is being abused.

## Definitions of abuse

It is important that all welfare officers are aware of the definitions of abuse, and that they in turn share these definitions with individuals who hold a position of trust in their organisation.

### Who could abuse a child?

- The abuser may be a member of the child's family, a stranger, an acquaintance, or an institution.
- An adult or a child.
- Peer on peer abuse.
- A male or female.
- Anyone.

### Defining abuse

- Any person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.
- The abuser may be a member of the child's family, a stranger, an acquaintance, or an institution.
- The abuser may be an adult or a child; recent reports show that peer abuse is increasing, specifically in the area of bullying.

### Effects of abuse

- Abuse that is allowed to continue can be extremely damaging and can, if not treated appropriately, cause problems for the person into adulthood.
- Present and future relationships can be affected as can the individual's trust in others.
- In some cases, abused children may become involved in drugs, alcohol abuse, criminality, suicide and in extreme cases may even go on to abuse other children.

### Maltreatment of children

All incidents of abuse or neglect are forms of maltreatment. Abuse can be:

- When someone inflicts harm or fails to prevent harm to a child.
- When a child is sexually abused by a person in the family, community or institution, often by someone known to them but could also be by a stranger.
- Committed by an adult or another child.
- Committed by a male or a female.

## Key abbreviations

<b>SWCSP</b>	Swim Wales Safeguarding Policy
<b>BS</b>	British Swimming
<b>CPSU</b>	Child Protection in Sport Unit
<b>DBS</b>	Disclosure and Barring Service
<b>IoS</b>	Institute of Swimming
<b>ISA</b>	Independent Safeguarding Authority
<b>LADO (aka DO)</b>	Local Authority Designated Officer also known as a Designated Officer
<b>LSCB</b>	Local Safeguarding Children Board
<b>MASH</b>	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
<b>NSPCC</b>	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
<b>WSA</b>	Welsh Sports Association

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