



# The ASA Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures



**NSPCC**



## Information sheet and emergency contact details

Please complete the information below as soon as you receive this document, and keep it at the front of Wavepower 2016-19 for reference. Please contact the ASA Child Safeguarding Team if you would like some assistance.

### Welfare Officer

**Name:**

**Tel:**

### National Governing Body (NGB)

The ASA Legal Affairs Department,  
Pavilion 3, SportPark,  
3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough University,  
Leicestershire, LE11 3QF

**Tel:** 01509 640270

**E-mail:** [legal@swimming.org](mailto:legal@swimming.org)

**Website:** [www.swimming.org](http://www.swimming.org)

### County Welfare Officer

**Name:**

**Tel:**

### ASA Child Safeguarding Team

**Keith Oddy:**

Independent Child Protection Officer (ICPO)

**Jenni Dearman:**

National Child Safeguarding Coordinator (NCSC)

At the NGB address above.

**Tel:** 01509 640270

**E-mail:** [jenni.dearman@swimming.org](mailto:jenni.dearman@swimming.org)

### Regional Welfare Officer

**Name:**

**Tel:**

### Children's Services

**Tel:**

### ASA Disclosure and Barring Service

**Samantha Massey:** DBS Coordinator

**Tel:** 01509 618738

**E-mail:** [dbs@swimming.org](mailto:dbs@swimming.org)

### Out Of Hours/Emergency Duty Team

**Tel:**

### Child Power

Leaflets available from  
[jenni.dearman@swimming.org](mailto:jenni.dearman@swimming.org)

**Website and under 16s section:** [www.swimming.org/asa/clubs-and-members/under-16s-advice/](http://www.swimming.org/asa/clubs-and-members/under-16s-advice/)

### Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

**Tel:**

### Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

**Tel:**

### ASA Office of Judicial Administration (OJA)

**Tel:** 0161 2731044

**E-mail:** [kerry.moss@swimming.org](mailto:kerry.moss@swimming.org)

### Police Child Protection Investigation Team

**Tel:**

### Swimline ASA/NSPCC

### Child Protection Helpline

**Tel:** 0808 100 4001

### Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

**Tel:**

### ASA Signposting Help Desk

**E-mail:** [signposting@swimming.org](mailto:signposting@swimming.org)



## 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)

## Other Important Contact Details

**Name:**

**Position:**

**Tel/E-mail:**

**Name:**

**Position:**

**Tel/E-mail:**

**Name:**

**Position:**

**Tel/E-mail:**



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## **Section 1: Introduction to Wavepower**

- Forewords
- Introduction
- The ASA Child Safeguarding Policy
- Key definitions
- Key abbreviations

## Forewords



### Adam Paker

Chief Executive Officer – The ASA

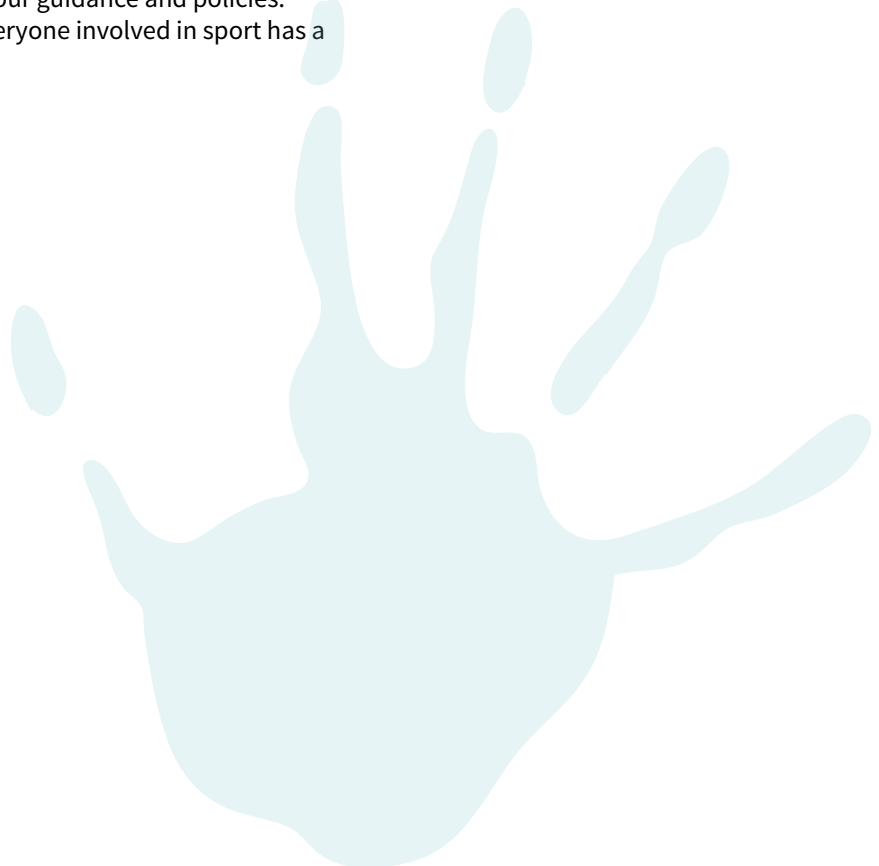
Swimming is a wonderful activity, especially for young people. It allows them the opportunity to have fun with their friends while learning new skills, staying healthy and achieving goals.

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

This updated version of Wavepower once again includes the valuable feedback from young people involved in our sport, via the excellent ASA Youth Forum. It 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. Wavepower 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.





## Anne Tiivas

### Director – NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

Wavepower is an essential resource for everyone who is involved in providing a safe and enjoyable environment for young swimmers, divers, water polo players, synchronised swimmers, and for young volunteers in the sport. It helps everyone to understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard and protect all our children and young people.

This new version of Wavepower takes account of changes in legislation, government guidance and learning from practice in swimming, in other sports and trends in the wider world of safeguarding children.

Child protection has been a constant focus of public attention in the last couple of years due to the high profile cases of abuse in institutions and by public figures. The NSPCC's How Safe are our Children report for 2014-2015 has shown a huge increase in referrals to statutory agencies and to our child and adult helplines. This reflects the rise in awareness of the extent and nature of abuse which our children and young people are exposed to. It is everybody's responsibility to ensure that our children are safe and able to reach their potential in life. Sports people play a key role in contributing to this.

The consistent message from inquiry reports into the abuse of children is that we need to listen more to

children and young people and act on what they tell us. The role of the ASA Youth Forum continues to be really important in this respect. However we also need to ensure that everyone involved in clubs, swimming, all aquatic sports activities and competitions has the knowledge and confidence to be able to identify children who are experiencing difficulty within or outside of the aquatic environment and to respond appropriately. Wavepower is an essential toolkit which contributes to these aims. The ASA also invests in safeguarding training to support safeguards being put in place in practice.

We know that young people are experiencing new challenges in their daily lives. For instance we are aware of the increase in reported mental health issues such as self-harm and eating disorders. Cases involving inappropriate use of technology by adults and young people are also increasing. The ASA has provided new information in this resource to help staff and volunteers to respond appropriately to these concerns. The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit commends the ASA for its work on this new version of Wavepower. It will help to provide confidence to parents and young participants that the ASA continues to demonstrate its commitment to providing safe and enjoyable swimming and aquatic environments.



## Introduction

Wavepower 2016–19 is the new Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures publication which replaces all previous versions.

The ASA has produced Wavepower to assist in safeguarding and protecting all children in aquatics. Wavepower is the ASA Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures publication and as such, must be adopted by all ASA affiliated aquatics clubs and organisations.

Although Wavepower is primarily aimed at ASA affiliated clubs, it can also be utilised by swim schools and other related organisations, events or activities where appropriate. If you are reading this document, but do not consider your organisation to be a club, please apply the guidance to your own particular scenario. The word ‘club’ or ‘organisation’ will be used henceforth as a general term, to refer to any ASA affiliated club, swim school, 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 an ASA affiliated 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 Wavepower is to safeguard all children in line with current child safeguarding legislation and guidance and is for use within any ASA-related organisation where children are present. Wavepower 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, county or national level.

Wavepower 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 concise, straightforward and easy to use. The ASA 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 the person most likely to use the guidance in Wavepower and it is they who will be responsible for holding and maintaining the publication. They will be expected to make Wavepower 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 welfare officer or equivalent will find this publication helpful in guiding them to plan, prioritise and implement the various safeguarding activities that are necessary to protect children within aquatics.

The aim of such a comprehensive publication is to enable everyone in aquatics to play their part 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.

Wavepower is also relevant to our county and regional members and a copy will be made available to all county and regional welfare officers.

This document will be fully updated in 2020, but when significant changes take place either in ASA policy and guidance or through statute or governmental guidance, the welfare officer will be sent additional or replacement pages. It is the responsibility of the welfare officer to keep the publication updated.

The information sheet and emergency contact details, which can be found at the front of Wavepower, contains the contact details for various child protection agencies which can be used either in an emergency or as a matter of course, and should be completed by the welfare officer on receipt of this publication. Please contact the ASA 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 the ASA Signposting Helpdesk if they have a problem or concern and are unsure on whom to ask for help.



## The ASA Child Safeguarding Policy

*The ASA Vision for Swimming in Britain (2013)* states that sport in general is recognised as being beneficial to the nation's health and wellbeing. 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 ASA 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 ASA believes that all children involved in its organisations have the right to stay safe and have fun. Sport develops physical skills, self-esteem and the ability to be a team player, as well as providing an opportunity to achieve individual success.

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

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

### Responsibility to safeguard children

The Children Acts (1989 and 2004) and the publication *Working together to safeguard children (2015)* from the Department for Education are clear that safeguarding children is the responsibility of all, including those who work with children in whatever capacity. It is the organisation's responsibility, through good recruitment practice, to ensure that those who are deemed to be unsuitable to work with children are not allowed to do so in our sport. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is an important, but not sole, part of safe recruitment.

The ASA 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.

The key principles of *Working together to safeguard children (2015)* are:

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

### Safeguarding 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.
- *Working together to safeguard children (2015)* sets out the key roles for individual organisations and key elements of effective local arrangements for safeguarding. It is very important these arrangements are strongly led and promoted at a local level.

### A child-centred approach

Effective safeguarding systems are child-centred. Failings in safeguarding systems are too often the result of losing sight of the needs and views of the children within them, or placing the interests of adults ahead of the needs of children.

Children 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-safeguard-children--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2).

### Key principles

- The ASA is committed to ensuring that all children who take part in ASA activities are able to have fun and participate in an environment that keeps them safe from harm.
- The welfare of the child is, and must always be, paramount.
- It is every child and young person's right to be protected from abuse irrespective of their age, gender, faith or religion, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, background, economic position, disability or level of ability.
- Allegations of abuse or concerns regarding children will be treated seriously and will be responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- The ASA recognises the responsibilities of the statutory agencies and is committed to complying with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures and the statutory guidance *Working together to safeguard children (2015)*.
- Confidentiality will be maintained appropriately at all times and the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration when making decisions on whether or not to share information about them.
- The ASA will support all adults involved in the sport to understand their roles and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and protecting children in the sport.
- The ASA will provide training and education to all adults involved in the sport to be aware of, and understand, what best practice is and how to manage any child welfare concerns they identify or are informed of.
- Parents, young individuals, and all participants involved in the sport can access advice and guidance on child welfare matters from the ASA Child Safeguarding and Legal Affairs Team, the ASA/NSPCC Swimline Child Protection helpline or from the statutory agencies.
- All ASA organisations must adopt Wavepower and ensure that, when they receive new information, the publication is updated as appropriate.



## The ASA commitment

The ASA 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, the ASA is developing closer links with the LSCBs, Local Authority Designated Officers (LADOs – also known as DOs) and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) teams.

The ASA 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, the ASA 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.

## Acknowledgements

The ASA has drawn from the work of a number of organisations during the production of Wavepower 2016–19 and would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their support and their kind permission for the use and adaptation of materials:

ASA Youth Forum

ASA National Volunteer Forum

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

The Football Association

Members of the British Swimming  
World Class Operations

British Swimming Coaches Association

Kidscape

selfharmUK

Dr A Connor, County Welfare Officer

The ASA would also like to thank and acknowledge welfare officers, coaching staff, parents, members, volunteers and all those who work with children and young people in our clubs for their ideas and feedback on the content of Wavepower.



## Key definitions

Key definitions and concepts shown below are taken from *Working together to safeguard children (2015)*. This is a guide to inter-agency collaboration to safeguard and promote the welfare of children produced by the Department for Education.

Abuse	For definitions of the different types of abuse and some common indicators, please see pp. 30–33.
Child	<p>A ‘child’ is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. ‘Children’ means children and young people throughout.</p> <p>The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, in prison or a young offenders’ institution, does not change his, or her, status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004.</p>
Child protection	<p>Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm as a result of maltreatment.</p> <p>Effective child protection is essential as part of the wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. However, all agencies and individuals should be proactive in safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children so that the need for action to protect children from harm is reduced.</p>
Children’s Services	This may also be known as Social Services or Children’s Social Care Team (the name may vary around the country).
Key concept: Who is responsible for safeguarding?	<i>Working together to safeguard children (2015)</i> states that Local Authorities have overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in the area. Whilst local authorities play a lead role, safeguarding children and protecting them from harm is everyone’s responsibility. Anyone who comes into contact with children or families has a role to play.
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team	Usually a secure co-located information hub of Children’s Services, Police, Health, Probation, Education, Mental Health and other agencies who enable secure information to be shared between agencies to determine best outcomes, following any referral of concerns about a child.
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	<p>For the purposes of this guidance this is defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting children from maltreatment.</li> <li>• Preventing impairment of children’s health or development.</li> <li>• Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.</li> <li>• Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.</li> </ul>



## Key abbreviations

ASA	Amateur Swimming Association
BS	British Swimming
CPSU	Child Protection in Sport Unit
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
ICPO	ASA Independent Child Protection Officer
IoS	Institute of Swimming
ISA	Independent Safeguarding Authority
LAD	ASA Legal Affairs Department
LADO (aka DO)	Local Authority Designated Officer (England only) also known as a Designated Officer
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
NCSC	ASA National Child Safeguarding Coordinator
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children





## 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



## Section 2: Toolbox

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

- Using the toolbox
- Duty of care
- Reacting to, recording and reporting concerns
- Definitions of abuse
- Indications of abuse
- Confidentiality and information sharing
- Whistleblowing

## Using the toolbox

This section of Wavepower is designed to assist ASA 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 the welfare officer, you are the designated person who will help guide 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 organisation will need to adopt the policies and procedures in Wavepower if they do not currently have them in place.

Section 2 has been divided into subsections so that relevant information can be obtained easily, with cross references to other sections where appropriate. 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 ASA 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 Wavepower can be obtained from the welfare officer and is available to download from the ASA website, [www.swimming.org/asa](http://www.swimming.org/asa). Some organisations may also wish to put the full document on their own website.

If the organisation requires any assistance or advice, they can contact the ASA Child Safeguarding Team, the ASA Legal Affairs Department (LAD) or their county or 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 (2009 – updated in 2014) 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. The ASA 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 Wavepower has been designed to assist all ASA 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 ASA organisations that have members under the age of 18 must adopt the ASA child protection procedures as set down in the ASA Model Club Constitution within points 2.3.2 and 2.3.3. Wavepower sets out the principles of the ASA child protection procedures and organisations must ensure that these principles and practices are known and followed by everyone to safeguard children.

All ASA organisations must act upon the guidance in Wavepower. The welfare officer is the lead person in an organisation from whom advice and guidance can be sought in safeguarding matters.

### Advice

Anyone involved in the sport can contact the ASA Child Safeguarding Team or the ASA Legal Affairs Department 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, Wavepower 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:

- Must adopt Wavepower 2016–19 in full.
- Should promote to all members that a safe environment is paramount.
- Should promote Wavepower and make it available 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. 36, and ensure that they promote an environment where legitimate concerns can be raised without fear of recrimination or victimisation.
- Must designate a person in the organisation who is responsible to ensure all appropriate DBS checks are completed.
- Must provide an open door environment.
- Must ensure that they are following the most up-to-date CPSU Duty of Care document: [www.thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2013/duty-of-care](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk/resource-library/2013/duty-of-care).
- Should promote and follow good practice in terms of recruitment of staff and volunteers:
  - Follow the ASA Safe Recruitment Policy for staff that work with children.
  - Appoint and train one or more welfare officer(s) in line with Wavepower recommendations.
  - Ensure staff and volunteers who have access to children at the organisation are DBS checked in accordance with ASA policy.



- Ensure individuals have training as required for the role undertaken.
- Ensure all relevant individuals who work directly with children attend an approved safeguarding children in sport course.
- Must have a Code of Conduct for all teachers, coaches, poolside helpers, members and parents (templates are provided on pp. 52–55) and must follow the ASA Code of Ethics.
- Must ensure equal opportunities for all.
- Adopt ASA 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.
  - 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 should ensure that the ASA Equality and Diversity Policy on p. 58 is adopted and adhered to appropriately.
  - The organisation should adopt, publicise and follow the ASA Anti-bullying Policy on p. 59.
  - The organisation should follow ASA guidance on supervising children within the pool and changing room, and at events and competitions (see the ASA Changing Room Policy on p. 65).
  - The organisation should adopt the guidance on the use of social networking on p. 72.
- 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 ASA's guidance on the supervision of members when away from the organisation on p. 84 and also the *CPSU Safe sport events, activities and competitions (2013)* document
- 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 ASA Missing Child Policy on p. 82.
- The organisation should adopt the ASA Late Collection of Children Policy on p. 81.
- Ensure that the ASA Photography Guidance (p. 76) and guidance on child abuse images/ indecent images of children (p. 67), use of electronic communication (p. 70), and use of social networking (p. 72) 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 the ASA Judicial Rules and Regulations.
  - The organisation must keep a written record of every concern or allegation of poor practice or child welfare related incidents and accidents, together with full details of the action taken. These records must be kept in a secure manner and copies should be sent to the ASA Child Safeguarding Team as appropriate. See the guidance on reacting, recording and reporting on pp. 23–29 for more information.
  - Offer support to any individual who raises a concern or allegation.
  - Use the services of the ASA Child Safeguarding Team to advise, guide and take direct action as required.
  - Know how to contact the statutory agencies.



## Reacting to, recording and reporting concerns

The ASA is committed to ensuring that any child who attends an ASA organisation, event or activity will be safeguarded from harm.

To make this possible, the ASA 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 the ASA 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 ASA organisations has minimised, and will continue to minimise, the opportunity for acts of child abuse or harm to children to take place.

The ASA 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 ASA organisation.

The ASA has therefore:

- Created the following concise guidance of action to take for any person involved in aquatics who may have a concern, observe a concern or have concerns raised to them about a child's wellbeing.
- Developed a child safeguarding management team from whom advice and guidance can be sought, and who will take the required actions and decisions in matters regarding child safeguarding. This team consists of:
  1. The ASA Legal Affairs Department (LAD).
  2. The ASA Independent Child Protection Officer (ICPO).
  3. The ASA National Child Safeguarding Coordinator (NCSC).

Each of these departments or individuals is assisted locally by the welfare officer, or the regional or county 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 (see Definitions of Abuse on p. 30).
- 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 made about a parent, carer or someone not involved with the sport.
- 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 the ASA 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 the ASA Child Safeguarding Team.
- Contact the parents of the child but only if they are **not** implicated in the concern.



## How should you respond appropriately? **Leading questions**

The ASA Child Safeguarding Team have developed three stages of action: React, Record and Report.

- Stage 1: **React** 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.

### Stage 1 – React

If a concern in respect of a child safeguarding issue is disclosed to you, you should:

- Always stay calm and listen patiently.
- Never show that you are upset or disgusted or that you disbelieve what you are hearing.

#### 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.

#### 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 on p. 25, or with the use of the ASA referral form (pp. 108–110).
- Ensure they understand the need for confidentiality.

A question that is considered to be a 'leading question' is one which may prompt the respondent to answer in a particular way. Leading questions often result in false or distorted information. A leading question also creates an opportunity for bias as the question will be suggestive of what answer should be given. Children are particularly susceptible to leading questions.

A leading question might sound similar to:

- "This has happened before, hasn't it?"
- "Who else is involved?"
- "Did this take place at the club?"

Instead, questions should be asked in an objective way to encourage a more accurate response:

- "Has this happened before?"
- "Is anyone else involved?"
- "Where did this take place?"

#### The need to share information vs. the need for confidentiality:

- Disclose what you have been told only to those who 'need to know'.
- Maintain confidentiality at all times and ensure those you need to share the information with understand why confidentiality is required.
- If the parents are not implicated in the concern, ensure they are made aware at the earliest opportunity and ensure they are advised on the basis of the above information.
- Consider which method of communication is best in respect of each situation. Some forms of communication are better than others from a confidentiality perspective (e.g. private meetings are more appropriate than phone calls in open areas or the use of group emails.)
- Be mindful of your environment (e.g. who else is around you? Is it possible that someone may overhear what you are saying?).
- Follow guidance on whom to share with in an appropriate and proper manner.

#### Never

- Confront the alleged abuser.
- Promise to keep a secret.
- Take any action yourself other than to share the information appropriately.
- Act alone.



## Stage 2 – Record

Your records may be passed to the LADO, the police, Children’s Services or MASH team and therefore it is important that all information is recorded as soon as possible and is factual. If you cannot remember a particular detail, leave it out or state that you are summarising what you understand was said or done.

### Referral Form

The ASA has a referral form template for you to use to record any information that is disclosed to you. This can be found on pp. 108–110 and we recommend that you keep copies of it in an easily accessible place. If you do not have a form to hand when needed, you are permitted to create your own report. However, the following information will need to be included. 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.

- Sign and date your report and give a phone number at which you can be contacted.

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 form or book

Written details of all incidents and accidents, together with details of any treatment given or actions taken, must be kept in the incident book. This differs from the confidential records of child safeguarding matters that must be kept by welfare officers.

## 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.

Inform the ASA Child Safeguarding Team of your actions by submission of the ASA Referral Form (pp. 108–110) as soon as possible.

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 the ASA Child Safeguarding Team with details of the concern at the earliest possible opportunity.

The ASA 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.



## Concern for an ASA member who is your responsibility

An ASA 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 county or regional welfare officer for guidance.

### Referrals

- **At a county or regional event** refer safeguarding concerns to the county or regional welfare officer or, if they are not available, the Meet Manager.
- **At national level competitions** e.g. School Games or the ASA Youth Championships, contact the welfare officer designated for that event, who will refer the matter to the ASA ICPO.
- **Swimline:** Any person involved in aquatics can refer a matter directly to Swimline by calling their number. The person calling needs to be prepared to leave a contact number at which they can be called that day or the following day by either the ASA Child Safeguarding Team or a Swimliner.
- **The ASA Child Safeguarding Team:** The welfare officer, a member of staff or any parent or member of the ASA can refer a concern to the ICPO or the NCSC.

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 the ASA, the appropriate welfare officer will take action and follow the policy and procedures in this document.

When a concern is referred to the ASA, the ASA Child Safeguarding Team will:

- Note the concern for information only.
- Advise the organisation of any further action to take.
- Deal with the matter directly, keeping the welfare officer informed and involved where possible.

- Refer the matter to Children's Services, the MASH team or the Police Child Protection Investigation Team.
- Refer the matter to the LADO.
- Refer the matter to the ASA Judicial Commissioner.
- Refer the matter to the county or regional welfare officer who will be advised on action to take.
- Refer the matter to Swimline for action.

You may not necessarily be informed of the outcome of the matter. This is to maintain confidentiality and is in no way a comment on your action. In other circumstances, where it is in the child's interest to remain at the organisation during a police or Children's Services' investigation, the organisation may be requested for additional support to enable this to happen. The ICPO will be available to advise and assist as required.

### Temporary or specified-term suspension

Temporary or specified-term suspensions are made under the ASA Child Protection Regulations 241 et al. If an individual is considered unsuitable to work with or have unsupervised access to children, **or who may pose a risk of harm to children** within aquatics, the ASA Chief Executive Officer may impose a temporary or specified-term suspension. This action will usually be taken following a recommendation by a statutory authority to the ASA Child Safeguarding Team or the ASA Legal Affairs Department.

The ASA Child Protection Regulations can be viewed in full in the ASA Handbook.

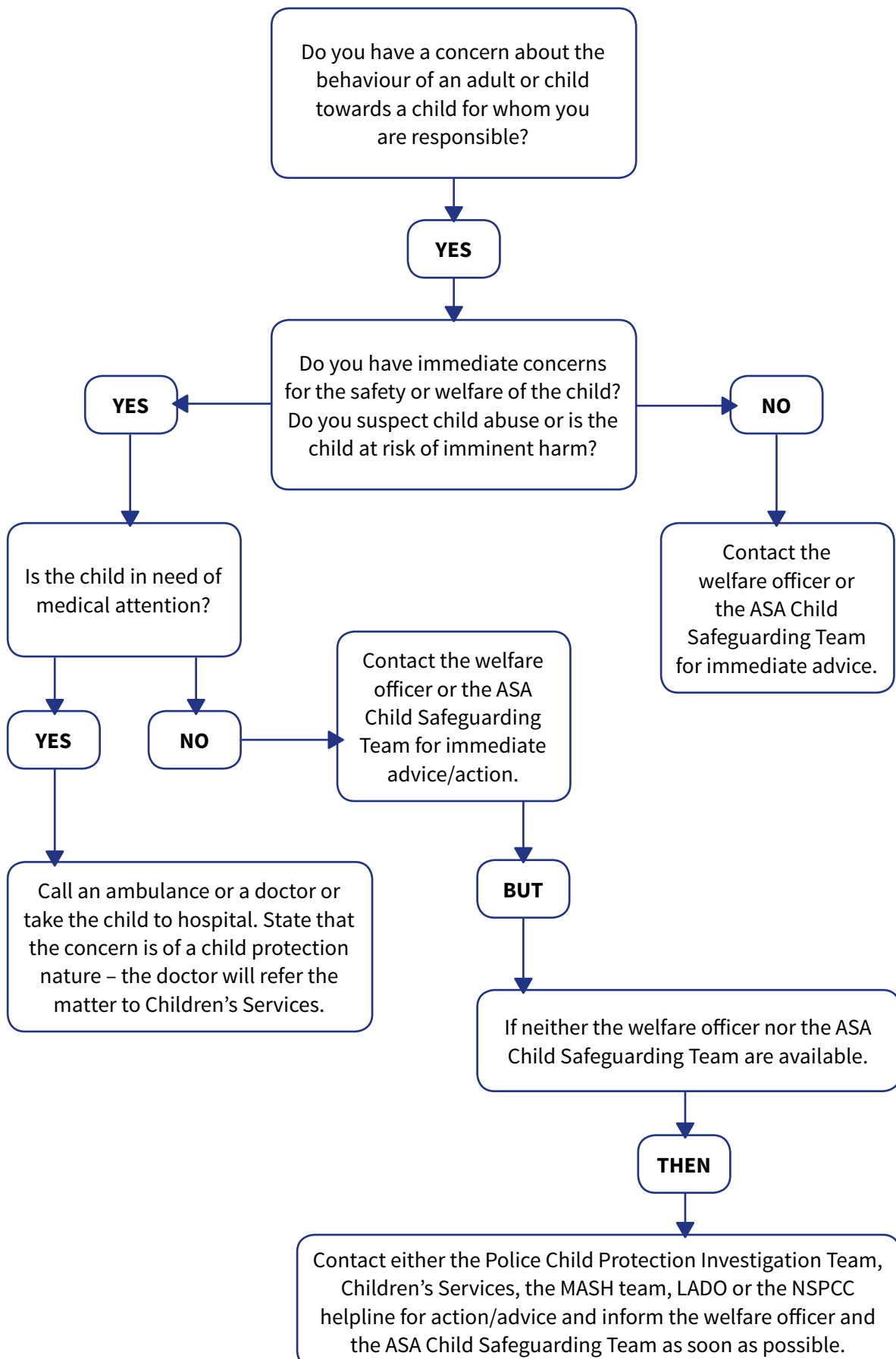
The ASA holds a record of each concern raised to them.

It may be significant if concerns have been raised previously regarding the same individual.

**The ASA Child Safeguarding Team must always be informed of an incident or concern, regardless of the situation.**



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



## Concern for an ASA member who is not your responsibility, or for a child who is not an ASA member

You may encounter a child protection incident that involves a child who is not a member of your organisation. This could include a child who is still a member of the ASA but who attends a different organisation or who has attended an event where many other ASA organisations are present. Alternatively, the child could be a member of the public who is using the same pool, but is unconnected to an ASA activity or organisation. You still have a responsibility to safeguard this child from harm, wherever possible.

A concern could involve abuse, failure to safeguard, poor parenting or possibly an inappropriate act by a member of the public.

If the child is potentially or actually considered to be at risk of harm, you should refer the concern directly to Children's Services, the MASH team or the Police Child Protection Investigation Team and inform the welfare officer of the action taken. Ensure you take the name and contact details of the person you have spoken to and relay that information to the ASA Legal Affairs Department or to the ASA Child Safeguarding Team and inform the welfare officer of the action you have taken.

### If you are concerned about:

#### A child in a school swimming programme:

You must inform the designated teacher, who will follow the Local Authority Referral Procedures.

#### A child in a Local Authority swim programme:

You must inform the Sports Development Officer or nominated person, who will follow the Local Authority Procedures.

#### The behaviour of a parent or child who is a member of the public:

Report the concern directly to the Pool/Facility Manager.

You can call the ASA Child Safeguarding Team at any time to request advice if you are unsure how to proceed or who to report your concern to.

It is likely that, for reasons of confidentiality, while Children's Services, the MASH team and/or the police will look at the issues you have raised, in most cases they will not report back to you on any action taken.

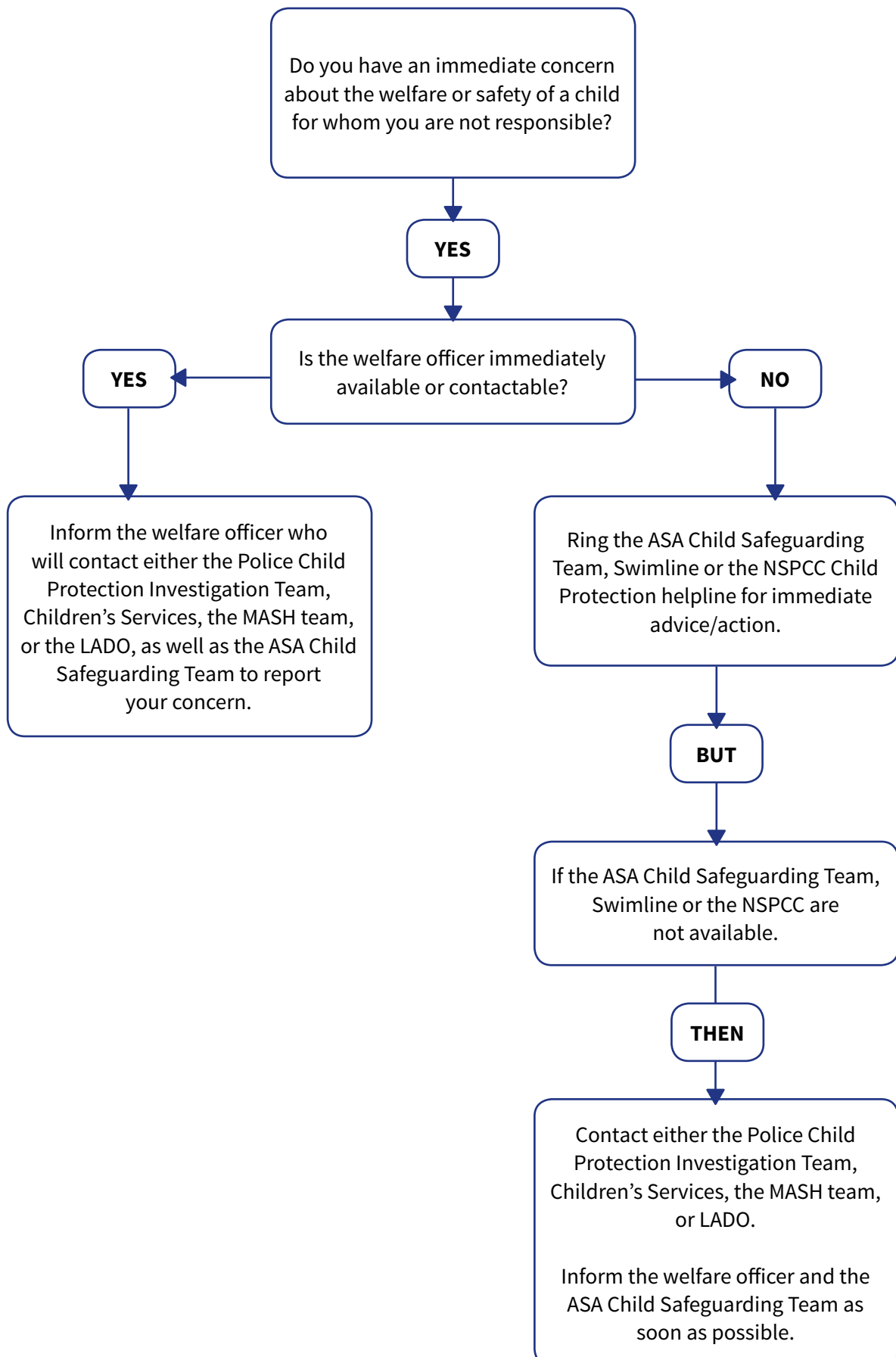
Make a factual record of events using the ASA Referral Form or by writing a report following our guidance at Stage 2 – Recording a concern (p. 25).

Forward a copy of the completed form or report, including any action taken or additional information, to the ASA Child Safeguarding Team who will take appropriate action.

In cases where Children's Services become involved, it is likely they will require no further action by the ASA or the organisation.



If you have a concern about a child who is not your responsibility, please follow the actions below:



## 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.

### 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.

## Types of abuse

### Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

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 and therefore leads 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.



## 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 without consent, or serious sexual assault; intentionally penetrating the vagina or anus of another person with a part of the body or anything else, without consent) or non-penetrative acts (e.g. intentionally touching another person sexually 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.

## 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.

The 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 see pp. 62–64).

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.

Bullying can occur between:

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

The ASA Anti-bullying Policy can be found on pp. 59–61.

## 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. The ASA is committed to preventing and dealing with incidents of harassment in aquatics.



## 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.

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:** the mutilation of a child through a belief the harm is appropriate.
- **Forced marriage:** more common within Asian cultures, often involving children, subsequently being forced into non-consensual acts.
- **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.
- **Self-harm:** self-inflicted cutting, scratching, injecting, or other types of self-physical harm, including drug misuse (see the guidance on self-harm concerns on pp. 62–64).
- **Gang/youth violence:** the recruitment of children into organised gangs usually based in a street culture, involving serious violence/drugs and higher level criminality.
- **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 the ASA Anti-bullying policy pp. 59–61).
- **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.



## Confidentiality and information sharing

The government initiative, Every Child Matters (2003), states that information sharing is important in order to:

- Enable early intervention to help children, young people and families who need additional services to achieve positive outcomes, thus reducing inequalities between disadvantaged children and others.
- Safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

The ASA recognises and supports that issues involving child safeguarding must be kept confidential. All paperwork relating to a concern regarding a child must be kept in a safe and secure manner. 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. It is for this reason the ASA policy states that no person being made aware of a child safeguarding concern should promise to keep such information secret.

Research and experience has demonstrated that to keep children safe from harm, it is essential that all who work with children maximise the potential for safe partnership with parent(s) and share relevant information appropriately.

Often, it is only when information from a number of sources has been shared, collated and analysed, that it becomes clear a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.

The key factor in deciding whether or not to disclose confidential information is 'proportionality', i.e. is the proposed disclosure a proportionate response to the need to protect a child's welfare? The amount of confidential information disclosed and the number of people to whom it is disclosed should be no more than is necessary in protecting the health and wellbeing of any child.

The approach to confidential information should be the same whether any proposed disclosure is internal to the organisation, or with an external statutory agency, e.g. to the police.

The government document *Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers (2015)* outlines seven golden rules for information sharing:

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act 1998 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
4. Share with informed consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be certain of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and wellbeing: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and wellbeing of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

The ASA is committed to ensuring that no child is disadvantaged or placed at risk through a failure to share information. If you are unsure on whether or not to share information, advice can be sought from the ASA Child Safeguarding Team and/or the ASA Legal Affairs Department, if to do so will not cause undue delay, or immediately with the police or Children's Services for them to make a decision on any action required.



## **The media and requests for an interview or comment**

In some high profile cases, the media may show an interest and seek information from employees, volunteers, parents or even the children themselves. It is important to make no comment and to refer the media to the ASA Communications Team.

Alternatively, individual members can be advised appropriately by the Communications Team.

Further information can be obtained by contacting [communications@swimming.org](mailto:communications@swimming.org).



## Whistleblowing

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.

The ASA is committed to developing a culture that is safe and encourages all those involved in aquatics to raise concerns of poor and/or unacceptable practice, breaches in safeguarding and/or incidents of abuse.

Children are vulnerable to abuse and all adults who work in sports organisations, whether paid or unpaid, member or non-member, must look to safeguard their welfare. The ASA believes it is necessary to develop a culture in all organisations and counties, regionally and nationally, where concerned individuals can raise the alarm about unacceptable practice and misconduct in a safe and supportive environment.

### 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, the ASA Child Safeguarding Team or the statutory agencies.

The ASA 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, the ASA Child Safeguarding Team and/or the statutory agencies will take action as deemed appropriate.

### Reasons for whistleblowing

Every member, member's parent(s), employee and volunteer in the ASA has a responsibility to raise concerns about potential poor practice and abuse/unacceptable behaviour in order to:

- Prevent the problem increasing.
- Protect or reduce the risk to others.
- Prevent becoming a party to the concern by lack of appropriate action.

### Why is it difficult to whistleblow?

You may feel worried that:

- You will be starting a chain of events you have no control over.
- To do so will be disruptive to the organisation, the young person/s and/or yourself.
- You may have gotten it wrong and the concern will prove to be unfounded.
- You will not be listened to or believed.

At each stage, concerns are managed by professionals, with a view to independently assess the information, and act in the best interests of any children that may be involved. Concerns are taken seriously, and if proved unfounded, any action taken is designed not to disrupt children and families unnecessarily. Reporting concerns will not start a process that cannot be halted, if unfounded.

The ASA assures all those involved in aquatics that they will be treated fairly and all concerns will be properly considered.

If you act in good faith in reporting a concern, even if the suspicion is unfounded, you will be supported and no action will be taken against you.

However, if it is proven the concern has been raised maliciously to cause harm to others, you may be liable to action under the ASA complaints and disciplinary processes.



## Referring the concern

- If you are a member of an ASA organisation, or the parent of a member, and your concern is regarding another member or the parent of a member, you must refer the matter to the welfare officer, the county or regional welfare officer, the ASA Child Safeguarding Team or the statutory agencies.
- If you receive a concern from a third party regarding a member of an ASA organisation, or the parent of a member, you should try to obtain the following information:
  - Their name, address and contact details.
  - The names of all the individuals involved.
  - If they have evidence of the alleged concern or if not what it is that leads them to believe that abuse/poor practice is happening.
  - How they became aware of the concern.

The information should then be referred to the welfare officer, or the county or regional welfare officer if appropriate, the ASA Child Safeguarding Team or the statutory agencies who will consider what action to take.

- If you are an employee rather than a member or officer of the organisation, you should report the concern to your line manager or you can contact Public Concern at Work on 0203 117 2520 or via [whistle@pcaw.org.uk](mailto:whistle@pcaw.org.uk).

### When referring the concern, do not:

- Try to deal with the concern yourself.
- Inform the person about whom the concern has been raised.
- Inform any other members or employees of the concern other than those outlined above.
- Commence your own investigation.
- Annotate or remove evidence received.
- Delay in reporting the concerns.

### Also, do not assume that:

- “All is well or it would have been noted earlier.”
- “It does not matter” or “no harm will arise.”
- “I should ignore it as it’s not my responsibility.”

## What happens when you have raised a concern in good faith?

- The concern you raise will be treated in confidence and will be shared only on a need-to-know basis.
- You will be given updates on how the enquiry is progressing if it is possible to do so.
- Your welfare officer, the county or regional welfare officer and the ASA have a responsibility to protect you from harassment of any kind that results from your disclosure.
- If the matter is proven/found on the balance of probabilities to be so then appropriate action will be taken against the individual(s) concerned.
- If the matter is unproven/unfounded on the balance of probabilities to not have occurred, providing you raised the concern in good faith, no action will be taken against you.
- Malicious allegations will be considered as a disciplinary offence.

## Feedback

Every effort will be made to provide feedback to you on the outcome and action taken on the matter you referred, but how much detail can be reported back to you will vary according to the nature and result of the investigation. Wherever possible, the ASA will ensure you have notice while the matter is ongoing and when it has been concluded.







## Section 2: Toolbox

### Subsection 2.2: Training and Recruitment

- ASA Safe Recruitment Policy
- The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- Roles and their DBS requirements
- Safeguarding and protecting children: workshops and courses
- The role of the welfare officer

## ASA Safe Recruitment Policy

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

### Guidelines on the recruitment and selection of paid staff and volunteers working with children

These best practice guidelines were developed by The Football Association. We have amended these guidelines so that they relate to the ASA to provide organisations with guidance and advice on the recruitment of volunteers and paid staff.

In the recruitment of paid staff and volunteers, the wellbeing of all children should be paramount. The ASA is committed to providing a safe environment for children in our organisations and the requirements of the recruitment process outlined below will assist organisations to ensure best practice is implemented to protect children whenever a volunteer is appointed.

Whilst the ASA acknowledges that the vast majority of people applying to work with children in our organisations are doing so with the best of intentions, our experience has shown that those less suitable will also apply and it is only through sound recruitment practice that they can be screened out.

This guidance is aimed at assisting those who are recruiting for individuals who would work with children but can be used for all recruitment purposes, including for individuals who would work with adults who are deemed vulnerable.

#### 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. For examples of role profiles, see the ASA Volunteering website: [www.swimming.org/volunteering/volunteer-resources](http://www.swimming.org/volunteering/volunteer-resources).

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 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.

In assessing the applicant's suitability you should:

- Consider their relevant qualifications and experience.
- Ascertain if they have previously undertaken a role in either an ASA 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 current employer is not an ASA 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.

## The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

The Disclosure and Barring Service (previously known as the Criminal Records Bureau – CRB) enables ASA organisations to make more informed recruitment decisions for vacant positions. Any individual who wishes to work with children or adults at risk are required to undertake a Barred List check and/or Enhanced DBS Disclosure, if appropriate.

### Types of Criminal Record Check

There are three different levels of criminal record checks; Standard Disclosure, Enhanced Disclosure only and Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List check.

As an ASA 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.

### 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.

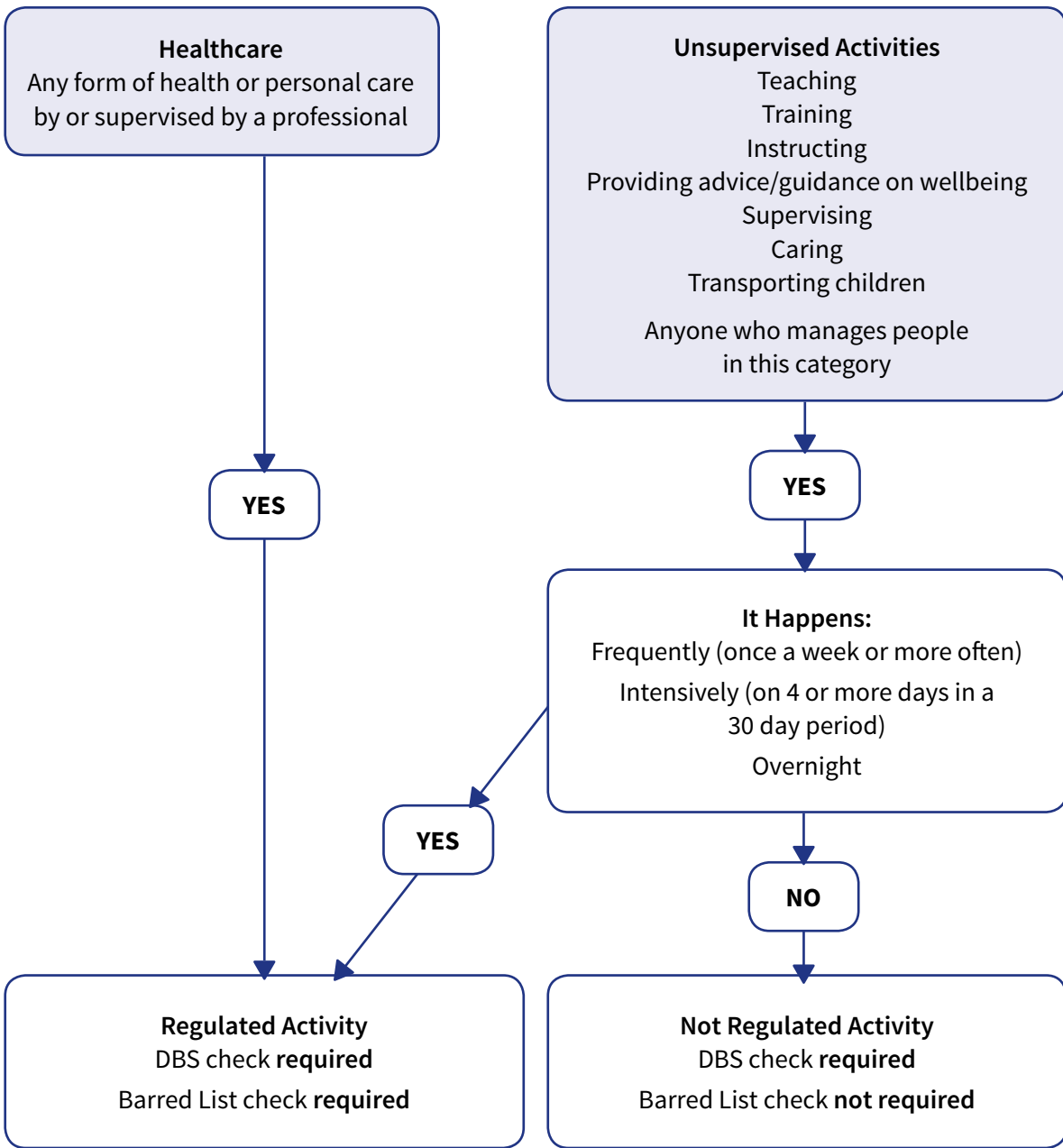
It is **against the law** to request this kind of check for an individual who is not eligible (i.e. who will not be undertaking a 'regulated activity').

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.

The DBS application process via the ASA will not allow you to request an Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List check for a role that is not considered to involve regulated activity. However, you can use the chart below to help you understand what kinds of activities are considered to be regulated activities.





## 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.
- An individual in charge of administrating and managing the organisation's website **would not** require an Enhanced Disclosure only check for that particular role.

In each case, you are assessing whether or not the individual's role involves regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of a child or children. If the individual's main role does not involve any of these activities, then you would need to consider any supplementary roles they may undertake. 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.

To assist you with the above, the ASA has produced a list of relevant roles and their associated DBS requirements to help you decide if you need to request an Enhanced Disclosure only, a Barred List check, or neither. You will find this list under 'Roles and their DBS requirements' on p. 45.



## The DBS process

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. 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, you will find information on the ASA website at [www.swimming.org/asa/clubs-and-members/making-a-dbs-check](http://www.swimming.org/asa/clubs-and-members/making-a-dbs-check).

You can also contact Samantha Massey, DBS Coordinator for the ASA on 01509 618738 or [dbs@swimming.org](mailto:dbs@swimming.org) with any questions you may have.

As soon as an applicant has been DBS cleared, you will receive the clearance letter from the ASA to confirm this.

## 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.

All new staff/volunteers must:

- Have a contract, sign up to and abide by:
  - The ASA Terms of Employment and/or the ASA Code of Conduct.
  - Equality and Diversity Policy.
  - Wavepower 2016–19.
- Be registered as members of the organisation and the ASA.

## Post-recruitment

- The recruit should be formally made aware of, and be asked to sign up to Wavepower. All new coaches, teachers and poolside helpers should be given a copy of Section 4 of Wavepower (pp. 93–104) which can be downloaded from [www.swimming.org](http://www.swimming.org).
- The expectations, role and responsibilities of the post should be clarified and put in writing to the new recruit.
- If they have not yet attended an ASA Child Safeguarding course or have not attended one in the last three years (they will have an attendance certificate to show when they last attended) then the club should ensure they attend a relevant course within six months of appointment.
- Any other training needs should be established and a plan made to meet those needs within an appropriate timescale.
- It is suggested that a period of mentoring, supervision and observation or monitoring should be put into place to support the new recruit.



## Roles and their DBS requirements

Role	DBS Requirement	
	Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List Check	Enhanced Disclosure Only
Coach	Yes	No
Assistant Coach	Yes	No
Teacher	Yes	No
Assistant Teacher	Yes	No
Club Welfare Officer	Yes	No
County Welfare Officer	Yes	No
Regional Welfare Officer	Yes	No
Chaperone	Yes	No
Team Manager	Yes	No
Medical Staff (e.g. Doctor or Nurse)	Yes	No
Sport Psychologist	Yes	No
Tutor to children under 18 years of age	Yes	No
Host family/parent/carer Individuals who have responsibility for a child other than their own. If this is a private arrangement between parents, a DBS check would not be required.	Yes	No
Physiotherapist (including Sports Masseur)	Yes	No
Nutritionist	Yes	No
Pool Helper Supervised role manually assisting and supporting children in the water who are learning to swim or children with a disability.	No	Yes
Poolside Helper Individuals not training to be or acting as a coach or teacher. Supervised poolside role acting as a helper to the qualified coaching and teaching staff in a training or supervisory capacity.	No	Yes
Poolside Assistant General assistant, securing lane ropes, handing out floats, tidying up after sessions.	No	No
Membership Secretary	No	No
Chairperson	No	No
Club Secretary	No	No
Website Officer/Administrator	No	No
Photographer or filming children	No	No

Please note this list may be subject to change in accordance with government legislation or further guidance.

Please contact the DBS Coordinator if you are unsure whether a role within your organisation would require either an Enhanced Disclosure only check or an Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List check at [dbs@swimming.org](mailto:dbs@swimming.org).



## Safeguarding and protecting children: workshops and courses

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.

### Basic awareness or introductory training

This level of training is usually designed for staff or volunteers who have infrequent contact with children and young people. They will usually cover the following points:

- Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility.
- Categories, signs and symptoms of abuse.
- What to do if there are concerns about a child and how to respond.
- How to create a safe environment for young people.
- Signposting for further information and support.

Basic awareness or introductory training could be delivered in a short face-to-face training format, e-learning format or in other formats, such as websites, leaflets, webinars, apps or podcasts.

Individuals who are not in regular contact with children or young people and who are not required by the ASA to have attended child safeguarding training for their role may still access this type of training if they choose to do so. It is not mandatory, but the ASA is aware that some individuals do wish to have an overview or a basic understanding of child safeguarding. There are many organisations that offer such courses but the ASA would advise undertaking the training being offered by the NSPCC or the LSCB as these courses have the advantage of being quality assured.

All individuals who are required to have a DBS check for their role in an ASA organisation must complete approved child safeguarding training within a reasonable timescale of taking up the position. Individuals who require a DBS check are those involved with our sport who have regular responsibility for children and young people. Please see 'The Disclosure and Barring Service' on p. 41 for more in-depth advice about who would require a DBS check.

### Advanced training

Child safeguarding training for those with regular responsibility for children and young people will cover:

- All the areas of a basic awareness or introductory child safeguarding course.
- The practical implications of the issues highlighted within a sports context.
- The legislative context of child safeguarding.
- Skill development in relation to identifying, responding to and reporting child safeguarding concerns.
- Signposting to further information.

This training should be delivered in a face-to-face format the first time an individual attends the training, and typically takes three hours or more to complete. Face-to-face training ensures a full discussion around this sensitive area and enables questions to be asked in a safe environment facilitated by a qualified child safeguarding tutor. Trainees also have the opportunity to discuss specific safeguarding issues during this course. Following the face-to-face training, refresher training can be taken online if the training provider has made this available.

### ASA/Sports Coach UK Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop

The ASA follows the recommendations made by the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU). The recommended training is the ASA/Sports Coach UK Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop, sometimes referred to as S&PC1. This course uses swimming-specific examples and refers to Wavepower throughout. We would encourage everyone to attend this particular course because of the additional information it provides relating to our sport. Also, Sports Coach UK now offer an online refresher course for those who have completed the initial Safeguarding and Protecting Children (S&PC1) training.

Sports Coach UK also run a generic Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop, although this course is usually delivered as part of county Sport Partnership's education programmes. Further information on the generic course can be found on the scUK website: [www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org).



### Time to Listen

Time to Listen training is only available for those undertaking the role of welfare officer. Please see p. 48 for more information.

### 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 the ASA.

Trainees will have to repeat the course every three years in a face-to-face environment unless the LSCB or NHS training provider offers refresher training online. Trainees can find out this information by contacting their course tutor, training provider or by checking the relevant LSCB or NHS training brochure.

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 the ASA.

### Coaches, teachers and swim21

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 the ASA swim21 accreditation scheme.

Following the guidance in the government document *Working together to safeguard children (2015)*, child safeguarding training should be refreshed every three years.

Further details and information on courses running in your area can be obtained from the Institute of Swimming at [www.swimming.org/ios](http://www.swimming.org/ios).



## The role of the welfare officer

### The role of the welfare officer for ASA organisations

#### Core tasks:

- To assist the club in implementing Wavepower.
- 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 Wavepower.
- 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 Wavepower 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 and the ASA Child Safeguarding Team.
- To ensure that codes of conduct are in place for club staff, volunteers, coaches, competitors and parents.
- To sit on 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.

#### 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.

The ASA has a 'Good Club Guide for a Welfare Officer (2015)' which can be accessed through the ASA website [www.swimming.org/volunteering](http://www.swimming.org/volunteering). This guide was written by welfare officers to assist others who take on the role. It contains details of:

- The role and duties of the welfare officer.
- The purpose of the ASA Child Safeguarding Policy.
- Tips for the welfare officer in setting up their role once appointed.
- Education and training available to the club on safeguarding children.
- Transferring the role to a new welfare officer.

The ASA would recommend that you print this guide and place it in the Wavepower folder for future reference.

#### Training required:

- The NSPCC CPSU 'Time to Listen' child safeguarding training is required for welfare officers. Please refer to [www.swimming.org/volunteering/volunteer-training-development/](http://www.swimming.org/volunteering/volunteer-training-development/) for details of courses running in your area.
- The scUK Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop (S&PC1) 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-expert-training/child-protection-sport-online-course/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-you-can-do/get-expert-training/child-protection-sport-online-course/).
- Educare is a distance-learning training provider, specialising in delivering the essential information on any subject, with over two million participants. They have a wide range of online child protection training resources written by the NSPCC on subjects such as bullying, child neglect and child abuse. Further details on Educare courses can be found at [www.educare.co.uk](http://www.educare.co.uk).



## The role of the county welfare officer

The county welfare officer, appointed by the county committee, will be required to offer support to club welfare officers as and when required.

### Core tasks:

- To assist the county in implementing Wavepower.
- To assist the county to put plans in place for child safeguarding.
- To be the first point of contact for county 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 Wavepower.
- To ensure that all relevant county 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 Wavepower 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 and the ASA Child Safeguarding Team.
- To ensure that codes of conduct are in place.
- To sit on the county 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 maintain an up-to-date list of welfare officers in the county.
- To be available to assist clubs in your county as requested by the ASA Child Safeguarding Team or directly by the welfare officer as appropriate to the county welfare officer's experience.

## The role of the regional welfare officer

The regional welfare officer, appointed by the relevant ASA region, will be required to offer support to county and club welfare officers as and when required. Please note that not every ASA region will have a designated welfare officer role.

### Core tasks:

- To assist the club/county welfare officers in implementing Wavepower.
- To assist the club/county to put plans in place for child safeguarding.
- To maintain contact with club and county 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 Wavepower procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed by clubs and Counties.
- To be aware of, and have a note of contact details of, the LSCB, the police, the LADO, the MASH team and the ASA 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 both county and 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 for both roles:

- The scUK Safeguarding and Protecting Children Workshop or approved LSCB equivalent.
- The county and regional welfare officer training, which is run once or twice a year by the ASA Child Safeguarding Team.

### Additional/courses available:

- The NSPCC CPSU ‘Time to Listen’ child safeguarding training is available for designated persons. Please refer to [www.swimming.org/volunteering/volunteer-training-development](http://www.swimming.org/volunteering/volunteer-training-development) for details of courses running in your area.
- Educare is a distance-learning training provider, specialising in delivering the essential information on any subject, with over two million participants. They have a wide range of online child protection training resources written by the NSPCC on subjects such as bullying, child neglect and child abuse. Further details on Educare courses can be found at [www.educare.co.uk](http://www.educare.co.uk).

## Guidance on appointing a welfare officer

Every club should have a welfare officer and every swim21 club 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 Wavepower.
- 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 county or 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 past parent or parent of a senior swimmer).
- Male or female.





## Section 2: Toolbox

### Subsection 2.3: Codes of Conduct

- Member's Code of Conduct
- Parent's Code of Conduct
- Code of Conduct for coaches and teachers
- Code of Conduct for committee members, officials and volunteers

## Member's Code of Conduct

### General behaviour

1. I will treat all members of, and persons associated with, the ASA with due dignity and respect.
2. I will treat everyone equally and never discriminate against another person associated with the ASA on any grounds including that of age, sexual orientation, gender, faith, ethnic origin or nationality.
3. I understand that the use of inappropriate or abusive language, bullying, harassment, or physical violence will not be tolerated and could result in action being taken through the disciplinary or child welfare policies.
4. I will display a high standard of behaviour at all times.
5. I will always report any poor behaviour by others to an appropriate officer or member of staff.
6. I will recognise and celebrate the good performance and success of fellow club and team members.
7. I will respect the privacy of others, especially in the use of changing facilities.

### Training

1. I will treat my coach and fellow members with respect.
2. I will make my coach aware if I have difficulties in attending training sessions as per the rules laid down for my squad.
3. I will arrive in good time on poolside before the training session starts to complete poolside warm up as directed by my coach.
4. I understand that if I arrive late, I must report to my coach before entering the pool.
5. I will ensure that I have all of my equipment with me, e.g. paddles, kick boards, hats, goggles, etc.
6. If I need to leave the pool for any reason during training, I will inform my coach before doing so.
7. I will listen to what my coach is telling me at all times and obey any instructions given.
8. I will always swim to the wall as I would do in a race, and I will practice turns as instructed.
9. I will not stop and stand in the lane, or obstruct others from completing their training.
10. I will not pull on the ropes as this may injure other members.

11. I will not skip lengths or sets – to do so means I would only be cheating myself.
12. I will think about what I am doing during training, and if I have any problems, I will discuss them with my coach at an appropriate time.
13. If I have any problems with the behaviour of fellow members, I will report them at the time to an appropriate adult.

### Competitions

1. At competitions, whether they be open meets, national events or club galas, I will always behave in a manner that shows respect to my coach, the officers, my team mates and the members of all competing organisations.
2. I understand that I will be required to attend events and galas that the Chief Coach has entered/selected me for, unless agreed otherwise by prior arrangement with the relevant official and coach.
3. I understand that I must wear appropriate swimwear, tracksuits, T-shirts/shorts and hats as per the rules laid down by the organisation.
4. I will report to my coach and/or team manager on arrival on poolside.
5. I will warm up before the event as directed by the coach in charge on that day and ensure I fully prepare myself for the race.
6. I will be part of the team. This means I will stay with the team on poolside.
7. If I have to leave poolside for any reason, I will inform, and in some cases, get the consent of the team manager/coach before doing so.
8. After my race, I will report to my coach for feedback.
9. I will support my team mates. Everyone likes to be supported and they will be supporting me in return.
10. I will swim down after the race if possible, as advised by my coach.
11. My behaviour in the swim down facility must be appropriate and respectful to other users at all times.
12. I will never leave an event until either the gala is complete or I have the explicit agreement of the coach or team manager.

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

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



## Parent's Code of Conduct

1. I will complete and return the Medical Information Form as requested by the organisation and provide details of any health conditions/concerns relevant to my child on the consent form. I will report any changes in the state of my child's health to the coach prior to training sessions or events. I will ensure that the organisation has up-to-date contact details for me and for any alternative person(s) as required.
2. I will deliver and collect my child punctually to and from training sessions/events. I will inform a member of the committee or coaching staff if there is an unavoidable problem. If the organisation changes my child's lane and/or changing times, I will remember that the change is to provide appropriate levels of training and to enable my child to progress, and I should therefore support and encourage this at all times.
3. I will ensure my child is properly and adequately attired for the training session/ events including all mandatory equipment, e.g. hats, goggles, etc.
4. I will inform the coach/welfare officer before a session if my child is to be collected early from a training session/event and if so, by whom.
5. I will encourage my child to obey the rules and teach them that they can only do their best.
6. I will behave responsibly as a spectator during training/events and treat members, coaches, committee members and other parents of members of both my child's organisation and any other organisation with due respect, in accordance with the ASA commitment to equality and diversity.
7. I will not use inappropriate language within the organisation environment.
8. I will show appreciation and support my child and all the team members.
9. I will ensure my child's needs are met in terms of nutrition and I will listen to advice given from the coach/nutritionist.
10. I will support the coach and committee appropriately and raise any concerns I may have in an appropriate manner to the welfare officer.

11. I will not enter poolside unless requested to do so or in an emergency.
12. If I wish to have a discussion with the coach, I will check with the welfare officer as to how this can be arranged.
13. Most of all, I will help my child to enjoy the sport and to achieve to the best of their ability.

### The organisation will:

1. Inform you at once if your child becomes ill and will ensure their wellbeing until you are able to collect him/her.
2. Ensure good child safeguarding guidelines are followed at all times to keep your child safe.
3. Ensure all activities are properly supervised/taught/coached and that consent is obtained for any activity outside of that previously agreed.

### You have a right to:

1. Make a complaint to the organisation if you feel the organisation or a member of the organisation is not acting appropriately or in accordance with ASA/organisation rules and regulations. Details of how to do this can be obtained from the welfare officer.
2. Make a complaint on behalf of your child to the ASA Office of Judicial Administration.

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

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



## Code of Conduct for coaches and teachers

1. Put the wellbeing, health and safety of members above all other considerations, including the development of performance.
2. At all times, adhere to the ASA Code of Ethics, Rules and Laws.
3. At all times, adhere to Wavepower.
4. At all times, adhere to the ASA Equality and Diversity Policy.
5. Consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.
6. Treat all members with respect and dignity, value their worth and treat everyone equally, recognising their varying needs and abilities within the context of the sport.
7. Develop an appropriate working relationship with members based on mutual trust and respect.
8. Always ensure that all teaching, coaching and competition programmes are appropriate for the age, ability and experience of the individual member.
9. Always identify and meet the needs of the individual member as well the needs of the team/squad.
10. Be fair and equal in team and training squad selection.
11. Never exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward. In particular, coaches must not use their position to establish or pursue a sexual or improper relationship with an athlete, member or someone close to them.
12. Encourage and guide members to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
13. Continue to seek and maintain their own professional development in all areas in relation to coaching and teaching children.
14. Complete a child safeguarding training course every three years in line with the guidance in Wavepower.
15. 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.
16. Encourage all members to obey the spirit of the rules and regulations both in and out of the pool.
17. Co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g. other coaches, officials, sport scientists, doctors or physiotherapists) in the best interests of the member.
18. Never encourage or condone members, volunteers, officials or parents to violate the rules of the organisation or the sport, and report any violations appropriately.
19. Observe the authority and the decision of the officials and only question those decisions in the appropriate manner.
20. 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.
21. Refer all child safeguarding concerns in accordance with the procedures detailed in Wavepower.

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

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

This code is an extension to the ASA Code of Ethics. Both should be followed.



## Code of Conduct for committee members, officials and volunteers

1. At all times, adhere to the ASA Code of Ethics, Rules and Laws.
2. At all times, adhere to Wavepower.
3. At all times, adhere to the ASA Equality and Diversity Policy.
4. Adhere fully to the role and job description as outlined by the organisation and never use that role to gain favour for yourself or any individual member.
5. Consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.
6. Treat all members with respect and dignity, value their worth and treat everyone equally, recognising their varying needs and abilities within the context of the sport.
7. Encourage and guide members to accept responsibility for their own behaviour and performance.
8. Continue to seek and maintain your own development in line with your role and complete a child safeguarding training course, if appropriate to your role.
9. 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.
10. Encourage all members to obey the spirit of the rules and regulations both in and out of the pool.
11. Never encourage or condone members, volunteers, officials or parents to violate the rules of the organisation or the sport, and report any violations appropriately.
12. Observe the authority and the decision of the officials and only question those decisions in the appropriate manner.
13. 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.
14. Refer all child safeguarding concerns in accordance with the procedures detailed in Wavepower 2016-19.

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

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

This code is an extension to the ASA Code of Ethics. Both should be followed.







## Section 2: Toolbox

### Subsection 2.4: Policies, Procedures and Guidance

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

## ASA 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 Sport England definition of Equality and Diversity in sport:

Sport England 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 under-represented in sport.

The organisation also seeks to fulfil the ASA's Equality and Diversity Policy objectives which states:

*'The Amateur Swimming Association ("ASA") and its subsidiaries are fully committed to the principles and practice of equality of opportunity in all its functions: as an employer, membership organisation, awarding body, in its training and development of teachers and coaches; involvement with officials and administrators; as an advisor to swimming pool designers and operators and as a facilitator of the aquatic disciplines by all its members. It is responsible for ensuring that no job applicant, employee, volunteer, member, service user or person within its jurisdiction (together "Stakeholders") are unlawfully discriminated against because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation (together the "Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010") or any other irrelevant characteristic.'*

*'The ASA considers the aquatic disciplines to provide "sport for all". They can and should be made accessible to everyone, to the greatest extent possible.'*

The organisation is committed to ensuring that everyone has the right to enjoy sport in an environment free from the threat of discrimination, intimidation, harassment or abuse.

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 ASA Equality and Diversity Policy, along with further useful information and equality guidance can be found at [www.swimming.org/asa](http://www.swimming.org/asa).



## ASA Anti-bullying Policy

This policy has been modelled on the anti-bullying guidance provided by Kidscape. Please visit [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk) for more information.

### Statement of intent

The ASA 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.

### Objectives of this policy

- All officers, teachers, coaches, members and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All officers, teachers and coaches should know what the organisation's policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All members and parents should know what the organisation's policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- All organisations should take bullying seriously. Members and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

### What is bullying?

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face-to-face or through cyberspace, and comes in many different forms:

Bullying can include:

- **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, religion 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.

### 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.



## Signs and symptoms

Although a child may not necessarily explicitly state that they are being bullied, they may still display signs or behaviours that indicate he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these signs and be prepared to investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from the organisation.
- Doesn't want to go on the club bus.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Is unwilling to go to the club when they previously could not wait to go.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence.
- Starts stammering.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Feels ill at training times and does not want to go.
- Starts to drop in their level of training or competition.
- Comes home with clothes torn or equipment damaged/lost.
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (in order to pay a bully).
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable.
- Is bullying siblings or other children.
- Stops eating or has less of an appetite.
- Is frightened to say what's wrong.
- Is afraid to use the internet or their mobile phone.
- Is nervous or jumpy when a message is received.
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered as a possibility and should be investigated.

## 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 – see the Behaviour Contract Template on p. 123.

## 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.

## Prevention

We will use Kidscape methods for helping children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing a set of 'club rules'.
- Signing a behaviour contract (see p. 123).
- Having discussions about bullying and why it matters.

## Other helpful organisations:

**Swimline:** 0808 100 4001

**Kidscape Parents Helpline:** (Mon-Fri, 10-4)  
0845 1 205 204

**ChildLine:** 0800 1111

**Child Power Leaflet:** available from  
jenni.dearman@swimming.org

**Child Power Online:** via the ASA website  
www.swimming.org/asa

**Youth Access:** (Mon-Fri, 9.30pm-1pm and  
2pm-5.30pm) 020 8772 9900

**Family Lives:** (formerly Parentline Plus)  
0808 800 2222



**BullyingUK:** (part of Family Lives)  
www.bullying.co.uk

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

The ASA acknowledges with gratitude the work of Kidscape in helping in the development of this policy.

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

- You should be informed of any allegations involving bullying of a member under the age of 18.
- Ensure you receive the information in writing and agree who will take the lead in investigating the concern. Usually this will be you, but in some cases the coach or teacher may wish to take the lead.
- Initially, try to reconcile the parties through mediation. The mediator could be you and/or the coach or teacher.
- Where any member under 16 is involved, ensure a parent/guardian, or another adult nominated by the parent, is present when the member is spoken to.
- If the young person is aged 16-17 then the parent and young person can agree to nominate another adult or to have no parent or adult present.
- If mediation fails then follow the guidance below:
  - Set up a subcommittee of three people; this would normally include you, a suitable committee member or coach and a committee member who will take notes.
  - Ensure all members of the subcommittee are fully aware of the concerns raised and are not involved in the matter or related to any of the parties involved.
  - Meet initially with the bullied young person and his/her parents as appropriate. Allow the young person concerned to explain the issues including what happened, where and how the incident made them feel. Reassure them that they did the right thing in raising the concern and that you take their concern seriously.
  - In cases where the member is 10 or under, the parents may prefer to meet with the subcommittee without the member but with a letter in writing (self-written or with the help of the parents if required) produced by the member as to what happened, etc.
- Ask the member if there were any witnesses to what took place; if so, ask the parents of those under 18 for consent to either speak to them or ask the parent to get any information they have/what they saw, etc., in writing. If the witness is over 18 you can approach them directly for this information.
- When you have all the information from the bullied young person, speak to the alleged bully and his/her parents by following the same protocol for the bullied young person, as set out above. In some cases, you will find they admit to wrongdoing and you can go straight to taking appropriate action.
- If the alleged bully denies the incident(s), ask them for their point of view; if they have anyone who they wish you to speak with, do so in line with the above guidance.
- When you have no agreement or evidence on what happened, it is for the subcommittee to consider all the information and form a view on what took place, based on the balance of probabilities. This should be formed by taking all the available information into account, including your view of what was alleged, previous concerns, knowledge of those involved, etc.
- If the outcome of your considerations confirms that bullying took place, based either on evidence or on the balance of probabilities, then consider what action you wish to take. Some options include:
  - An apology from the bully and an agreement for proper behaviour in future.
  - A behaviour contract (see p. 123).
  - Temporary suspension in line with the organisation's disciplinary policy.
  - A mix, or all, of the above.
- Ensure everything is recorded and that all parties are kept informed of what is happening, the outcome, and of any actions to be taken.
- Time is of the essence in matters involving children and young persons. Ensure there is minimum delay in considering the matters and agreeing an outcome.



## Guidance on self-harm concerns

The ASA is grateful to the expertise of selfharmUK and Dr Adam Connor in assisting with the following guidance.

### What is self-harm?

Self-harm 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 and can be very addictive.

The following is a list of possible types of self harm but is not an exhaustive list:

- Scratching and pinching.
- Hitting objects, including punching and head banging.
- Cutting.
- Ripping skin.
- Carving.
- Interfering with healing.
- Burning.
- Rubbing/scraping the skin with sharp objects.
- Hair-pulling (and then potentially hair-eating).
- Abusing drugs and alcohol.
- Eating disorders.
- Poisoning or overdosing.

It is often more helpful to focus on how someone is feeling rather than what they are actually doing to themselves.

### Who and why does someone self-harm?

Self-harm can affect people of all ages and from all walks of life. A young person is not necessarily more likely to self-harm if they come from a deprived background or if their parents are separated. Young people growing up in care are not more or less likely to self-harm than teenagers who live with their families. It really can, and does, affect anyone.

It is thought that around 13% of young people aged 11-16 will self-harm at some point. Research suggests that children exposed to others who self-harm may be more likely to begin harming themselves, so it's important that siblings and friends receive support to understand self-harm as much as the person affected.

The trigger for someone to hurt themselves for the first time will be different for each person. Self-harm can be used as a coping mechanism to deal with emotions that have become difficult to manage although sometimes it may be a sign of an underlying mental health issue.

There are many reasons why a young person may be self-harming. These could include:

- Feeling unhappy.
- Experiencing low self-esteem.
- Suffering from bullying or discrimination.
- Coming to terms with their sexual orientation.
- Having problems at school.
- Experiencing negative life events or family issues.
- Losing someone close to them such as a parent, grandparent, sibling or friend.
- Lacking love and affection or being neglected by parents or carers.
- Experiencing physical or sexual abuse.
- Undergoing other psychiatric and/or psychological factors.

Please note that this list provides examples only and is not exhaustive.

### Talking about it

Self-harm can be very difficult to talk about. Sufferers may feel scared or ashamed, or they may think they will get into trouble for self-harming. They may also have difficulty in explaining to others how they feel and why they are hurting themselves.

Parents of sufferers will find it equally difficult to talk about and/or deal with the emotions of what is happening to their child. They may not understand self-harm, want to block it out or simply be at a complete loss of what to do to help their child.

Being the person who has noticed signs of self-harm or who has had an incident of self-harming disclosed to them by a young person can be very distressed and may find it challenging trying to find ways to help the young person and their family.

Support and guidance on how to deal with self-harm is available from the ASA Child Safeguarding Team, and in some cases the ASA Doctor under the Medical Protocol as required.



## What can the organisation do?

Unfortunately, referrals of self-harm to the ASA Child Safeguarding Team have greatly increased and many officers, coaches and teachers have contacted the ASA after noticing concerning marks on a young person's body, or after a disclosure from the young person or their friends.

It is important that any concerns of this nature are referred to the welfare officer and to the ASA Child Safeguarding Team so appropriate advice can be provided.

In most cases, the organisation would discuss the concerns with the child together with their parents to establish that the parent(s) are aware and that the young person is receiving appropriate professional support. In some cases, parents may already be aware but simply don't know where to turn to for help. Many of our organisations have been able to support young people and their families in providing appropriate signposting to the professional help available.

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 parent(s) could make the situation much worse for the young person concerned, a referral can be made to Children's Services in order to take further advice.

In some cases, the organisation may be concerned that the young person is unfit to continue with aquatics due to the self-harm. In cases of this nature, assistance can be sought from the ASA Doctor under the Medical Protocol. Under this protocol the doctor can be asked to speak to the young person's GP or consultant to discuss this further. The ASA Doctor will require the written consent from the parents of the young person concerned, if appropriate, and the name and contact details of the medical professional charged with the young person's care. The ASA Doctor may request further information from the parent or the organisation. Such requests will always be advised on a case-by-case basis.

Following this referral process, the ASA Doctor is able to confirm whether or not the young person is fit enough to continue participating and whether any additional support can be given by the organisation. Case studies undertaken by the ASA in this area show that medical professionals predominantly regard aquatics as a very positive and enjoyable experience for a young person. In most cases, medical advice encourages the young person to continue their involvement in the sport due to the positive mental and physical benefits.

It is important to remember that officers, coaching staff, other employees or volunteers of the organisation and the ASA 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 to their family. Self-harm is a highly complex area and requires appropriately qualified medical practitioners to support the young person and their family.

In all cases, the ASA Child Safeguarding Team will support and provide guidance to any organisation or individual with a concern of this nature.

## Who can help?

In most cases the young person and their family may find help and support through their GP. The GP may then refer the young person to specialist mental health services depending on availability. Service provision varies across the UK and waiting lists can be long.

The GP may refer the young person to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) instead. CAMHS provide specialist NHS mental health services to children and young people.

Referrals to CAMHS can also be accessed through the young person's school. If the family is receiving support through Children's Services they may also be able to access CAMHS through their family worker.

There are private clinical psychologists and psychotherapists who may offer specialist support for families but these can be costly and the families would need to ensure that the practitioner is recognised by a professional body.

In addition to the above, there are a number of organisations that can provide advice and support and the details are provided at the end of this guidance.

## Will the self-harm continue?

Not everyone who hurts themselves will continue to do this for months or years to come. For some it may only happen for a short period of time, possibly during a time of stress such as exams.

It is important to remember that self-harm won't stop automatically 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 the process of self-harm addictive and some may become



dependent on it. Just telling somebody to stop is unlikely to work and could push the young person to self-harm secretly due to the fear of being found out again.

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.

## 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/keeping-children-safe/self-harm/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-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.**



## ASA Changing Room Policy

The ASA has been asked by many clubs to clearly state what responsibility the club has for young members under 18 years in changing rooms before, during and after training or an event or competition.

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 have no responsibility, but parents 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 under what circumstances they require parents to remain at the pool throughout a session. For example, with young 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

The view of the ASA is that 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).

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, following the guidance in section 2.2 (pp. 39–50). If the incident involves a person not associated with the club, the pool manager should be made aware and consideration given as to whether the statutory agencies need informing.

The ASA is currently working with the CPSU, ASA Facilities Team and commercial facility providers, to try to encourage pool providers across the nation to separate the sexes of school-age children in mixed changing villages.

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, etc.) to enable mixed changing villages to be used as separate changing areas for either sex. This is likely to help prevent the crime of any covert use of cameras or phones, etc. by one person on another of the opposite sex. (See the guidance on pp. 67–69 and 76–77).

### Information for parents regarding changing facilities

- Ensure that parents are made aware that changing facilities at venues may be shared by both club members and members of the general public.
- Ensure parents are made aware of the type of changing room in use, i.e. separate for male and female or mixed changing villages.
- Ensure that the behaviour of members in changing rooms is part of the member's Code of Conduct and any behaviour contracts, where appropriate. 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 are aware that they should not be in the changing room whilst the children are changing, unless their child is of an age where help is required from parents 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 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 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.



The ASA does not advise that adults supervise changing facilities as that places them and the children at risk of harm and allegation. Clubs may however place an officer or appointed poolside helper on the outside of the doors in and out of the changing rooms to allow children to call for assistance if required. This approach has proved helpful to many clubs when children have reported incidents of bullying or general behaviour issues between members in the changing rooms.

### **Responsibility after a session is completed**

The view of the ASA 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 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 aware that if children are not collected by a parent, 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 arrives or the parent communicates alternative arrangements.

If a parent fails to collect a child, the club should follow the procedure outlined in the ASA Late Collection of Children Policy on p. 81.



## Guidance on child abuse images/indecent images of children

### Risks

Increasingly, and with the emergence of technology, some young members have been found to have been trying to take, and succeeding in taking, images (video and still photographs) of children under 18 in the process of changing, perhaps in changing villages and under/over changing cubicles. Some young people, only known to each other through the sport, have also been sharing indecent images with each other. An indecent image is one which is an image of an under 18 year old depicted in an indecent circumstance.

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 and can significantly affect their future. It is vital that children understand the legal implications and the impact on others.

Research (Finkelhor/Wolak) has identified the initial risk mainly comes from peers, friends and others in their social network rather than from strangers or adults. Statistics from the children's charity Beatbullying suggest the following:

- Over one third (36% of males and 39% of females) have received a sexually explicit text or e-mail.
- Over a quarter of 12-15 year olds have received an offensive sexual image, of which, 85% know the identity of the aggressor.
- The majority of these aggressors are peers and only 2% indicated that it was an adult.

“Recent evidence suggests that girls are more adversely affected by the risks than boys – it is

not a gender neutral practice, it's something that is shaped by pre-existing gender dynamics and reinforced through the use of the technology.”  
*NSPCC – Children, Young People and Sexting May 2012.*

### Criminal Acts

It is a criminal offence to **take, make, distribute (send), upload and/or possess** any indecent image of a child (including those taken/possessed by other under 18 year olds). Legislation is under the Protection of Children Act 1978 and Criminal Justice Act 1988. It is also an offence to request a child to take, make, distribute or upload such an image, under Section 44 of the Serious Crime Act 2007, encouraging another to commit an offence. An offence of Voyeurism may also have been committed (observing/filming another doing a private act) under Section 67 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Sending may also be an offence of Malicious Communication.

The position of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) is that it does not support prosecutions of children for taking indecent images of themselves. It realises the detrimental effect especially if they are convicted. The label of sex offender that would be applied to a child or young person convicted of such offences is regrettable, unjust and clearly detrimental to their future health and wellbeing. It would also have an effect on future employment, particularly in roles in a position of responsibility, such as supervision or teaching of children.

### Types of criminal acts and course of action

All usage of images as detailed above are criminal offences, and, if deemed to be an ‘**experimental**’ act, then Children’s Services, the MASH team and the ASA Child Safeguarding Team should be advised. If the act is deemed to be ‘**aggravated**’ then it must be reported to the police, Children’s Services and the ASA Child Safeguarding Team.

### 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 the ASA 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 the ASA, 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.

### Aggravated

This term may be applied to any other situation not detailed above, such as incidents which include adult involvement, and abusive or criminal behaviour by under 18s such as sexual abuse, extortion, threats or malicious conduct arising from personal conflicts. It also includes the creation, showing or sharing of images without the knowledge, or against the will, of the young individual who is pictured.

Aggravating factors to be considered also include:

- The age of the child (or children) involved.
- The circulation of images to peers.
- The coercion or exploitation of a child by the use of rewards or threats to send/share the image.
- The number of 'victims' or repeat behaviour by any party.
- The wording or language which accompanies the image.
- The explicit or depraved nature of images beyond 'the norm'.
- Any other background information that may increase the risk of harm.

A **request** for an image under any of these circumstances can also be considered to be an **aggravated** act.

In the case of an aggravated incident, the matter will be referred to police and the MASH team or Children's Services, by welfare officers or the ASA Child Safeguarding Team, according to local arrangement.

### Action to be taken by the organisation

Our duty to safeguard children is paramount. Therefore, if there is a strong suspicion that a particular device contains an indecent image of an under 18 year old, then the ASA suggests that:

**Where the device is available**, retain and secure the device, and follow the reporting procedures outlined on pp. 23–29. This includes reporting the act immediately to the police, if necessary, in order to secure evidence and/or protect a child from harm. You should also inform the welfare officer or the ASA Child Safeguarding Team.

**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.**

If, for example, a child denies they have any such image on their device or refuses to hand over the device, and you are confronting them shortly after the incident has allegedly taken place, they can be asked to produce the device, ideally with two appropriate adults present. It is vital they do not get the opportunity to delete any images or data themselves.

**Where the device is not available**, or where an incident comes to light after the event, then an immediate referral should be made to the welfare officer and the ASA Child Safeguarding Team. If the incident takes place 'out of hours', and there are concerns that the image has been, or will be shared, you should contact the police.

Keep any information limited to those who 'need to know' only. It may be prudent to advise any Leisure Centre Duty Manager of the incident, and if you are still at the location, and the concern falls under the 'aggravated' category above, a decision to contact the police should be made.

Please note, a 'device' can include mobile phones, tablets, laptops, desktop computers, any type of camera or video camera, or any type of technology



capable of taking, sharing or storing images or video footage.

Please remember that it is not the responsibility of officials of the organisation to make decisions about the seriousness of the matter, nor to investigate this crime.

## 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 the ASA Child Safeguarding Team.



## Guidance on the use of electronic communication

Mobile phones, text messaging, e-mail 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 or young people.

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a recommendation of best practice to aquatics teachers, coaches and those in a position of trust regarding:

- The use of mobile phones whilst having responsibility for the supervision and safety of young people.
- Direct communication between coaches or teachers and young members of the organisation via mobile phones and e-mail.

Most mobile phones can gain access to the internet and the guidance on the use of social networking found on p. 72 applies to phones as well as tablets, laptops, desktop computers or other applicable devices.

### Phoning, texting or e-mailing a young person

- Coaches and teachers should not personally hold the mobile phone numbers or e-mail addresses belonging to young members of the organisation.
- Coaches can hold the phone numbers and e-mail addresses of members' parents with their consent, in order to get messages to members. It is then the responsibility of the parent to inform the child of the message.
- 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 DBS checked, have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training and have the consent of each member's parent or guardian 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 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 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 or guardian, use text messaging or e-mail to communicate with the athlete for training and competition purposes only. It is recommended that such communications are also copied to a parent or guardian to safeguard the member **and** the coach.

### Use of a mobile phone by coaches and teachers

- Coaches and teachers should not take or make calls whilst supervising young members in a teaching or training session. It is permissible for a coach to make or take a call during an event, providing they are not the sole supervisor of the members and are not actively engaged during warm up or swim down at the time of the call.
- Coaches who have mobile phones with camera facilities must fulfil the obligations set out in the ASA Photography Guidance on p. 76.
- Whenever mobile phones are taken into changing rooms, the camera facility must not be used. See the ASA Changing Room Policy on p. 65.
- The publishing of a photograph of a member under 18 years should only be done with the parent's consent and it should be noted that parents and guardians have the right to refuse to have their child photographed. See parental consent/refusal of consent forms on pp. 116–117.
- If a photograph is taken for publication, it should adhere to the guidance provided in the ASA Photography Guidance on p. 76. Details which identify the individual in the photograph, such as full name, place of residence or school attended, should not be given alongside the photograph.



- In the event of a member showing a teacher or coach a text message or image which is considered to be inappropriate for a child to have, the teacher/coach must advise the nominated person at the organisation, most likely the welfare officer.

### Coaches aged 18 to 21

The ASA recognises that many young coaches aged 18 to 21 will have been members themselves before becoming a coach, and will be friends with their fellow members, some of whom will still be between the ages of 16 and 17. It is therefore plausible that they will have the personal contact details for those members. The ASA accepts it would be inappropriate to require young coaches to remove the details of those members from their contact lists.

Therefore, in such cases:

- If a coach aged 18 to 21 had phone and/or e-mail details who were/are swimmers aged between 16 and 17 prior to undertaking the role of coach, the ASA does not expect them to remove those members from their contact list.
- However, the coach is advised to inform the welfare officer and the 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 on the use of social networking

There has been a growing awareness of the increasing communication between adults and young people on social networking sites. There are risks associated with these developments, and the ASA 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.

The ASA recognises that the use of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and instant messaging tools such as Whatsapp and Snapchat, continue to grow rapidly and are increasingly being used as the communication tools of choice by young people.

These social networking sites permit users to chat online, post or send pictures, comment on and share content, and write 'blogs' or updates through the creation of an online profile. These can either be publicly available to all, or can be restricted to an approved circle of electronic friends.

Sites such as YouTube and Google provide a platform for uploading and viewing video clips, which with the latest cameras and mobile phones, becomes ever easier and can be almost instantaneous. More recent apps, such as Periscope and Meerkat, 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.

In addition to these sites, Twitter is a social networking and micro-blogging service that enables users to send and read other users' messages known as 'tweets'. Tweets are online text messages of up to a maximum of 140 characters displayed on the author's profile page. Tweets are publicly visible by default, however the sender can restrict message delivery to their followers list only.

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

### 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 young people through social networking sites if they are a member of the organisation you work for.
- Should a young person 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 an ASA club **and** the parent/guardian 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 ASA organisations and to do so may be in breach of the ASA Rules and Regulations.
- The publishing of a photograph or video footage on any social networking site is governed by the same requirements as those contained in the ASA Photography Guidance on p. 76.

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

The ASA 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 of the first two points above must still be adhered to.

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

Therefore, in such cases, if the parent of a young person in a position of responsibility aged 16 or 17 **and** the young person themselves requests 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/guardian 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 young person to the discussion of matters relevant to the young person's professional role in the club.
- Ensure all such communications are shared with an identified third person (e.g. the young person's parent/guardian or club welfare officer).
- Ensure that if the young person 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 the ASA or the statutory agencies if appropriate.
- Use the internet positively and do not place yourself at risk. Have a look at [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.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 ensure 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.

### Coaches aged between 18 and 21

The ASA 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, the ASA 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, the ASA 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.
- Do not upload images of other members taking part in your organisation's training, activities or events as you may breach the ASA Photography Guidance (see p. 76). If you do wish to upload such content, you must first seek the advice and consent of your parents, the consent of the other young person(s) and their parents, 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, are happy for you to upload the image.
- Always be aware that social networking sites 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 ASA Policy and also the law.
- 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.

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



## Guidance to parents

### Parents of members under the age of 18

There have been occasions where parents 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 to the person who is the subject of the abuse to take action through statutory agencies or statutory legislation to address the comments made.

The ASA has produced a parent's Code of Conduct which can be found in Wavepower on p. 53.

Parents are expected to behave responsibly as a spectator at all training sessions, events and activities, and treat members, coaches, committee members and parents of other members of any aquatics organisation, be that your child's organisation or not, with due respect in order to meet the ASA's commitment to equality and diversity.

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

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

Many parents are becoming 'friends' with their children on social networking profile 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 access to the profiles of other children listed as 'friends' of their child. It would not be appropriate for the ASA to prevent a parent who is also an employee at the organisation where his/her child is a member from using this form of protection for their child's online activities.

Therefore, in such cases:

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

## Further information

The CPSU Briefing Document *Social networking services, social media and sport: Guidelines for safeguarding children and young people (2009)* gives more in depth guidance on social networking sites and can be accessed via the Child Protection in Sport Unit website at [www.cpsu.org.uk](http://www.cpsu.org.uk).

### What to do if you have concerns

As a user of a social networking site, whether you are a child or an adult, you may at some time have a concern about what you are seeing or being told about by another user. Concerns may range from negative or abusive comments and cyber bullying, to suspected grooming for sexual abuse.

The ASA has drawn up a list of agencies that you can contact, anonymously if you wish, where you can raise such concerns.

- The National Crime Agency: CEOP Command (formerly the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) at [www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk) or by pressing the CEOP button on Facebook or on the ASA Child Power website.
- Swimline ASA/NSPCC helpline 0808 100 4001.
- If you are under 18 use the 'Your Chance to Talk' form on the Child Power section of the ASA website.
- ChildLine 0800 1111 or [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk).
- [www.childnet.org.uk](http://www.childnet.org.uk) which is an NSPCC support service specifically for young people.
- The local police or Children's Services – their number appears in the phone book, or dial 101.
- The NSPCC helpline 0800 800 5000 or [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk).
- The Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk). The IWF was established to provide a UK internet hotline which can be anonymous for the general public and IT professionals to report criminal online content in a secure and confidential way. They work in partnership with other agencies to minimise the availability of this content, specifically:
  - Child sexual abuse images hosted anywhere in the world.
  - Criminally obscene adult content hosted in the UK.
  - Incitement to racial hatred content hosted in the UK.
  - Non-photographic child sexual abuse images hosted in the UK.



## Guidance on communicating with children and young people

When an adult in the organisations communicates with children or young members, 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 site.

Wavepower provides guidance on how to react 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 the ASA guidance and not shared your phone, e-mail address or social networking details with that person. Should that happen, we do not want you to stop that communication as it breaches our guidance, but you should advise the welfare officer of the contact immediately and follow the guidance in Wavepower 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, e-mail 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.

There are exceptions to every rule and this is outlined in our guidance. However, all those in a position of responsibility in the organisation must remember that they have to ensure they are appropriate at all times with individuals under the age of 18 and maintain appropriate, professional relationships to safeguard the young people and themselves.



## ASA 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 an ASA affiliated organisation.

It should be acknowledged that although the majority of images taken are appropriate and in good faith, images can be misused and children can be put at risk if common sense procedures are not observed.

### Aims

The ASA Photography Guidance aims to help organisations avoid three potential sources of child abuse:

- The use, adaptation, sharing or copying of images for child abuse purposes, either electronically or in print.
- The possible identification of a child when an image is accompanied by significant personal information, which can lead to the child being 'groomed'.
- The identification and locating of children where there are safeguarding concerns; such cases would include, for example, children who could be compromised by an image because:
  - They have been removed from their family for their own safety.
  - There are restrictions on their contact with one parent following a parental separation.
  - They are a witness in criminal proceedings.

### 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 ASA guidelines.
- A parent or guardian 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. A suggested template allowing parents to indicate refusal of consent is provided on p. 117.

- 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.

The ASA 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, though full length tracksuit shots are approved.
- Photographs should not be taken from behind the starting blocks or that show young participants climbing out of the pool.

Published photographs may identify the individual by name and organisation but should not state the member's place of residence or school attended. The ASA 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.

### The official photographer

In some cases, the organisation will ask a member or officer to act as an official photographer for an event and in some cases they may employ a specialist photographer. Their role is to take appropriate photos that celebrate and promote aquatics.

When taking any image, they should be asked to:

- Focus on the activity rather than the individual child.
- Include groups of children rather than individuals, if possible.



- Ensure all those featured are appropriately dressed.
- Represent the broad range of youngsters participating in swimming – boys and girls, children with disabilities, members of minority ethnic communities, etc.
- Organisations should screen applicants for their suitability (just as they would check any other member of staff or volunteer working with children) and then provide training and information on the organisation's child safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The official photographer (whether a professional photographer or a member of staff) should receive clear instructions, preferably in writing, from the organisation at an early stage.
- The organisation should provide them with a copy of this guidance and a clear brief about what is appropriate in terms of content.
- Images should not be allowed to be taken outside the activity being covered.
- The organisation should determine who will hold the images recorded and what is to be done with them after they have served their purpose.

### 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).

Assuming filming is justified, written consent is required from the parents of each child who should then be invited to attend the filming and to subsequently view the video.

The individual who is responsible for filming should exercise caution when recording and ensure the content of the footage is appropriate, following the advice outlined above. Filming should cease and/or the footage destroyed should any concerns be raised or if consent is withdrawn.

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 the ASA 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.

Please refer to the ASA Changing Room Policy (p. 65) in addition to the guidance on child abuse images on p. 67 and on the use of electronic information on p. 70.

### 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, and certainly not with the child's name as this could lead to the child being identified, approached and placed in a vulnerable position. The same applies to printed materials such as an organisation's annual report or kit. Many organisations will use a child's first name, surname or nickname only, with parental consent, so as not to identify them fully.

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



## Guidance on lane sharing between adults and children

Swimming is a physical sport, and like many sports, there are inherent risks in taking part. The ASA 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, the ASA 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. The ASA has a duty of care to all ASA 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, the ASA 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. The ASA 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.

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.

### ASA statement on adults and children sharing lanes in training

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

The ASA 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 (see p. 45). When using changing facilities together please refer to the advice provided in the ASA Changing Room Policy on p. 65.



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

The ASA 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. For this reason, specific guidance below has been collaboratively developed by the Independent Child Protection Officer (ICPO), the ASA Legal Affairs Department and advisors with water polo experience to assist in maintaining proper safeguarding for all ASA members.

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.

The ASA is grateful for the time given by the water polo representatives who helped to compile the guidance below.

**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 Wavepower.
- 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 on pp. 41–45.
- 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 fulfill 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. If they do play together, the coach must be aware of the heightened risks and address those risks accordingly.
- 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 notify the ASA on the relevant form if there is any confrontation or violent play involving a junior player, giving as full an account as possible. It is the responsibility of the ASA to confirm the ages of the players involved and determine whether or not the reported matter is a child protection issue.
- 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.



## ASA 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. The ASA 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. 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.

### The organisation should:

- Attempt to contact the parent/carer from the information sheet completed on joining/renewing membership.
- Attempt to contact the emergency contact or nominated person.
- If there is no reply from the parent, emergency contact or nominated person, ask the child if there is another family member who may be contacted.
- Wait with the young person at the organisation with at least one other responsible adult, e.g. an official, coach, teacher, volunteer or parent.
- If you are unable to reach someone, contact the local police to enquire about the best course of action.
- Remind parents/carers of the policy relating to late collection.

### 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 ASA Child Safeguarding Team, Children Service's or MASH team for further advice.



## ASA 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.**

- 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.
- This nominated person should also be making a note of the events, including a physical description of the young person including approximate height, build, eye colour, hair colour and style as well as the colour, brand and type of clothing he/she was wearing, and where he/she was last seen, as this will be required by the police. If the search is unsuccessful you should then report the concern to the police.
- 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 the ASA Child Safeguarding Team.

**A REPORT SHOULD GO TO THE POLICE NO LATER THAN THIRTY (30) MINUTES AFTER THE YOUNG PERSON'S DISAPPEARANCE IS NOTED, EVEN IF THE SEARCH IS NOT COMPLETE.**



## ASA Transport Policy

**This advice should be read in conjunction with the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit document, *Safe sport events, activities and competitions (2013)*.**

- 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.
- 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.



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

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. Depending on the level of the member, they may go to galas and meets on a regular basis, some of which will be for one session, a day, or two or more days that require overnight stays. The ASA and NSPCC previously produced *Safe sport away* which outlined the actions that an organisation is required to take in the planning stages as well as at the event itself, to ensure that safeguarding is met at all times. This document has been updated by the NSPCC CPSU and is now called *Safe sport events, activities and competitions (2013)*. It is recommended that organisations download the new document in order to refer to it whenever they take young members away from the home venue.

In addition to the guidance below, the requirements of the ASA Safe Recruitment Policy on p. 40, the ASA Transport Policy on p. 83 and the codes of conduct on pp. 52–55 must also be adhered to. This guidance should also be read in association with the advice and forms in *Safe sport events, activities and competitions (2013)*.

### 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 ASA Transport Policy on p. 83 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 (2013)* 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
- Chief 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 Wavepower, 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 Wavepower and *Safe sport events, activities and competitions (2013)* or access to both documents via a computer while at the event.



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.

### Team manager

The ASA 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. county 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 Wavepower.
- Should not be in a coaching role at the same time.
- Can also act as the welfare officer when the number of members is low.
- Must hold a current DBS certificate issued within the last three years.
- Must have completed the scUK Child Safeguarding Course (or approved LSCB equivalent) 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.

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 (2013)* 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 (2013)* 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 on p. 83 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, as recommended by the ASA.
- Ensure all documentation as outlined in *Safe sport events, activities and competitions (2013)* 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.

## 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 the ASA Child Safeguarding Team for advice and guidance including whether or not insurers should be informed or action to take if the media is involved.
- As soon as possible, write down the details of what has happened.





## Section 3: Child Safeguarding Responsibilities

- Responsibility for child safeguarding within the ASA

## Responsibility for child safeguarding within the ASA

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

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

### ASA Chief Executive

The Chief Executive, Adam Paker, has the ultimate responsibility for child safeguarding, together with the ASA Group Board and the ASA Sport Governing Board.

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

The Chief Executive is the only person in the ASA with the power to suspend an individual ASA 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 the Head of Legal Affairs, Legal Affairs Department and the ASA Child Safeguarding Team.

### Legal Affairs Department

The ASA has an in-house Legal Department, which has prime responsibility for the formulation of regulations in relation to child safeguarding and has formed the ASA Child Safeguarding Team, which includes the Head of Legal Affairs, the ASA Independent Child Protection Officer and the ASA National Child Safeguarding Coordinator. The ASA Child Safeguarding Team has responsibility for all child safeguarding case management. It also has responsibility for bringing disciplinary cases before the ASA's judiciary.

The team is headed by Ash Cox, Head of Legal Affairs. Ash is a solicitor and has worked in the area of child safeguarding for over ten years. The Legal Affairs Department actively takes a lead in sharing best practice in child safeguarding with the world of sport as a whole.

### ASA Child Safeguarding Team

The ASA Child Safeguarding Team includes the ASA Independent Child Protection Officer (ICPO) and the National Child Safeguarding Coordinator (NCSC).

### ICPO

Keith Oddy is the ICPO and has in excess of 30 years experience in policing the busiest areas of London. Keith has worked on numerous youth crime projects, and from 1990, supervised several child protection teams in the London Boroughs. An accomplished paedophile-case investigator, he has investigated complex cases across Europe and the USA. For eight years, he supervised and took the lead on suspicious child death and child murder investigations, having been awarded nine commendations for his work in these fields. He also led on setting up London's first MASH team, jointly working with Children's Services for three years prior to his appointment as the ASA's ICPO.

Keith played water polo at club level, and has been involved in competitive swimming since 1972. In 2014, he became joint-holder of two British Records and a European Masters record.

### NCSC

Jenni Dearman is employed by the ASA as the NCSC and is based in the Legal Affairs Department. Jenni has a Chartered Institute of Legal Executives, Level 3 Diploma in Law and Practice. Jenni has worked for the ASA for over ten years and specifically in child safeguarding for eight years, advising affiliated ASA organisations and their members on a wide range of child welfare and safeguarding issues.

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

The ASA Child Safeguarding Team are responsible for writing Wavepower, and are actively involved in promoting and sharing best safeguarding practice with other sports organisations.

The ASA holds the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) Advanced Standard for Safeguarding Children in Sport. The ASA Child Safeguarding Team are responsible for maintaining and embedding that standard and acts as a pilot organisation with Sport England and the CPSU on the new safeguarding framework for funded sports.



The ASA ICPO has responsibility for the ASA Child Welfare Complaints Procedure. This procedure is available to all members and is published in full in the ASA Handbook and at [www.swimming.org](http://www.swimming.org). At any time, should the ASA Child Safeguarding Team believe their advice has been dismissed, and/or believe that the advice in Wavepower has been dismissed, then the ASA Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures have been breached and the ICPO can raise a complaint against the organisation or individual member involved.

### Club, County and Regional Welfare Officers

The volunteers who perform the role of welfare officer are a vital part of the ASA Child Safeguarding Team. They are often the first point of contact for ASA 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 Wavepower and the ASA Rules and Regulations. Many welfare officers have experience in child safeguarding through their professional employment outside of the ASA and this knowledge and experience can be invaluable when handling the wide range of concerns and enquires they are faced with.

At the request of the Legal Affairs Department or the ASA Child Safeguarding Team, county and 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

Welfare officers can discuss any concerns with, or request help and advice from, the ICPO and/or NCSC at any time.

A full role description of the club, county and regional welfare officers can be found on pp. 48–50.

### Swimline and Swimline Volunteers

The ASA Swimline Child Protection helpline is a freephone helpline that anyone involved in aquatics can contact for help and advice on any child safeguarding issue.

On contacting Swimline, callers are asked to leave their contact details and a brief description of their concern. The caller will be contacted within 48 hours by either a Swimline volunteer or by the ASA Child Safeguarding Team.

Callers also have the opportunity to transfer straight through to the NSPCC helpline should they require immediate assistance.

Swimline volunteers are qualified and experienced professionals within child protection. They have direct involvement with the ASA at club and county level, and have vast experience of child safeguarding within the ASA.

At the request of the Legal Affairs Department or the ASA Child Safeguarding Team, Swimliner volunteers can become directly involved with child safeguarding issues. They may meet with the individuals or lead meetings with parties to try to directly resolve the issues presented.





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

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

## Guidance for Coaches, Teachers and Poolside Helpers

The ASA 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 Wavepower gives details of policies, procedures and guidance to enable all who work with children to do so in a safe and appropriate manner. The ASA has produced a code of conduct which all local, county and national level teachers, coaches, officials and poolside helpers should adhere to. The codes of conduct can be found on pp. 52–55. The ASA Code of Ethics can be found in the ASA Handbook and on [www.swimming.org/asa](http://www.swimming.org/asa).

All those who work directly with children on poolside must adhere to the child safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance of the organisation and the ASA 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 Wavepower would not be a practical document. The ASA has identified through annual studies of referrals to the ASA Child Safeguarding Team that coaches, teachers and poolside helpers are viewed by members as trustworthy adults. 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. The ASA 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 the ASA Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures into practice.

This section of Wavepower, 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 an ASA-approved Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport course upon commencement as a coach and attend a refresher course every three years.



- Know and understand the ASA Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures contained in Wavepower.
- 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 ASA 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 Wavepower.
- Recognise the expectations on members to undertake other activities outside of the sport including the demands of school sports and school examinations.
- 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.
- Engage in a sexual relationship with a swimmer aged 17 or under.

Engaging in sexual relations with a child under 16 years of age is a criminal offence.

The ASA Code of Ethics for coaches and teachers can be found on [www.swimming.org](http://www.swimming.org) or in the ASA Handbook.

ASA 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.



## 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.

However, as outlined in the section on grooming on p. 99, the giving of gifts or favours can be identified or misconstrued as part of the grooming process. 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 favoritism 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 ASA Code of Ethics and follow good practice as outlined in the Code of Conduct on p. 54 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.'

This does not currently apply in law to aquatics teachers or coaches but the ASA has adopted this policy into the ASA's codes of conduct and the ASA Code of Ethics, and any relationship of this nature may result in disciplinary action.

The ASA adopts the Home Office guidelines which recommends the principle that people in positions of trust and authority should not have sexual relationships with 16/17 year olds in their care. The power and influence a coach or teacher has in a professional relationship with a young



person cannot be underestimated. In addition to this, the young person's success or failure and team selection may be dependent on the coach. 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 the ASA is that no sexual relationship should exist between any young member of the organisation aged 16/17 years and their coach or teacher, and that the relationship between coach and member must be appropriate at all times.

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



## Grooming

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, the grooming of a child for the purposes of developing that relationship into a sexual one is a criminal offence.

Grooming is when an abuser builds a relationship with a child or young person in an attempt to 'set up' or 'prepare' them in order to sexually abuse them. Not all sexual abuse is preceded by grooming, but it is very common and may be used by strangers or by those known to the victim. It often involves a process of deceit, where the abuser continually appears to be a helpful and generous person to the child, or their parent/carer, to get their trust in order to gain the opportunity to abuse. The grooming process can take weeks, months or even years and can be very subtle. Many adult and child victims of grooming often do not realise that they are being manipulated until after the sexual abuse has taken place. Some victims are never able to see how the grooming led to their or their child's abuse.

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.

The ASA 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 the ASA's 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.

The ASA is clear in its expectations that ASA coaches have a responsibility to maintain that relationship of trust within the boundary of professionalism as outlined in the ASA 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 ASA Disciplinary and Child Protection Regulations for a breach of the ASA 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.

These guidelines aim to promote good practice and to encourage a proactive response to support children to manage their own behaviour. The guidelines suggest some strategies and sanctions which can be used, and also identify unacceptable sanctions or interventions, which must never be used by any individual.

The guidelines will also include the views and suggestions of children.

These guidelines are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of the child is the paramount consideration.
- All those involved in activities (including children, coaches/volunteers and parents/carers) should be given clear guidelines about required standards of conduct, and the organisation's process for responding to behaviour that is deemed unacceptable.
- Children must never be subjected to any form of treatment that is harmful, abusive, humiliating or degrading.
- Some children exhibit challenging behaviour as a result of specific circumstances, e.g. a medical or psychological condition, and coaches may therefore require specific or additional guidance. These and any other specific needs the child may have should be discussed with parents/carers and the child in planning for the activity, to ensure that an appropriate approach is agreed, and additional support provided where necessary, e.g. Children's Services.
- Sport can make a significant contribution to improving the life experience and outcomes for all children and young people.

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.

### Agreeing acceptable and unacceptable behaviours

Staff, volunteers, children, young people and parents/carers should be involved in developing an agreed statement of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour (code of conduct) and the range of sanctions which may be applied in response to unacceptable behaviour. This can be done at the start of the season, in advance of a trip away from home or as part of a welcome session at a residential camp.

Issues of behaviour and control should regularly be discussed with staff, volunteers, parents and children in the context of rights and responsibilities. When children are specifically asked as a group to draw up a code of conduct that will govern their participation in activities, experience indicates that they tend to arrive at a very sensible and working set of 'rules' with greater 'buy-in' from participants than those simply



imposed by adults within the organisation. If and when such a code is compiled, every member of the group can be asked to sign it, as can new members as they join.

## Managing challenging behaviour

In responding to challenging behaviour, the response should always be proportionate to the actions, be imposed as soon as is practical and be fully explained to the child and their parents/carers. In dealing with children who display negative or challenging behaviours, staff and volunteers might consider the following options:

- Time out – from the activity, group or individual work.
- Reparation – the act or process of making amends.
- Restitution – the act of giving something back.
- Behavioural reinforcement – rewards for good behaviour, consequences for negative behaviour.
- De-escalation of the situation – talking through with the child.
- Increased supervision by staff/volunteers.
- Use of individual ‘contracts’ or agreements for their future or continued participation.
- Sanctions or consequences, e.g. missing an outing.
- Seeking additional/specialist support through working in partnership with other agencies to ensure a child’s needs are met appropriately, e.g. referral for support to Children’s Services, discussion with the child’s key worker if they have one, speaking to the child’s school about management strategies (all require parental consent unless the child is felt to be ‘at risk’ or ‘in need of protection’).
- Temporary or permanent exclusion.

The following should never be permitted as a means of managing a child’s behaviour:

- Physical punishment or the threat of such.
- Refusal to speak to or interact with the child.
- Being deprived of food, water, access to changing facilities or toilets or other essential facilities.
- Verbal intimidation, ridicule or humiliation.

Staff and volunteers should review the needs of any child for whom sanctions are frequently necessary. This review should involve the child, parents/carers

and, in some cases, others involved in supporting or providing services for the child and his/her family, to ensure an informed decision is made about the child’s future or continued participation. As a last resort, if a child continues to present a high level of risk or danger to him or herself, or others, he or she may have to be suspended or barred from the group or club activities.

## Physical intervention

The use of physical intervention should always be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary to prevent a child injuring themselves or others, or causing serious damage to property. All forms of physical intervention should form part of a broader approach to the management of challenging behavior.

Physical contact to prevent something happening should always be the result of conscious decision-making and not an unplanned reaction. Before physically intervening, the member of staff or volunteer should ask themselves, ‘Is this the only option in order to manage the situation and ensure safety?’ It is good practice to ensure that if you have to physically intervene in a situation with a child/young person, it is in the least restrictive way necessary to prevent them from getting hurt, and used only after all other strategies have been exhausted. Studies have shown that, where this is the case, children and young people understand and accept the reasons for the intervention.

The following must always be considered:

- Contact should be avoided with buttocks, genitals and breasts. Staff/volunteers should never behave in a way which could be interpreted as sexual.
- Any form of physical intervention should achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the child whose behavior is of immediate concern.
- Staff/volunteers should consider the circumstances, e.g. the risks associated with employing physical intervention compared with the risks of not employing physical intervention.
- The scale and nature of physical intervention must always be proportionate to the behaviour of the young person and the nature of harm/damage they might cause.
- All forms of physical intervention should employ only a reasonable amount of force, i.e. the minimum force needed to avert injury to a person or serious damage to property – applied for the shortest period of time.



- Staff/volunteers should never employ physical interventions which are deemed to present an unreasonable risk to children or themselves.
- Staff/volunteers should never use physical intervention as a form of punishment.
- Physical intervention should NOT involve inflicting pain.
- Where children are identified as having additional needs or behaviors that are likely to require physical intervention, this should be discussed with parents/carers and where necessary, the organisation will seek advice from or work in partnership with external agencies (e.g. Children's Services) to ensure that a child or young person can be supported to participate safely. This may include asking for the provision of a suitably trained support worker/volunteer or accessing staff/volunteer training in physical intervention.

Any physical intervention used should be recorded as soon as possible after the incident by the staff/volunteer(s) involved, by using the Incident Report Form and passing it to the welfare officer/ASA Child Safeguarding Team as soon as possible.

## Views of the child

It is clear from the accounts of children and young people that physical intervention provokes strong feelings. Children may be left physically or emotionally hurt. Even a child who hasn't directly been involved in the situation may be fearful that it will happen to them in future or have been upset by seeing what has happened to others.

A timely debrief, for the staff/volunteers, the child and the parents, should always take place following an incident where physical intervention has been used. This should include ensuring that the physical and emotional wellbeing of those involved has been addressed and ongoing support offered where necessary. Staff/volunteers, children and parents should be given an opportunity to talk about what happened in a calm and safe environment.

There should also be a discussion with the child and parents about the child's needs and continued safe participation in the group or activity.

It is important that staff and volunteers are made aware of and understand the organisation's guidance about managing challenging behavior to ensure that they are aware of ways in which they may need to intervene and are clear about the guidance in this area.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, all organisations that have a duty of care to children and young people should develop and implement policies and procedures on managing challenging behaviour, or consider incorporating this into their child protection policy. It should clearly set out the following:

- The standard of conduct expected from staff/volunteers and participants.
- How the organisation will respond to unacceptable behaviours.
- How the organisation will respond to 'high risk' behaviours. This will give children and young people a clear message about when staff may need to get involved to stop a particular form of behaviour, and describe options to avoid confrontation through, for example, time out.
- The circumstances in which children will be restrained. A decision to restrain a child should be firmly based on the safety of the child or of others, and must NEVER be made as a punishment or to get children to comply with instructions.
- The guidance, information or any support and/or training available to staff/volunteers, particularly where they are supporting a child with recognised challenging behavior to access the organisation's activities.
- The circumstances where external agencies will be contacted for support or in response to concerns, e.g. Children's Services or the police.
- What will happen after an incident? The organisation must have arrangements in place to check on the physical and emotional wellbeing of the child and staff, provide guidance on who should be informed and a system for recording and monitoring.

This briefing has been developed from *Creating a Safe Environment in Sport, Scottish Governing Bodies Child Protection Guidelines* (Sport Scotland/Children 1st).

Kind permission to reproduce this document has been provided by the NSPCC/CPSU.



## Frequently asked questions

The ASA recognises that coaches, teachers and poolside helpers may be wary of putting themselves in a position where false allegations can be made and for this reason may overly interpret the guidance given in this document. It is important the guidance is interpreted appropriately and in a common sense manner so it does not hinder the building of professional, appropriate and safe relationships with members.

Below are the answers to some questions that are asked regularly, which we hope will allay some of the concerns you may have and provide assistance to help you interpret the procedures in an appropriately flexible manner, as well as advising where specific guidance can be obtained from.

### 1. What do I do if I find I am inadvertently left alone with a young person?

Firstly, don't panic. You are now the only person available who can ensure the wellbeing of that young person, so although the guidance says 'do not place yourself in a situation where you are alone with a young person', in this scenario, to absent yourself could potentially put that young person at risk. You should therefore ensure the wellbeing of the child, as that should always be the first and foremost consideration. In this case, that means you should wait with that child until the parent arrives, and use your mobile to inform another coach or committee member of the situation.

It is unlikely you will have the parent's phone number but the young person should be able to provide this, or, if they are old enough to have their own mobile phone, they can contact the parent themselves. Take sensible precautions while waiting with the young person. Talk only about matters which are acceptable between coach and member and if you are in a leisure centre with other users, wait for the parent in a public area. If you are at a venue that has no other users, wait in an area that is open and where the parent can clearly see you when they arrive.

If the late arrival of a parent is happening repeatedly, discuss this with the welfare officer as the ASA Late Collection of Children Policy (p. 81) should be brought into action.

### 2. If a parent fails to arrive, it is getting late and I cannot contact them by phone what should I do?

In such circumstances, it may be necessary for you to consider transporting that member home. If other suitable adults are present, ask one to accompany you and the young person in the car to the member's home. If not, ensure you tell another officer or staff member of the action you are taking by phone, sit the member in the back of the car and make sure you know where you are going before you set off to return the child home.

When you arrive at the member's home, hand the member over to the parent. Do not get into discussion with the parent about their failure to collect their child in front of the member concerned, but suggest you will inform the welfare officer and ask they speak to the parent the following day.

### 3. As a coach on poolside, can I physically comfort a young person who is upset, can I congratulate a member who has done well by shaking their hand and can I assist a young member manually in the water?

The answer to all the above is yes but always in a reasonable and appropriate manner.

Be mindful that to comfort a young person who is upset, it is not always necessary or appropriate to place an arm around them. Sitting down and listening to them, and maybe holding their hand, can show concern for their situation. Often young people do get distressed if they compete and feel they have done a 'bad swim' and sometimes a coach can assist just by being positive, for example, saying "well the dive and turns were good, and we can look in training next week at the stroke issues."

You can certainly shake the hand of a member who has done well. This is often seen by a young person as high praise from the coach.

The concerns about manually assisting young members in the water when teaching or coaching, along with other handling issues, are addressed in the ASA guidance document *Teaching in the water and handling children*.



It has been written to advise and guide on how to safely handle young members in the water. This document can be found at [www.swimming.org](http://www.swimming.org).

- 4. I work mainly with able-bodied members at my organisation but I occasionally coach young disabled members, some of whom are just learning to swim and some who are ready to move up into squads. I am unsure on how to physically handle members with a disability safely when in the water, and how to integrate them when ready into the sessions I teach/coach with mainstream members.**

The ASA has published a document entitled *Inclusion of swimmers with a disability* which is available to all coaches and teachers at [www.swimming.org](http://www.swimming.org). The document includes guidance on what is safe and the appropriate handling of swimmers with a disability. This guidance should answer many of your questions but it is also advised that you undertake one of the ASA Continual Professional Development (CPD) courses such as *Integrating swimmers with a physical and sensory impairment into mainstream teaching and/or Integrating disabled swimmers into a mainstream coaching environment* to assist in your ongoing development and to inform your work with disabled members.





## Section 5: Templates, Forms and Checklists

- ASA Child Safeguarding Policy Statement
- ASA Referral Form
- ASA Reference Form
- Application Form
- Medical Information Form
- Child Photography – Parental Consent Form
- Child Photography – Refusal of Consent Form
- Template welcome letter to parents
- Template welcome letter to new members
- New members information checklist
- Behaviour Contract Templater

## ASA Child Safeguarding Policy Statement

The \_\_\_\_\_ organisation (club/squad/school) is committed to providing an environment in which all children and young people participating in its activities have a safe and positive experience.

In order to achieve this, the organisation agrees to:

1. Adopt and implement the policies and procedures in Wavepower in full.
2. Recognise that all children participating in the \_\_\_\_\_ organisation (regardless of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, ability or disability) have a right to enjoy their involvement in aquatics in a safe environment and be protected from harm.
3. Ensure that all individuals who work with children in the \_\_\_\_\_ organisation, whether paid or voluntary, provide a positive, safe and enjoyable experience for children.
4. Appoint a welfare officer with the necessary skills and training as outlined by the ASA who will take the lead in dealing with all child safeguarding matters raised within the organisation.
5. Ensure that the welfare officer's name and contact details are known to all staff, members and parents of members.
6. Ensure the welfare officer is available to discuss issues of concern on matters of safeguarding and deal with such concerns appropriately and in line with Wavepower.
7. Ensure that all individuals who work with children in the \_\_\_\_\_ organisation have undertaken the appropriate training, have had the relevant DBS checks, and adhere to the required practices for safeguarding children as outlined in Wavepower.
8. Ensure that all individuals who will be working or will work with children in the \_\_\_\_\_ organisation have been recruited in accordance with the ASA Safe Recruitment Policy.
9. Ensure that all individuals who work with children in the organisation have the appropriate training, code of conduct and good practice to follow in line with the guidance in Wavepower.
10. Provide all members of the organisation and parents of members with the opportunity to raise concerns in a safe and confidential manner if they have a concern about a child's welfare.
11. Ensure that all child safeguarding matters, whether they be concerns about child welfare or protection, are dealt with appropriately in accordance with the guidance for reporting and action in Wavepower.
12. Ensure that confidentiality is maintained appropriately and in line with the best interests of the child.
13. Ensure all papers relating to child safeguarding matters are held in a safe and secure manner.

## The ASA Referral Form

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

Name of Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 1 – Details of referrer (your details)

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

Position in Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 2 – Details of child concerned

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnic Origin: \_\_\_\_\_

Disability/Special Needs: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, give detail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Carers: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 3 – Details of adult/child against whom the allegation is made

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

Position in the organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_



**Section 4 – The incident/concern**

Date of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did you observe the incident/concern:  Yes/ No

If no, give details of the person who did

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

Position in Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Details: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Details of concern (include as many details as possible including time it happened, place, if any injuries were sustained, treatment required). Continue on separate sheet if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Child's account of what happened (please state what the child actually said or indicate if not their exact words). Continue on separate sheet if necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**For ASA Office use only**

Category of referral: (delete as appropriate)

Sexual      Bullying      Physical      Other



**Section 5 – Action taken by the organisation**

Police informed: Yes/No

If yes, give name of the police officer dealing: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/e-mail contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

Children’s Services informed: Yes/No

If yes name of social worker dealing: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/e-mail contact details: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical assistance required: Yes/No

If yes, give details: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parents informed Yes/No

Details of action taken (or attach report sheet seperately).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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



## ASA Reference Form

Applicant's name	
Applicant's address	
Applicant's Date of birth	
How long have you known this person?	
In what capacity?	
In your opinion is this person suitable to work with children and young people?	Yes/No (please delete as appropriate)
If no, please can you say why?	
Please could you comment on their skills?	
Their ability to work, and form appropriate relationships with children?	

Can you comment on the following as poor, good or excellent?

In your opinion, to what extent is the applicant's:	Poor	Good	Excellent
Ability to stay calm with children and young people			
Ability to motivate children?			
Coaching skills?			
Administrative skills?			
Trustworthiness?			
Reliability?			
Honesty?			
Any other comments?			

Please complete your details below.

Name	
Address	
Are you currently involved in swimming and if so, in what capacity?	
Phone Number(s)	
Signed	
Date	



## Application Form

### For members under 16 years of age

#### Applicant's Details

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Parents' Details

Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Father \_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_ Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ First Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address (If different from above): \_\_\_\_\_ Address (If different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### Contact Details

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please also complete the following forms attached

1. Medical information form
2. Photography consent or refusal of consent form
3. The members' Code of Conduct
4. Parent's Code of Conduct

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

Please return the form to: \_\_\_\_\_



## Medical Information Form

To be completed by members aged 18 years or over, or by parents/carers of members under 18 years. Please delete 'Yes' or 'No' as appropriate and complete further details as necessary.

Name of member	Date of birth

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as anyone with a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on his or her ability to carry out normal daily activities.

Do you consider this child to have an impairment?  Yes  No

If yes, what is the nature of their disability?

- Visual impairment   
  Learning disability   
  Hearing impairment  
 Physical disability   
  Multiple disability   
  Other (please specify)

### Medical information

Please detail below any important medical information that our organisation needs to know. Such as allergies, medical conditions e.g. asthma, epilepsy, orthopaedic problems, any current medication, special dietary requirements and/or any injuries.

Name of child's doctor and surgery

Doctor's phone number

I understand that, in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998, all efforts will be made to ensure that this information is accurate, kept up to date and secure and that it is used only in connection with the purpose and activities of the organisation. Information will not be kept once a person is no longer a member of the organisation. The information will be disclosed only to those members of the organisation for whom it is appropriate and relevant officers of the Amateur Swimming Association or British Swimming.



Signed (Member) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/Carer (if member is under 18 years) \_\_\_\_\_

### For parents/carers of members under 18 years

It may be essential at some time for the coach or team manager accompanying your son/daughter to have the necessary authority to obtain any urgent treatment which may be required whilst at a competition or event with \_\_\_\_\_. Would you therefore please complete the details on this form and sign below to give your consent.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ being the parent/carer of the above named child hereby give permission for the coach or team manager to give the immediately necessary authority on my behalf for any medical or surgical treatment recommended by competent medical authorities, where it would be contrary to my son/daughter's interest, in the doctor's medical opinion, for any delay to be incurred by seeking my personal consent.

Signature of consent by parent/carer: \_\_\_\_\_

Print full name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please return this form to: \_\_\_\_\_

## Child Photography Parental Consent Form

Note: this form must be read and completed after reading the ASA/ \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of organisation) Photography Guidance.

The \_\_\_\_\_ organisation may wish to take photographs of individual and/  
or groups of members under the age of 18 that may include your child during their membership of the  
organisation. All photographs will be taken and published in line with the ASA Photography Guidance. The  
\_\_\_\_\_ organisation requires parental consent to take and use all photographs.

Parents have a right to refuse agreement to their child being photographed.

As the parent or carer of \_\_\_\_\_ please complete the form below in respect  
of your child or children. Please note you can withdraw your consent in writing to the welfare officer at  
any time should you wish to.

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take photographs to use on the organisation's secure website:  | Consent given/Consent refused* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take photographs to use on the club's social networking sites:   | Consent given/Consent refused* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take photographs to include with newspaper articles:   | Consent given/Consent refused* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take photographs to use on the organisation's notice boards:   | Consent given/Consent refused* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Filming for training purposes only:  | Consent given/Consent refused* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employ a professional photographer (approved by the organisation)<br>who will take photographs in competitions/galas/meets/events: | Consent given/Consent refused* |

\*Delete as appropriate

Signed (parent/carer): \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please return this form to: \_\_\_\_\_



## Child Photography Refusal of Consent Form

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

I refuse permission for the taking and/or publication of **any** images of my child by the organisation's appointed photographer(s) in respect of \_\_\_\_\_ (activity).

Signed (parent/carer): \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please return this form to: \_\_\_\_\_

## Template welcome letter to parents

This letter is for you to use in full or as a basis for a letter to add to your welcome pack for new parents.

Dear Parent,

The organisation welcomes you and your child(ren) to the \_\_\_\_\_ (name of club/organisation)). We hope your child(ren) will enjoy the experience of being a member including the training, competitions and the social interaction with all of their fellow members. This letter will provide you with information that may be of assistance to new members. Please do ask me, the welfare officer, or any committee member or coach if you have other questions not covered in this letter.

Firstly who runs the organisation? A full list of the officers, committee members and coaches can be found on the notice board. Below is a list of some of those officers for your information.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ name and contact details \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary \_\_\_\_\_ name and contact details \_\_\_\_\_

Welfare Officer \_\_\_\_\_ name and contact details \_\_\_\_\_

Chief Coach \_\_\_\_\_ name and contact details \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Liaison Officer \_\_\_\_\_ name and contact details \_\_\_\_\_

We are a swim21 club/working towards becoming a swim21 club (delete as required) and follow the guidance in Wavepower for child safeguarding, the ASA Code of Ethics and codes of conduct. While we hope your child will be happy and content at the organisation, sometimes questions, concerns or issues may arise.

If you have a question regarding coaching you should in the first instance approach your child's coach. Do so at a time convenient to you both and please do not go on poolside and interrupt training sessions. The coaches will be happy to arrange a time before or after training to discuss any training issues/our organisation has a dedicated meeting which is held \_\_\_\_\_ where you can arrange an appointment to speak to the coach. (delete as appropriate) Please ask the parent liaison officer for details.

If you have a question or concern regarding child welfare, the welfare officer should be informed. Alternatively, there is a dedicated helpline for anyone wishing to raise a safeguarding or welfare concern directly to the ASA called Swimline – a Swimline poster with contact details can be found on the notice board.

Our organisation is committed to providing good child safeguarding practice for all our young members and we have adopted the ASA Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures manual – Wavepower, a copy of which is held by \_\_\_\_\_ or can be viewed and downloaded from [www.swimming.org](http://www.swimming.org). Our organisation is one where we accept that good safeguarding and fair play is paramount for all our young members.



Your child(ren) has already been/will be (delete as required) assessed as to what level they are currently achieving to place them in the appropriate training lane and competition level which is outlined below with other helpful information.

(Give details of the below list here as it relates to the child concerned.)

- Team coaches list.
- Details of training times.
- Details of competitions.
- Details of the decision making and procedure by which any parent can question i.e. they should approach the coach/team manager or whoever in the first instant.

The \_\_\_\_\_ (name of club/organisation) are always looking for parental help to run the organisation. You may offer to help or a member of the committee may approach you to see if you are able to assist. We are predominantly/totally a voluntarily-run organisation and we appreciate all the help parents can give us, however small.

Lastly, we have a parent's Code of Conduct which goes alongside similar codes for the coaches, officers and members. You will be asked to read and sign the parents' Code of Conduct and countersign that of your child/children.

And finally, we hope you and your child/children enjoy being a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ (name of club/organisation).

Kind regards

(Insert name)  
Welfare Officer

(Name of the club/organisation)

## Template welcome letter to new members

Dear (member – leave blank to fill in the name)

Welcome to the \_\_\_\_\_ (name of club/organisation). We hope you will have an enjoyable and happy time as a member of our organisation and that you make many new friends and enjoy training and competing with us.

Your parents have been given a letter which includes details of your training times and lane allocation. This letter is to give you some additional information you may find helpful now or in the future

### Coaching

As an ASA swim21 club/club (delete as appropriate) we are committed to helping you swim, to enjoy your training, learn to train hard and to your reach your potential. The coaches and teachers are here to help you do that, and have been trained to do so in a safe and proper manner. You should soon get to know your coach and if you have any concerns about training do talk things over with your coach and your parents.

### Safeguarding

You may wonder what we mean by safeguarding. Essentially, alongside our wish for you to enjoy and succeed at your sport, we want to ensure that you are safe and happy at the organisation and that we act upon anything that prevents that. That is what we call 'safeguarding our members'. You may ask what you are being safeguarded from. So for example, we want to make sure you are not being:

- Bullied.
- Treated differently to others.
- Hurt by another person on purpose.
- Not being listened to.

Preventing such behaviour is very important to us as an organisation and to achieve that we have a safeguarding manual called Wavepower. If you want to have a look at Wavepower, the welfare officer will have a copy that you can read or it can be viewed and downloaded from the organisation's website or from [www.swimming.org](http://www.swimming.org).

We know any bullying or poor behaviour to you would make you feel unhappy, so please do not feel you have to just put up with it. While we will do all we can to prevent anything happening, it is important if something or someone causes you to be unhappy that you tell someone. Tell your parent, your coach, the welfare officer or any other adult you feel happy to speak to. Any issues you raise will be dealt with.

To assist you here are some helpful details of how you can raise concerns:

- Your welfare officer is \_\_\_\_\_ and they can be contacted on \_\_\_\_\_
- The ASA also have a helpline called Swimline if you want to tell someone but not anyone in the organisation. The number is 0808 100 4001.



You will be asked to leave a number at which you can be contacted in the next 48 hours. If you feel you cannot wait that long for someone to talk to you, hang on and you will be put through to the NCPCC/ ChildLine helpline number who will answer your call immediately.

- Child Power is an ASA section of the ASA website just for young people like you. It has a message link so that you can send a concern in writing to the ASA Child Safeguarding Team who will then help you with whatever issue you have raised.
- Attached is a Child Power Leaflet. You can use the Your Voice section to put down your concern in writing and give to a parent or trusted adult in the organisation if you can't tell anyone directly.

### Codes of conduct

Just as we expect others to behave properly to you, we expect all our members to behave in an appropriate manner to each other as well as their coaches, all helpers, and all adults and young people you have contact with in competitions. We have a code of conduct that you and your parents will be asked to sign and return to the (name of club/organisation) \_\_\_\_\_. If you are unsure about any aspect of the code of conduct please feel free to ask.

We hope you will have a very happy and successful time while a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ (name of club/organisation).

From

(Insert name)  
Welfare Officer

(Name of the club/organisation)

### Note

Any additional information such as the organisation's named member representative on the committee and their details, club captains, etc. should be added where applicable.

## New members information checklist

It is important that organisations provide members, and their parents/carers if they are under 18, with information and guidance when they join the club.

The following list is not definitive, but should be used by organisations as a guide to ensure that any important information is given to, or collected from, new members and their parents/carers:

### Information to collect from new members

- Completed Medical Information Form
- Emergency contact details
- Completed and signed Member's Code of Conduct

### Information to give to new members

- Welcome letter and information pack to member
- Application form to be completed by members if aged 16 or over
- Directions to the organisation's website or notice board
- Directions to the resources available on the ASA website
- Introduce members to the welfare officer
- Details of how to contact the welfare officer should they have a child safeguarding concern or complaint
- Details of who Swimline are along with the contact telephone number
- Details of the organisations swim21 accreditation (if applicable)
- Introduce members to their coach or teacher
- Introduce members to other relevant helpers/officers at the organisation
- Details of the complaints/disciplinary processes
- Guidance on how to raise a complaint if their concern is **not** of a child safeguarding/welfare nature

### Information to collect from parents/carers

- Photography Consent Form or Refusal of Consent Form
- Emergency contact details
- Completed and signed Parent's Code of Conduct

### Information to give to parents/carers

- Welcome letter and information pack to parents
- Application form to be completed by parents if member is under 16
- Directions to the organisation's website or notice board
- Directions to the parent information section on the ASA website
- Introduce parents/carers to the welfare officer
- Details of how to contact the welfare officer should they have a child safeguarding concern or complaint
- Details of who Swimline are along with the contact telephone number
- Details of who Swimline are along with the contact telephone number
- Details of the organisations swim21 accreditation (if applicable)
- Introduce parents/carers to the member's coach or teacher
- Introduce parents/carers to the other relevant helpers/officers at the organisation
- Details of the complaints/disciplinary processes
- Guidance on how to raise a complaint if their concern is **not** of a child safeguarding/welfare nature



## Behaviour Contract Template

Contract between \_\_\_\_\_ (name of organisation)  
and \_\_\_\_\_ (name of member)

This contract has been drawn up to address incidents of poor behaviour by \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of member) at the \_\_\_\_\_ (name of organisation).

\_\_\_\_\_ (name of member) will abide by the code of conduct of the  
\_\_\_\_\_ (name of organisation).

\_\_\_\_\_ (name of member) will additionally not:

1. (Details of specific actions about which the concerns have been raised.)
2. (Details of specific actions about which the concerns have been raised.)
3. (Details of specific actions about which the concerns have been raised.)

\_\_\_\_\_ (name of parents) will be required to:

1. (Details of what is required of the parents.)
2. (Details of what is required of the parents.)
3. (Details of what is required of the parents.)

If the member is reported to have breached this contract or to have behaved in a way that would be a serious breach of the code of conduct the following steps should be taken:

1. The parents will be informed immediately.
2. The officers of the organisation (The ASA suggests officers should be named, specifically the chair, welfare officer and coach) will consider through the appropriate method if the allegations made are proven to be true.
3. If the action is proven and is a breach of this contract \_\_\_\_\_ (name of member) will be (Include details of what the organisation considered to be an appropriate response. This may be a temporary suspension).

Signed

Member: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Parent 1: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Parent 2: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

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



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