



## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Our Swimming Club wants to work with children, parents and the community to ensure the safety of children and to give them the very best start in their swimming life.

Our aims are to:

- create an environment in our swimming club which encourages children to develop a positive self image, regardless of race, language, religion, culture or home background;
- help children to establish and sustain satisfying relationships within their families, with peers, and with other adults;
- encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence;
- enable children to have self confidence; and
- work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all our children.

The legal framework for this work is:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Protection of Children Act
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1984
- 1999 The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act

Liaison with other bodies

- We work within the Area Child Protection Committee guidelines.
- We have a copy of Area Child Protection Guidelines available for coaches and parents to see.
- We notify the registration authority (ASA) of any incident or accident and any changes in our arrangements which affect the children.
- We have procedures for contacting the local authority on child protection issues, including maintaining a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of social workers, to ensure that it is easy, in any emergency, for the swimming club and social services to work well together.

- Records of the local NSPCC contacts are also kept.
- If a report is to be made to the authorities, we act within the Area Child Protection guidance in deciding whether we must inform the child's parents at the same time.

### ***Staffing and volunteering***

- Our named person who coordinates child protection issues is Joanne Harte .
- We provide adequate and appropriate staffing resources to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the swimming club are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- We abide by ASA requirements in respect of references and police checks for staff and volunteers, to ensure that no disqualified person or unfit person coaches at the swimming club or has access to the children.
- Volunteers / students do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our swimming club, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have lead to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We take security steps to ensure that we have control over who comes into the swimming club so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.

### ***Disciplinary Action***

Where a member of coaching staff or a volunteer is dismissed from the swimming club or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

If a member of coaching staff has an accusation made about them, they will be immediately suspended until the matter has been addressed, when they will be either permanently dismissed or reinstated within the swimming club.

### ***Training***

We seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in the swimming club to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and so that they are aware of the local authority guidelines

for making referrals. We ensure that all coaching staff know the procedures for reporting and recording their concerns within the swimming club.

## ***Planning***

The layout of the swimming pool allows for constant supervision.

## ***Complaints***

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about coaching staff or volunteer action within the swimming club, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We follow the guidance of the Area Child Protection Committee when investigating any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer has abused a child.
- We follow all the disclosure and recording procedures when investigating an allegation that a member of coaching staff or volunteer has abused a child as if it were an allegation of abuse by any other person.
- Responding to suspicions of abuse
- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, sexual and neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour, or in their play. Where such changes in behaviour occur, or where children's play gives cause for concern, the swimming club investigates.
- We allow investigation to be carried out with sensitivity. Coaching staff in the nursery take care not to influence the outcome either through the way they speak to children or ask questions of children.

## ***Disclosures***

Where a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff:

- offers reassurance to the child;
- listens to the child; and
- gives reassurance that she or he will take action.

The member of staff does not question the child

## ***Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures***

Coaching staff make a record of:

- The child's name;
- The child's address;
- The age of the child;

- The date and time of the observation or the disclosure;
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure;
- The exact words spoken by the child;
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported, with date and time; and
- The names of any other person present at the time.

These records are signed and dated and kept in a separate confidential file.

All members of coaching staff know the procedures for recording and reporting.

### ***Informing Parents***

Parents are normally the first point of contact. If a suspicion of abuse is recorded, parents are informed at the same time as the report is made, except where the guidance of the local Area Child Protection Committee does not allow this. This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser. In these cases the investigating officers will inform parents.

### ***Confidentiality***

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Area Child Protection Committee.

### ***Support to families***

- The swimming club takes every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relations among families, staff and volunteers in the group.
- The swimming club continues to welcome the child and the family whilst investigations are being made in relation to abuse in the home situation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child only if appropriate under the guidance of the Area Child Protection Committee.
- With the proviso that the care and safety of the child is paramount, we do all in our power to support and work with the child's family.