

Wavepower 2009 - 2011



The ASA Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

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the essential element

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## Wavepower 2009/11 - guidance to ASA members

Wavepower 2009/11 is the new Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) Safeguarding Policy and Procedure manual and replaces all previous ASA Child Protection Policies and Procedures documents.

The theme of Wavepower 2009/11 is unlike those which it replaces, with the emphasis on safeguarding children in line with current child safeguarding legislation and guidance. It consistently highlights throughout the document that the responsibility for child safeguarding in our clubs and related activities lies with all those involved in the sport and is not the sole responsibility of any one person at club, county or national level.

The format of Wavepower 2009/11 is very different from our previous policy and procedure documents. This manual is aimed at providing significantly more information in one document to the club officers, club members and members' parents and is subdivided into specific sections to make using it straightforward and concise. The ASA will be constantly updating the manual as required and would welcome feedback from users.

The club Welfare Officer will be the person most likely to use the guidance in Wavepower 2009/11 and it is they who will be responsible for holding and maintaining the manual as and when required. They will also be expected to make the manual available to all persons in the club who request to consult it.

The club Welfare Officer, acting for the club, will find the manual will help them guide the club committee to plan, prioritise and implement the various safeguarding activities that are necessary to protect the children within swimming. Wavepower 2009/11 also has a separate section for coaches/teachers, child members and parents.

The aim of such a comprehensive manual is to enable everyone in swimming to play their part in safeguarding children. It offers practical guidance for those who are directly involved in swimming with children, providing awareness of both mandatory requirements and good practice guidance.

Wavepower 2009/11 is also relevant to our county and regional structure and a copy will be made available to all county and regional welfare officers.

This document will be fully updated in 2012, 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 to keep the manual as up to date as possible.

Finally all clubs should adopt and implement the guidance manual, which replaces all prior child welfare policy documents of the ASA.



## Foreword



Keeping children and young people safe, happy and healthy is a priority for us all. Childhood should be a time for enjoyment, learning and exploration and we need to make it possible for children and young people to safely enjoy a range of activities and opportunities.

Swimming and water safety are important skills for children and young people to learn and help promote a healthy and active lifestyle. What's more, these skills could also one day save lives.

It is crucial that children learn these new skills in a safe environment. That is why I welcome the significant work the ASA, alongside the NSPCC, has done in recent years to promote the very highest standards in safeguarding.

I am pleased to add my support to Wavepower which is an important step forward for all those involved in aquatic activity and working with children and young people.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ed Balls'.

Rt Hon Ed Balls MP  
Secretary of State for Children, Schools  
and Families



Swimming remains the most popular sport and activity for children and we at the ASA believe it is really important that children and parents feel confident that they are swimming and having fun in a safe environment. This updated version of Wavepower provides our members and everyone in swimming with our policies and guidelines which should ensure that the needs of the child are central to everyone's action in the pool and that children can continue to have fun learning to swim for many years to come.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Sparkes'.

Mr David Sparkes  
Chief Executive  
Amateur Swimming Association

## Acknowledgements

The ASA has drawn on the work from a number of organisations during the production of the Wavepower 2009-2011 Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures document 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:

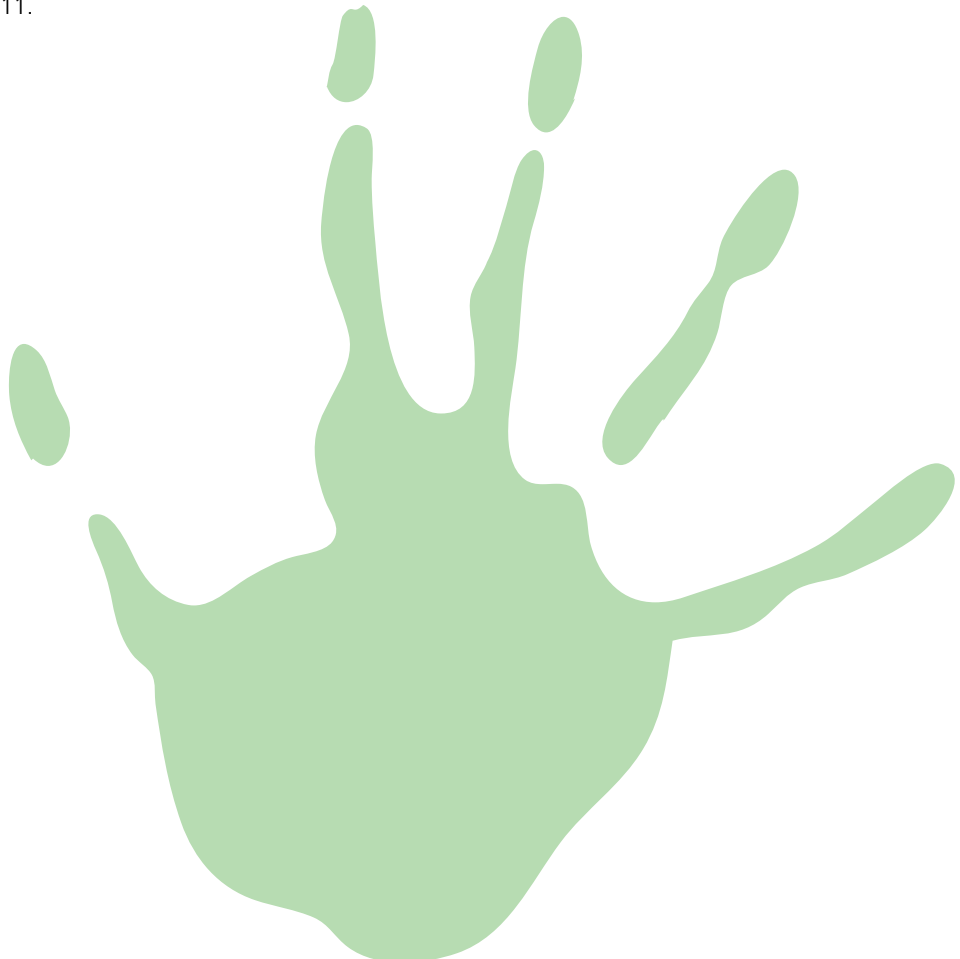
England and Wales Cricket Board

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

Nova Centurion Swimming Club

British Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association

Additionally the ASA would like to thank and acknowledge the ASA Youth Forum, Welfare Officers, parents, swimmers, volunteers and all those who work with children and young people in our clubs for their ideas and feedback on the content of Wavepower 2009-2011.



## Information sheet for clubs

### Club Welfare Officer

Name:

Tel:

### County Welfare Officer

Name:

Tel:

### Regional Welfare Officer

Name:

Tel:

### Local Authority Services Children Social Care Team

Tel:

Out Of Hours Contact Number

Tel:

### Police Child Abuse Investigation Team/Unit

Tel:

### National Governing Body

The ASA

Legal Affairs Department

Harold Fern House

Derby Square

Loughborough

LE11 5AL

Telephone: 01509 632270

Legal@swimming.org

Swimline: 0808 100 4001

### Signposting Help Desk

Tel: 01509 632275

signposting@swimming.org

### Other Services

Child Protection in Sport Unit

Tel: 0116 234 7278

Email: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk

### NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

Tel: 0808 800 5000

www.nspcc.org.uk

### Child line

Tel: 0800 1111

### Kidscape

Tel: 020 730 3300

## The ASA child safeguarding policy

### Introduction

The Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) believes that all children involved in its clubs and activities 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 the opportunity to achieve individual success.

The ASA is committed to ensuring that all children who participate in ASA activities should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be safeguarded from harm. It is the clubs, counties and regions who will ensure safeguarding at a local level and it is a key theme in Working Together 2006 that safeguarding is the responsibility of every adult in the ASA, whatever their role, to ensure the wellbeing of children.

Recent reports and research, including the government document "Every Child Matters" highlights this responsibility and the need for individuals, statutory and voluntary agencies, as well as all other organisations who work with children, to work together to achieve the best outcomes for our children and to safeguard them from harm.

"Every Child Matters", the overall Government Strategy for children, supported by legislation, guidance and policies, defines 5 key outcomes for children as follows:-

- Being healthy: enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle.
- Staying safe: being protected from harm and neglect.

- Enjoying and achieving: getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood.
- Making a positive contribution: being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour.
- Economic well being: not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life.

"Every Child Matters" places the responsibility for safeguarding children under the age of 18 with all adults who play a role in their lives. In an ASA club this refers to all who work, directly and indirectly, with children including those responsible for the administration and coordinating of the swimming club and its activities. Furthermore "Every Child Matters" identifies that basic skills and knowledge are required by these adults, both paid and voluntary, to meet the identified outcomes.

The Government's "Children's Workforce Strategy" identifies these Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce as:

- Effective communication and engagement with children, young people and families.
- Child and young person development.
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child.
- Supporting transitions.
- Multi-agency working.
- Sharing information.

The ASA has committed to develop the policies and guidelines within its current safeguarding structure to ensure children have a safe environment in which to participate in the sport and achieve to the best of their ability.

Wavepower 2009/11 sets out a framework for protecting and safeguarding children in swimming to meet the required standards of care that the sports governing body is committed to achieving and which children and their parents have a right to expect.

## Safeguarding children in swimming clubs

The ASA has produced Wavepower 2009/11 to assist in safeguarding and protecting all children in swimming. Wavepower 2009/11 is the ASA Child Safeguarding Policy and as such, the document must be adopted by all ASA registered swimming clubs.

Safeguarding children in your club should become an integral part of all club activities and be 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. The sport of swimming should be enjoyable and fun, including the competitive aspect at whatever level undertaken, giving the individual concerned a sense of achievement and satisfaction from taking part in the sport.

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

### Responsibility to safeguard children

The Children Act (2004) made it clear that safeguarding children is the responsibility of all, including those who work with children in whatever capacity. It is the sports clubs responsibility, through good recruitment practices, to ensure those who are deemed to be unsuitable to work with children are not allowed to do so in our sport. The current Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and the new Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) will be an important, but not sole, part of safe recruitment.

The ASA Mission includes the statement "to ensure everyone has the opportunity to learn to swim." This is linked to the Government's objective that every child should be able to swim 25m unaided by the age of 11. In this aspect swimming is unique as a sport as it is likely swimming teachers and coaches will have contact with the majority of children in the country at one time or another, many of whom will go on to join ASA clubs or affiliated clubs within organisations such as schools and independent swim schemes.

The ASA "Swimming Strategic Plan 2005 to 2009" states that there will be "Implementation of a comprehensive Child Protection Policy, adopted by the clubs, with a continuous training

## Statutory duties, roles and responsibilities for all organisations Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006 – 2.8



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and awareness programme” which is essential to the safeguarding of children in the sport, whatever the level of achievement or capacity in which they take part.

To achieve this the ASA acknowledge and require clubs to acknowledge that they have a Duty of Care to safeguard children from harm. Clubs and their members must follow the guidance in this document to safeguard children from harm and act appropriately if a child is identified at being at risk of harm. They must also meet the requirements of complimentary policies, i.e. the Equity policy.

Swimming has links with schools and colleges under the PE and Sport Strategy for Young People (PESSYP) initiative and follows the guidelines laid down by the NSPCC, CPSU, DCFS, Sport England for PESSYP and funded National Governing Bodies.

#### The ASA commitment

The ASA is committed to working in partnership with the Police and Children’s Social Care Services to enable them to carry out their statutory duties to investigate concerns and protect all children from harm. To enable this to happen the ASA is developing closer links with the Local Safeguarding Children’s Boards (LSCBs) by making a copy of Wavepower 2009/11 available to all LSCB managers. To use in accordance with their procedures.

The ASA is committed to developing policies and procedures to assist clubs in safeguarding children through links with professional organisations including the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU). The ASA has developed a working relationship with KIDSCAPE,

Left: A diagram, which demonstrates the statutory guidance, which requires 10 mandatory arrangements to be in place in any organisation that provides services for, or works with children.

Provided by kind permission of the CPSU.

the national bullying charity, to further strengthen the commitment to prevent and deal with bullying in clubs and has developed an anti bullying policy with them, which many other sports have now taken and adapted. The ASA anticipates developing closer Links with The Child Online Protection Centre (CEOP) in the next few years.

#### Key principles underlying the ASA safeguarding policy

- The ASA is committed to all children who take part in ASA activities to have fun and enjoyment 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, sex, gender, culture, disability, racial origin, background, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.
- 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 Procedures and the statutory guidance “Working Together to Safeguard Children” April 2006.
- At all times confidentiality will be maintained appropriately and the child’s safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration when making decisions on whether to share information about them.
- The ASA will support all adults involved in the sport to understand their roles and responsibility for 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 sports persons, and all participants involved in the sport can access advice and guidance on a child welfare matter from the ASA Swimline helpline, the NSPCC directly, the ASA Child Protection Officer or the statutory agencies.
- All ASA clubs and counties must adopt the ASA child safeguarding policy and will ensure that the policy is updated as appropriate.

#### Confidentiality and information sharing

The Government Document “Every Child Matters” states information sharing is important to:

1. 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.
2. Safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

The ASA recognise and promote 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 sharing information with appropriate and relevant persons when not to 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 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 maximize 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 the 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 well-being of the child.

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

The Government Guidance document "Information Sharing for Practitioners" states 6 key points on information sharing:

1. You should explain to children, young people and families at the outset, openly and honestly, what and how information will, or could be shared and why, and seek their agreement. The exception to this is

where to do so would put that child, young person or others at increased risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of serious harm, or if it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime (see glossary for definition) including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.

2. You must always consider the safety and welfare of a child or young person when making decisions on whether to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration.

3. You should, where possible, respect the wishes of children, young people or families who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information, if in your judgment on the facts of the case, there is sufficient need to override that lack of consent.

4. You should seek advice where you are in doubt, especially where your doubt relates to a concern about possible significant harm to a child or serious harm to others.

5. You should ensure that the information you share is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, shared only with those people who need to see it, and shared securely.

6. You should always record the reasons for your decision - whether it is to share information or not.

The Government document "What to do if you feel a Child is being abused" (see the glossary for website details) summarises the above information in Appendix 1.

The ASA is committed to ensuring no child is disadvantaged or placed at risk through a failure to share information. If you are unsure on whether to share information advice can be sought from the ASA ICPO or the 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.

## Remember...

The ASA does not expect you to make a decision on whether a child is at risk of or likely to suffer harm. The ASA does expect you to act upon your concern properly, in line with best practice and within an appropriate time scale.

## Duty of care by ASA members and clubs

All organisations and individuals have a Duty of Care to safeguard children when they are participating in their activities. The NSPCC document "Briefing Paper 01/06 - Duty of Care\*" highlights that a Duty of Care may be imposed by law or statute, by contract or by acceptance of the individual. While the club Welfare Officer has specific duties to deal with and raise issues of concern regarding children in the club they do not have the sole responsibility in safeguarding children or promoting good safeguarding practice. The ASA recognise that a Duty of Care exists for all adults in positions of responsibility in respect of the child members in their club including coaches, teachers, poolside helpers and club officers. The guidance in Wavepower 2009/11 is aimed at helping all ASA clubs and responsible individuals within it to meet that Duty of Care.

Safeguarding is about ASA clubs and their members acknowledging that this Duty of Care exists. To provide proper safeguarding clubs must put in place measures to minimise the likelihood of

"foreseeable harm" arising. The type of harm referred to is outlined later in this section.

To achieve a Duty of Care through proper safeguarding all ASA affiliated clubs and 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 2.3.2 and 2.3.3. Wavepower 2009/11 sets out the principles and procedures of the ASA child protection procedures and the club must ensure that these principles and practices are made known and followed by everyone to safeguard children.

All ASA clubs and affiliated organisations must act upon the guidance in Wavepower 2009/11. The Welfare Officer is the lead person in clubs from whom advice and guidance can be gained in safeguarding matters. Additionally, members can contact the Legal Affairs Department and ICPO for advice on procedure or direct action by the ICPO or contact the Local Authority

Children's Social Care Services or the Police Child Abuse investigation team when the aforementioned are not available or the circumstances require immediate referral and to delay would fail to safeguard or place at risk a child or children. The contact details of the ASA departments, as well as those of National Specialist Help lines, are to be found in the front of this document. The contact details for the local statutory child protection agencies should be completed by the club Welfare Officers in the front of this document.

Members may also contact the ASA signposting helpdesk if they have a problem or concern and are unsure on whom to ask for help. Contact details for the helpdesk are available at the front of this document.

To assist all clubs to meet the duty of care, Wavepower 2009/11 identifies clearly policies and procedures they must follow to provide proper safeguarding, actions the clubs must take when a concern is identified and what support is available to all concerned.

\*Obtainable from [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

### The following actions are required for a club to meet its duty of care

- The adoption of the ASA Wavepower 2009/11 document in full.
- Promoting to all club members that a safe environment is paramount and failures in safeguarding will be acted upon in line with the policy document.
- The club child protection policy document should be promoted and made available to all parents and swimmers, club employees and officers, voluntary helpers and staff as required.
- The club must adopt the ASA whistle blowing policy, and ensure they promote an environment where legitimate concerns can be raised without fear of recrimination or victimisation.

- The club must designate a person in the club who is responsible to ensure all appropriate CRB checks are completed.
- The club must provide an open door environment.

### Promote and follow good practice in terms of recruitment of staff and volunteers.

- Following the ASA recruitment policy for staff that work with children.
- All staff and helpers to sign up to the child protection policy.
- Appoint and train one or two welfare officers in line with the recommendations in this document.
- Ensure the club staff and volunteers who have direct access to children

through their involvement in the club are CRB checked in line with ASA policy and have training as required for the role undertaken.

- Ensure all relevant persons who work directly with child attend a Safeguarding Children in Sport course.
- The club must have a code of conduct for all teachers, coaches, poolside helpers, swimmers and parents and follow the ASA code of ethics.
- The club must ensure equal opportunity for all, irrespective of difference.

### Adopt ASA good practice in terms of children and their parents

- Provide parents and swimmers with a welcome/information pack including updated information regarding child welfare in the club.
- Parents should actively seek out a good club as well as supporting the club to ensure good practice in safeguarding.
- The club, its staff and volunteers should recognise and respond to the needs of children with special needs.
- The club should regularly communicate with parents and swimmers concerning child welfare and safeguarding matters.
- The club should follow ASA guidance on supervising children within the pool and changing room, and with events and competitions held.
- The club should ensure the ASA equal opportunity and equity policies are adopted and adhered to appropriately.
- The club should adopt, publicise and follow the ASA anti bullying policy.

### Provide appropriate guidance to coaching staff

- 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. To fail to do so puts all concerned at risk of allegation.
- Ensure that all trips away follow ASA guidance in Safe Sport Away including the provision of written consent, up to date health and contact details on each individual club swimmer and agreement to act in loco parentis if the parent is not accompanying the child.
- The club should adopt the ASA "missing child policy".
- The club should adopt the ASA policy on the persistent failure by parents and carers to collect swimmers from training.
- Ensure that the ASA photography and video policy and mobile phone and electronic communications policy are adopted by the club.

### Act upon any concerns appropriately

- The club must deal with all complaints in line with rules of confidentiality, and complying with the ASA policy and guidance.
- The club must keep a written record of any concerns of poor practice or child welfare related incidents and accidents together with full details of action taken. These records must be kept in a secure manner and copies should be sent to the ASA ICPO as appropriate.
- Offer support to any individual who raises concerns and allegations of abuse.

- Use the services of the ASA Independent Child Protection Officer to advise and guide and take direct action as required.
- The club should act in line with ASA policy and procedures through which complaints and concerns raised will be dealt with appropriately and in line with ASA policy.
- Know how to contact the statutory agencies.

### Coaches and Teachers

- All coaches and teachers have a duty of care to swimmers.
- The ASA code of ethics must be adhered to at all times - this can be found on the ASA website at [www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org) and then following the link to corporate - legal where the code of ethics is then listed to view or download. Hard copies can also be requested from the signposting helpdesk at [signposting@swimming.org](mailto:signposting@swimming.org).
- Section 4 of this document details the requirements on coaches and teachers to provide for a duty of care.

## Definitions of abuse

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child.

A child may be abused or neglected by someone who:

- Inflicts harm.
- Fails to act to prevent harm.

A child may be abused by:

- A family member.
- By a person within an institutional or community setting.
- By a person known to them or more rarely by a stranger\*.
- An adult or adults, or another child or children.

\*It is recognised through research that children are more likely to be abused by a member of their immediate or extended family, someone within their community or a person in a position of trust than by a stranger.

### 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.

In swimming an example of physical abuse may be the imposed use of performance enhancing drugs or persistent training, which is beyond the capacity of the individual leading to physical harm.

### Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child

such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

- It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.
- It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- It may involve 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, though it may occur alone.

Within swimming an example of emotional abuse may be when a coach continuously criticises a swimmer, uses sarcasm, name-calling and generally belittles the young person. Parents can emotionally abuse a swimmer by having too high expectations and placing unrealistic pressure on the young person with negative constant 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.

- The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.
- They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Child sex abusers can come from any professional, racial or religious background, and can be male or female. They are not always adults-children and young people can also behave in a sexually abusive way. Usually the abuser is a family member or someone known to the child, such as a family friend. Some individuals will target a sport that allows access to children specifically to commit acts of sexual abuse.

Abusers may act alone or as part of an organised group. After the abuse, they will put the child under great pressure not to tell anyone about it. They will go to great lengths to get close to children and win their trust. For example, by choosing employment that brings them into contact with children, or by pretending to be children in Internet chat rooms run for children and young people.

Sexual abuse has been identified within swimming. Coaches and other club officers are in a position to form trusting relationships with swimmers and sexual abuse is most often based on abuse of that trust by a trusted adult.

## Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, 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 parent or carer failing to:

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

Neglect in swimming could be a coach/official failing to ensure the safety of a young person, exposing them to undue cold or to unnecessary risk or injury, and often highlights a failure in duty of care.

## Bullying

Bullying is repeated deliberate actions by one or more people that causes hurt to an individual or group and where it is difficult for the bullied person(s) to prevent or deal with the bullies actions. The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to young people, to the extent that it affects

their health and development or, at the extreme, causes them significant harm (including self-harm).

The anti bullying charity Kidscape defines bullying as a child encountering bullying attacks that includes:

- Physical: Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and other forms of violence or threats.
- Verbal: Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- Emotional: Excluding (sending to Coventry), tormenting, ridicule, humiliation.

Bullying can occur between:

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

In all cases it is not acceptable within swimming.

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

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

## Harassment

Harassment is an act that is unwanted by the recipient. It may be the provision of items or unwanted actions from another person but by definition it is the unwanted nature of the action or item that distinguishes the nature of the act to be harassment. It is for any given individual to determine for themselves what is acceptable to them and what they regard as offensive.

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 being suggestive sexual remarks; racist insults or jokes; verbal abuse or foul language exclusion; unwelcome attention. The impact of harassment for the individual can be profound. Harassment can lead to the child feeling unhappy, demoralized or undervalued as a person. Harassment is often a constant ongoing type of abuse where the individual causes extreme distress by the repeated action, usual verbally. The ASA is committed to prevent and deal with harassment incidents in the sport.



## Indicators of abuse

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.

The referrals of the ASA ICPO over recent years reflect this with less than 1% of referrals being made directly by children to the ASA and only 10% of cases being through disclosure by the child to a trusted adult\*. It is important for clubs to recognise and consider this in situations where the indications of possible abuse are observed or identified and ensure all such concerns are acted upon appropriately.

Abuse is not always easy to identify. Children and young people can be bruised in everyday life by falling off bikes and 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 a view that a child may be being abused.

Some indicators of abuse are:

- The child or young person discloses a concern and describes what may be an abusive act.
- Another person raises concern about the wellbeing of a child or young person.
- Unexplained or concerning injuries such as burns, cuts, and bruises situated in areas of the child's body which are not normally prone to injury through for example play activity.
- Physical injury where the explanation given is inconsistent.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour such as a child becoming withdrawn, quiet or aggressive/verbally violent.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness and/or behaving in a sexualised manner.
- Eating disorder i.e. a child is overeating or showing a loss of appetite.
- Excessive weight loss or weight gain for no obvious reason.
- Physical appearance becomes unkempt.
- The child or young person is withdrawn and isolated themselves from the group and seems unable to make friends.
- The child or young person is prevented from socialising with other children.
- The child or young person displays a distrust of adults.
- Behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go to school, training or sports club.
- A drop in performance at school or in the sport.
- Physical signs such as stomachaches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed-wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes and bingeing, for example, on food, cigarettes or alcohol.
- A shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions.
- A high turnover of club members.

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

\*2006 to 2008 ASA referral report. Remember. The ASA does not expect the adults involved in the sport to decide a child has been abused but it is the responsibility of all adults in the sport to act upon their concerns

## ASA equality, diversity and inclusion statement for child safeguarding

### Equality, diversity and inclusion

1. The ASA and British Swimming have committed themselves to tackling forms of discrimination and to strive to become inclusive of all those who want to participate in swimming (as competitors, officials, coaches and administrators) irrespective of their race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and faith and ability.

2. This Policy Statement includes the Association's commitment to address equality, diversity and inclusion in swimming. To this end the Association will not tolerate:

- discrimination on the grounds set out in 1 above
- harassment
- bullying
- abusive or insensitive language
- inappropriate behaviour detrimental to any individuals or groups of individuals.

3. The ASA and British Swimming are governed by UK law and will seek to ensure that its participants are committed to addressing its responsibilities under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976, Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Equal Pay Act 1970, Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Human Rights Act 1998, Disability Discrimination Act (Amendment) 2005, Equality Act 2006.

4. All participants, coaches, officials and volunteers in all aquatic disciplines must address this responsibility to support equality, diversity and inclusion in our sport.

### ASA/British Swimming Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

5. 'Equal Opportunity is about celebrating difference and diversity and as such providing a swimming structure that can respond to this in a proactive and positive manner'.

The ASA and British Swimming are totally committed to the principals and practice of equal opportunities across all of their aquatic disciplines, both as an employer, provider and as facilitator of such practices by all their members. In our work with key partners, such as swimmers, clubs, teachers, coaches, officials and administrators, we will advocate our policies to make every effort to ensure that all participation has equality, diversity and inclusion at its core.

6. Swimming is a 'sport for all'. It can and should be enjoyed and made accessible to everyone and to achieve this:

- The ASA/British Swimming is committed to work towards ensuring that swimming is accessible to the many rather than the few.
- The ASA/British Swimming recognise the need to acknowledge the diversity of provision that is required to ensure that all people, regardless of their race, sex/gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, social or economic background can access swimming and develop at a level that is appropriate to them.
- The ASA/British Swimming recognise the need to celebrate differences and diversity of provision as a means of creating entitlement and accessibility to our structures.
- The ASA/British Swimming recognise that equal opportunity is about recognizing that people are different and therefore require different provision.
- The ASA/British Swimming recognise the need to consult widely in order to respond to diversity.
- The ASA/British Swimming recognise the need to become more inclusive in our work and engage with a wider cross section of society to bring to all people the opportunities and benefits that swimming and its aquatic disciplines offer.

### Addressing equal opportunities

7. In addressing equal opportunities, the ASA/British Swimming will respond to issues of diversity and inclusion by:

- Recognising that swimming as an organisation - our staff, swimmers, coaches, teachers, officials and administrators need to adapt and work flexibly in order to respond to the needs of a wide and diverse range of people.
- Taking positive action to increase the involvement from under-represented groups in all aspects of our organisation.
- In doing so the ASA/British Swimming supports four key principles as being fundamental to ensuring that everyone can participate in our sport and the achievement of equality of opportunity:
  - Entitlement: People have a right to participate in and access quality and appropriate experiences within swimming.
  - Accessibility: It is the responsibility of the ASA - our teachers, coaches, officials and administrators - to adapt provision to fit the needs of the many.
  - Inclusion: Wherever and whenever possible, all to access the same provision.
  - Integrity: Whatever we do as an Association to change or adapt provision, it must be of equal worth, challenging, relevant and in no way patronising.

### Lines of responsibility

8. The ASA/British Swimming will strive to become an organisation that values diversity and in order to achieve this we recognise that there must be clear lines of responsibility between all segments of the organisation.

### The ASA/British Swimming as an employer:

9. The ASA/British Swimming aspires to provide a diverse workforce, a composition of which reflects that of the broader community in terms of gender, ethnicity and disability. In order to bring about this diversity we undertake to:

- Provide full and fair considerations for all job/role and applications.
- Assist all our employees to realise their full potential by ensuring that they receive fair consideration of their training and career development needs and promotion opportunities.
- Wherever possible modify employment practices and procedures to reduce barriers experienced by members of disadvantaged social groups in seeking and during employment with the Association.
- Maintain records in recruitment, training and employment and use this information as a means of identifying areas of inequality.
- Require all our employees to undergo relevant training before taking part in recruitment and selection.
- Regularly review our recruitment, selection, training and promotion procedures to ensure that they are fair and reflect current best practice.

### The ASA/British Swimming as a membership organisation

10. The ASA/British Swimming is committed to encouraging membership from all sectors of the community. To achieve this we undertake to:

- Promote an open and honest culture that values diversity.
- Communicate widely, ensuring that our messages can be understood and appreciated by all.

- Positively encourage the involvement of all people, regardless of their gender, race, disability, age and social background.
- Work to redress the effects of discrimination.
- Change attitudes and working practices to ensure that everyone can feel a valued member of the Association.

### Teachers and Coaches

11. In our training and development of teachers and coaches, we will strive to ensure that they:

- Establish and implement professional and ethical values and practice.
- Promote and apply the principles and practices of equal opportunities.
- Promote positive images of people with special needs.
- Have a commitment to providing entitlement and access to all their professional activities.
- Encourage high expectations and standards of achievement from all they teach.
- Involve everyone in meaningful and appropriate activity to ensure a quality experience.
- Help everyone to achieve their full potential.

### Officials and Administrators

12. In our involvement of officials and administrators we will expect them to:

- Adopt, promote and practice the values of the Association.
- Ensure that participation can be enjoyed by all.
- Provide meaningful and appropriate experiences, which recognise and value the diversity of the participants.
- Actively encourage the participation and involvement of people from disadvantaged groups of the community.

### Policy into practice

13. The ASA/British Swimming recognises that to successfully implement our policies we will require the commitment of everyone involved in the Association. People's attitudes, views and working practices may have to change to ensure that an inclusive agenda is accepted by all and throughout the sport.

14. This will require the Association to respond to issues of equality by creating a series of comprehensive action plans that will state in detail how the Association and all that embrace its structures move towards a swimming structure that is more inclusive.

15. This policy should be read in conjunction with the ASA/ British Swimming's current Equal Opportunities Policy, Harassment and Bullying Policy and Equality Action Plans.

In addition to the ASA equality, diversity and inclusion statement above the ASA also recommends that clubs also refer to the Government Document entitled "Working Together to Safeguard Children". Prejudice and discrimination can prevent some children getting the help they need and everyone involved in working with children and young people should take steps to combat discrimination and actively include all children and young people in their safeguarding measures.

This document is available to view at [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk). Chapter 11 specifically deals with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who may be particularly vulnerable.

## Glossary

In recent years there have been many changes in the safeguarding of children.

The following will help clarify how the current terminology and titles relate to past policy documents and training material.

### Terminology

#### "A Child"

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout this document and denotes all persons under the age of 18.

#### "Working together to safeguard children"

A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children produced by Government in April 2006

#### "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused"

A government publication (2006) useful for all adults who work with children.

### Statutory Agencies

#### Children's Social Care Services

The services formerly known as Social Services. The name may vary from county to county and teams are sometimes known as the "Children, Schools and Family" team.

#### Local Safeguarding Children Boards

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) are newly formed strategic bodies which have responsibilities under the Children Act 2004 to help ensure that children are safeguarded properly by the "key agencies" involved with children working effectively together. They put the former area child protection committees (ACPC) on a statutory footing.

The Local Safeguarding Boards can assist clubs through:

- Offering recognised child safeguarding courses for clubs at low or no cost.
- Producing the local inter agency guidance and child protection procedures.
- Provide local resources to clubs through "Local Safeguarding through Sport" sub groups. They may also be active in providing child safeguarding conferences for local sporting organisations.

The core membership of the LSCB is set out in the Children Act 2004, and includes local authorities, health bodies, the police and others. The objective of LSCB is to coordinate and ensure the effectiveness of their member agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Every county council has a LSBC with a LSCB manager listed on the "Every Child Matters" website.

#### Police Child Abuse Investigation Team/Unit

Formerly known as the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team. The above title is not generic and may vary according to the police body.

The role of the Police Child Abuse Investigation Team is to investigate alleged crimes against children by family members, by other children and by those in a position of trust over them, for example, sports coaches and teachers.

#### "Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children"

The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

### Child Protection

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare and refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are at risk of suffering, significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

### Relevant acts and government guidance

- The Children Acts 1989 and 2004.
- The Protection of Children Act 1999.
- The Police Act 1997.
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- The Criminal and Court Services Act 2000.
- The Human Rights Act 1998.
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- The Data Protection Act 1998.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children HM Government 2006 [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk).
- Co-operating to safeguard Children 2003(NI).
- Caring for the Young and Vulnerable - Home Office guidance for preventing the abuse of trust 1999.
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2006. Obtain from [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk) - This is a particularly useful document for all those who work directly with or have responsibility for children in clubs.
- Every Child Matters. Obtain from [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)
- Staying Safe Action Plan. Obtain from [www.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk)
- Every Child Matters - Information Sharing - [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00340](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00340)

All relevant Acts and Home Office guidance documents can be obtained from [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk)