

VERULAM AMATEUR SWIMMING CLUB

(Affiliated with Swim England East Region)

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Verulam Amateur Swimming Club follows the guidance, policies and procedures on child protection as laid down by Swim England in Wavepower. The Swim England document can be found at <http://www.swimming.org/swimengland/wavepower-child-safeguarding-for-clubs/>

These child protection procedures stem from the following principles

- The child's welfare is the first consideration.
- All children 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.
- Swim England and Verulam, as an associated club, have responsibilities to ensure that all individuals who work with children, whether paid or voluntary, provide a positive, safe and enjoyable experience for children.
- Swim England has a responsibility to maintain confidentiality in all cases involving child protection in line with the current legislation. Swim England will not tolerate, within its associated clubs, poor practice in dealing with child welfare.

1. WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

It's generally acknowledged that there are four main types of abuse - **Physical, Sexual, Emotional and Neglect**.

PHYSICAL ABUSE may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm or deliberate ill health to a child. It might also occur if a child is forced to train beyond his/her capabilities.

SEXUAL ABUSE involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. It may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts, involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child that adversely affects their development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, and inadequate, or where inappropriate expectations are put upon them. In a sporting context this may include severe parental or coaching pressure to succeed. Racially and sexually abusive remarks constitute emotional abuse and it can be a feature of bullying.

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, such as failing to provide shelter, food, clothing, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs. In a sporting context it could also mean failing to ensure they are safe or exposing them to harm, in addition BULLYING currently accounts for a high proportion of referrals to Swim England. A separate anti bullying policy has been written by Swim England with the assistance of KIDSCAPE. The guidance in Swim England Wavepower Child Protection document should be followed in any case where bullying has been reported or observed within the club setting.

All Adults involved in swimming have a responsibility to report concerns of a child abuse nature appropriately and to act in a manner at all times that keeps children from harm.

2. PROCEDURES



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Please remember it is not your responsibility to decide whether a child is being abused, but we are asking you to act on your concerns. It is your responsibility to ensure the concerns raised are passed on appropriately.

Verulam Amateur Swimming Club has a club welfare officer as detailed on this document and on the list of committee members published on notice boards, website and in the club newsletter. This person has the knowledge of Swim England policy and procedure to advise anyone with a child welfare concern. They should always be involved in any concern raised within the club unless they are in some way implicated in the concern. As a member, official or parent involved in an Swim England affiliated club you should follow the guidelines as outlined below:

- If the child or young person is in immediate danger or has been physically injured, ensure they are safe and contact the police or social services.
- If the child is not in immediate danger but you have concerns, either:

Discuss the concerns with your club welfare officer or a club official who will advise you on the correct procedure for referring your concern appropriately.

Or

Ring the Swimline number 0800 100 4001 displayed on the club notice board. The club welfare officer will be able to inform you on how to refer your concerns to gain appropriate advice and action.

- Make a note of what you've seen or heard but don't delay passing on the information. As soon as possible complete the Swim England referral form available from the club welfare officer or the Swim England website.

NB You or the club welfare officer/ official should, in every case send a completed referral form to the Swim England Legal Department to advise them of your concern and to whom you have reported it.

Address the letter to:
 Child Safeguarding Team
 Swim England Legal Affairs Dept.,
 Harold Fern House,
 Derby Square,
 Loughborough LE11 5AL

PLEASE REMEMBER - it's not your responsibility to decide whether a child is being abused but we are asking you to act on your concerns.

When a concern is referred to Swim England and further action is required you will receive a copy of Swim England protocol document. This outlines what possible actions will be taken and what further contact will be made with the referrer. This document is located in the appendix section of the Swim England guide.

3. GUIDANCE

Action to take if a child tells you that he or she is being abused:

- Stay calm
- Don't promise to keep it to yourself
- Listen to what the child says and, please, take it seriously
- Only ask questions if you need to identify what the child is telling you - don't ask the child about explicit details



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- Make a detailed note of what the child is telling you but as advised in the previous section, please don't delay passing on the information

4. ROLE OF THE CLUB WELFARE OFFICER

- To have an understanding of child protection, and how best practice and the use of the criminal record bureau checks can help prevent child abuse. To assist Swim England to safeguard children and young people in swimming and to implement the Swim England child protection plan at club level.
- To do this by working to the Swim England policy document and by consultation with the legal affairs department and the Independent child protection officer of Swim England.
- To ensure all persons who have significant contact with children in the club complete a DRB check when they join the club or when requested to if they are existing club personnel.
- To have details of the following contact numbers:

Swimline

The Swim England Legal Affairs Department

The Local Social Services Department

The Local Child Protection Police Department

N.B. Child Protection Police and SSD have an out of hours service

- To have an understanding of the role of the police and social services in child protection and how to make referrals as necessary through the Swim England Legal Affairs Department or directly in an emergency.
- To ensure all club swimmers, parents, officials, teachers and coaches are aware of the child protection policy and procedure of the Club and Swim England and make available copies of relevant club and Swim England documents.
- To be available to advise any person in the club who has a concern of a child protection nature of the appropriate procedure to follow to refer the concern appropriately. To maintain appropriate records of all concerns raised.
- To promote best practice within the club at all times and question issues arising from poor practice and ensure the club committee deals with them appropriately. If necessary refer concerns of poor practice to the Swim England legal affairs department
- To promote and raise awareness of child protection training available and to ensure all persons undertake appropriate Child Protection training according to their role.
- To sit on the club management committee and ensure the issue of child welfare in the club is raised, monitored and reviewed appropriately. To advise the committee on actions required when child welfare issues are referred.
- To ensure confidentiality is maintained at all times by all members of the club committee over issues of a child protection nature.
- To promote anti-discriminatory practice within the swimming club.
- To have an awareness of equity issues and the Swim England equity policy.
- To ensure Swimline notices are displayed at club training venues.
- To refer all concerns of a child protection nature to the Swim England Legal Affairs Department for action/ information.
- To ensure club policies and practices are reviewed every 3 years and revised appropriately

Verulam Amateur Swimming Club's Child Welfare Officer is: Pippa Hopkins, she can be contacted via the Verulam Website (Contact us tab)

