



AquaKidz Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy

Ensuring that children are safeguarded is a key part of how swim schools operate and help to provide a safe, happy and fun environment in which children can learn to swim and develop their skills.

The responsibility to safeguard children does not belong to any one person but instead belongs to everyone who plays a part in delivering our sporting activities. [Wavepower](#) is a document produced by Swim England, intended for anyone involved in these activities and offers practical guidance and information on mandatory requirements and good practice.

Statement of Principles

- AquaKidz seeks to provide a safe, secure and positive environment in which children and adults can learn to swim and develop their full aquatic potential.
- AquaKidz is committed to a value system within which children and adults are entitled to be treated with respect and understanding so that they may participate in any activity without fear of intimidation. Any behaviour which undermines this is unacceptable.
- The Swimming School seeks to ensure that those acting on behalf of the Swimming School actively listen to children and act appropriately on information received in order to ensure that a safe, secure and positive outcome is provided.
- All children have a right to feel secure, to be able to trust without fear and to expect protection from adults in positions of care and responsibility. They also have a right to take part in activities in an environment that does not subject them to cruelty or create unhappiness.
- AquaKidz will promote the positive aspects of sport and has a zero tolerance approach to the use of inappropriate or abusive language, inappropriate relationships, bullying, harassment, discrimination or physical violence.
- AquaKidz will respect the spirit of sport adhering to the rules and laws in and out of the pool, incorporating the concept of friendship and respect for others.

Our Rules to Keep Children Safe

No adult will be left alone with individual children.

The lay-out of the swimming pools allows for constant supervision of all children. However, should it be deemed necessary to enter the changing rooms with an individual child, that member of Staff should seek support of another member of Staff, or a reliable adult.

Never do personal things for a child which they can do for themselves.

Parents should not be in the changing room while children are changing unless their child is of an age where help is required from parents (usually 7 or 8 years and below) or if the child requires additional specific assistance (especially if that child has a disability).

Parents are expected to remain on poolside during their child's lesson.

Exceptional circumstances should be discussed with the Swim School Manager. If a child is left at a pool at the end of the session, the teacher will stay with the child until they are collected

Any unknown person visiting the pools must be identified

The teacher will ask that they identify themselves and which child they are accompanying. If this is not forthcoming or is unsatisfactory, they will then be asked to leave the premises.

Photography and recording is not allowed during swimming sessions.

- ✓ Under no circumstances will photography be permitted in the changing facilities or toilet areas of the pools.
- ✓ If a parent wishes to take a photo of their own child they must speak to an instructor so they can ensure this can be carried out without safeguarding principles being compromised
- ✓ Any photos/images taken by the Swimming School for publicity purposes will be done with the written permission of the parent/guardian (in accordance with Swim England guidelines)

Mobile phones must not be used at the pool side or in the changing rooms

No recording is permitted on ANY electronic device

Teachers should not transport children to and from lessons.

The Swim School is only responsible for swimmers while they are in the water.

The changing rooms are supervised by the parents and not the swimming school staff.

The Swim School is not responsible for any siblings not swimming. Siblings are requested to stay with their parents during the lessons.

Get written consent for manual support, keep hands above the water wherever possible

SAFEGUARDING AND MANUAL SUPPORT IN THE WATER

AquaKidz is committed to providing good child safeguarding practice for all our swimmers and we have adopted the Swim England Safeguarding Policy – Wavepower, a copy of which is held by the AquaKidz Office or can be viewed and downloaded from www.swimming.org. Our AquaKidz policy is one where we accept that good safeguarding and fair play is paramount for all our swimmers.

If you have a question or concern regarding child welfare, please make contact with the AquaKidz Head Office or contact Swim England's Swimline on 0808 100 4001.

As part of our safeguarding procedures, AquaKidz teachers and assistants are trained in offering appropriate manual support for swimmers whilst teaching in the water. For AquaKidz beginner and improver ability lessons the swimming teacher will teach from within in the water. Methods of manual support, appropriate to the age and ability of the learner, may be used. For example: support may be offered by holding the swimmers hands for reassurance at the early stages of swimming, providing gentle support under the child head or shoulders when floating on their back, support may be provided under the arms to help a swimmer regain an upright position when out of their depth.

Swimmers with disabilities often need help to participate but teachers and assistants should avoid lifting wherever possible. Swimmers with disabilities should make use of their own arm and leg strength, be encouraged to help themselves and be taught how to do so.

There may be occasions when manual handling cannot be avoided. If this is the case then it is important that we discuss, plan and prepare before a teachers offers manual assistance.

Before assisting and handling we must consider:

the TASK

the INDIVIDUAL

the LOAD

the ENVIRONMENT.

The Swimmer assessment form should identify if a swimmer will require manual support and the individual risk assessment should be completed and discussed with the parent and guardian.

The Safety of swimmer and helper is of paramount importance. If the risk assessment identifies that further training or assistance is required then this should be completed prior to the lessons commencing.

Anti-bullying Statement

All bullying or 'harassment' is unacceptable and we operate a zero-tolerance approach to this. We want to make it very clear what won't be tolerated. We define bullying as:

Any behaviour which makes another person feel intimidated, threatened, upset, embarrassed or insulted. We believe that it is an abuse of power.

It can be physical, sexual (including sexual advances or sexual language and innuendo), verbal, digital (on-line) or psychological/emotional abuse. Bullying can also be racist, sexist, homophobic, ageist, anti-religion or anti-disability

(Please also see our Equity Policy which covers different forms of discrimination).

It is never an excuse to justify bullying by saying that you didn't mean it or that it was just a joke or banter– we will focus on the effect of the behaviour on the victim and take action to prevent and stop any unacceptable behaviour. We also believe that bullying can follow different patterns and we want to reassure our staff and customers that we will take action even if the bullying only happened once.

We encourage customers and staff to speak to a manager immediately if they witness or experience any form of bullying or harassment. All victims will be treated in a supportive manner and we guarantee a fair process for anybody accused of bullying. Allegations will be handled by our Employee Disciplinary and Grievance Policies & Procedures.

Our Safeguarding Procedures

These safeguarding procedures stem from the following principles:

- The child's welfare is the first consideration. Services should be based on an understanding of children's needs and views.
- All children and adults have the right to stay safe and be protected from abuse.

- **Safe Recruitment Policy**

In the recruitment of paid staff and volunteers, the wellbeing of all children is paramount. All candidates go through an appropriate vetting process prior to appointment in order to establish their suitability to work with children.

The recruitment procedure includes an interview with the applicant to explore their previous experience of working with children both inside and outside of the aquatic environment, as well as their attitudes and commitment to child safeguarding. If the candidate is suitable for the role then an Enhanced DBS Disclosure is carried out prior to being offered the work.

Teachers are required to have completed a Safeguarding Children Course. They should receive appropriate ongoing training and attend suitable seminars undertaken every 3 years, so they are aware and sensitive to potentially abusive situations.

Spotting signs of potential abuse

Because of the nature of the sport of swimming, teachers may be the first to see signs of physical abuse or neglect. They are aware of the importance of listening to, rather than questioning, a child. Teachers will never promise the child confidentiality but explain that it may be in their interest for information to be passed on to an appropriate adult.

Acting on concerns and reporting suspected abuse

Any member of staff who suspects that a child may have been the subject of abuse will inform the Swim School Manager immediately. All changes in a child's behaviour or appearance will be recorded in line with Data Protection considerations. All suspicions and investigations will be kept confidential. No child who is freely recalling information or events will be stopped until they finish of their own accord. Teachers will avoid asking leading questions or ones which could be construed as putting ideas into the child's head.

Records will include the name, age and address of the child, the time and date of the report. Observations must be objective and without interpretation or comment. Whenever possible, the exact words spoken by the child will be recorded. The record must be signed and dated by the teacher. The Swim School Manager will be responsible for referring the concern to the appropriate agency in line with the guidance within Swim England's 'WavePower' Child safeguarding policy and procedures.

Emergency Procedures

Child not collected at the end of a lesson

In this event, the teacher will:

1. Contact the Swim School Manager to get the contact number for the parent/responsible adult and the emergency contact details if they are different.
2. The teacher will call the phone numbers provided to find out what the problem is and arrange an immediate pick up
3. If the parent cannot be contacted and the emergency number is also unsuccessful, the child should be asked if there is another family member who could be contacted.
4. If no-one can be contacted, the local Police should be contacted by the teacher to enquire about the best course of action.

Missing Persons

The safety of a child outside of the water is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Parents are expected to remain on poolside during their child's lesson. Exceptional circumstances should be discussed with the Swim School Manager.

If a teacher realises that a child isn't in the class anymore and they are unsure of their whereabouts the first step is to ask the parent. If the child is believed to be missing the following emergency procedures must be followed by the teacher:

1. The pool would be cleared, and the water checked
2. The registers would be re-taken and the children supervised on poolside while the teacher checks the building
3. During any procedure it is the teacher who is responsible for the children in the water.
4. The changing rooms/toilets would be checked by the teacher in charge

5. The child's clothes would be checked by the parent and if still there, the child would be presumed to be still in the pool area. If gone, then the parent's car and surrounding area would be searched, and the hiring facility alerted by the teacher
6. The teachers should organise a search using responsible adults to cover all areas. All those searching should report back to the teacher in charge at a specific location and time
7. The Teacher must inform the Swim School Manager at the earliest opportunity
8. The teacher in charge should make a note of events, including a description of the missing child, what they were wearing and where they were last seen for the Police.
9. The Police must be called no later than 30 minutes after the young person's disappearance is noted, even if the search is not complete
10. If necessary, the teacher will follow emergency evacuation procedures and re-take the register once outside of the building to ensure that all swimmers are accounted for

Online Safety

- It is the School policy that mobile phones are not used on the poolside and any photography or recording of images is only carried out in accordance with the Swim School's Safeguarding policy. Parents of children playing with electronic devices on poolside must make their children aware that any recording or streaming of other people is not allowed.
- No one is allowed to use mobile phones or recording equipment in the changing areas. Increasingly, young people are at risk of images being taken of them and shared, most often by peers. Children should be made aware that 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 under 18-year olds).
- Email addresses and mobile phone numbers of parents/carers are held with the permission of the adult to enable communication between the swim school and parents. Children will not be contacted directly.
- Photographs and information appearing on the Swim School website and Facebook page are used in accordance with the Safeguarding policy. The School website and Facebook page are managed by AquaKidz teachers who have carried out Safeguarding training.
- All teachers, assistants and lifeguards should protect their privacy on-line and carefully consider to who they give access to their personal information on-line. There should be a clear differentiation between their personal and professional profiles.

Staff Training

All lead teachers (who hold a formal Swim Teaching Qualification) should also hold a Safeguarding certificate that they are required to renew every 3 years. This course can be either an online course or an attendance course.

On completion of the course, teachers are required to email their certificate to the AquaKidz Head Office so this can be stored on the teacher's database.

Record Keeping

All sensitive personal data will be processed and stored in line with our Data Protection Policy.

The Extent of the Policy

This Policy does not form a part of any employment contract with any employee. The Swim School reserves the right to amend and update this Policy at any time.

Please speak to your manager if you have any questions or concerns about this Safeguarding Policy & Procedure