

SECTION 1

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Jane Nickerson

Chief Executive Officer – Swim England

Our sports, being swimming, para-swimming, diving, high diving, artistic swimming, water polo and open water swimming are both sports and activities which everyone can participate in at all stages of life, providing opportunities for fun, healthy living and competition. We aim to ensure every child is given the opportunity to learn to swim and then go on to enjoy a variety of water-based activities throughout their life.

Swim England is committed to ensuring a safe environment for children and young people who engage in swimming. To help those involved in the provision of swimming to understand their roles and responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and young people, we constantly review the resources we provide.

This new version of Wavepower continues to put the child and young person at the heart of our sports and considers changes in legislation, new challenges facing children and young people in today's society and provides enhancements in current best practice. It provides comprehensive guidance in an easy to read format for coaches, teachers, parents and everyone involved in running our clubs as well as guidance for children and young people.

I encourage everyone involved in our great activity to read it carefully and encourage all children and young people to raise matters of concern promptly so that we can continue to work on building a safe and fun environment.



Nick Slinn

Director – NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

I am delighted to endorse this updated version of Wavepower – Swim England’s key safeguarding resource. Wavepower plays a very important role in ensuring that individuals and clubs involved in swimming and related activities for children and young people put their wellbeing and safety at the heart of what they do. It clarifies the safeguarding responsibilities of everyone involved and provides practical guidance about how arrangements to protect young participants can be put in place.

The revised Wavepower reflects changes in legislation, government guidance and learning arising in swimming and across the wider sports and safeguarding sector. This includes enhanced guidance around issues of indecent images, mental health and self-harm which are proving to be challenging areas for Swim England as they are for many other sports.

It is particularly pleasing to note how Swim England’s National Youth Panel plays a significant part in ensuring that the voices of young people across the sport positively influence the organisation’s planning and development. This includes the introduction of safeguarding awareness resources for young people which will soon be officially launched across the club network.

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit continues to enjoy a close and constructive relationship with Swim England as we all seek to build on and enhance efforts to provide safe and enjoyable swimming and aquatic environments for the many thousands of children and young people involved.

Introduction

Wavepower 2020-23 is the new Swim England Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures manual which replaces all previous versions. Swim England has produced this document to assist in safeguarding and protecting all children in our sports. Wavepower must be adopted by all Swim England affiliated clubs and organisations.

Although Wavepower is primarily aimed at Swim England 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 Swim England 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 any Swim England affiliated organisation, be that a club, swim school or other related organisation across all our disciplines.

The aim of Wavepower is to safeguard all children in line with current legislation, regulations and guidance and is for use within any Swim England affiliated organisation where children are present. A child is anyone under the age of 18. Wavepower consistently emphasises that the responsibility for child safeguarding in our organisations belongs with all those involved in our sports and is not the sole responsibility of any one person at local, county or national level.

This document provides comprehensive information in one place for officers, members, members’ parents/guardians and all individuals involved in our sports. It is subdivided into specific sections to make it concise, straightforward and easy to use.

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 whenever changes occur.

The Welfare Officer or equivalent will find Wavepower helpful in guiding them to plan, prioritise and implement the various safeguarding activities that are necessary to protect children within our sports.

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

This document will be updated in 2023, but when updates or changes take place either in Swim England or through statute or governmental guidance, the Welfare Officer will be sent additional or replacement pages or be referred to our website to download relevant documents. It is the responsibility of the Welfare Officer to keep Wavepower 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 that 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 Child Safeguarding Team if you are unsure of how to find any of these contact details and would like some assistance.

The Swim England Child Safeguarding Policy

Swim England believe that all children involved in its organisations have the right to stay safe and have fun. Amongst other things 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 sport 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.

Swim England is committed to ensuring that all children who participate in our 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 as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Government document "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018" are clear that safeguarding children is the responsibility of all, including those who are employed or volunteer with children in whatever capacity. It is the organisations' responsibility, through safe recruitment practice, to ensure that those who are deemed to be unsuitable to work with children are not allowed to do so in our sports. The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is an important, **but not sole**, part of safe recruitment.

Swim England 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 Wavepower 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 (2018) are:

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each practitioner 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 children is everyone's responsibility

- Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe; this includes teachers, coaches and all who are employed or volunteer to work with children in the sport sector.
- No single practitioner 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 practitioners. They should be aware of, and comply with, the published local arrangements as set out by the local safeguarding partners. Effective safeguarding requires clear local arrangements for collaboration between practitioners and agencies.

- Any practitioner with concerns about a child's welfare should make a referral to local authority Children's Social Care. Practitioners should always follow up their concerns if they are not satisfied with the response.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) sets out the key roles for individual organisations to deliver local arrangements for safeguarding. It is essential these arrangements are strongly led and promoted at a local level.
- **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.
- **Protection:** to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee.

For more information please refer to the full document at [gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2).

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 are clear about what they want from an effective safeguarding system:

- **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, decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response.

Key principles

- Swim England is committed to ensuring that all children who take part in our 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'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.
- Swim England recognises the responsibilities of the statutory agencies and is committed to complying with safeguarding partners and the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) [gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-protect-children-2](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-protect-children-2).
- 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.
- Swim England will support all adults involved in our sports to understand their roles and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding and protecting children in our sports.
- Swim England will provide training and education to all adults involved in our sports 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/guardians, children and all participants involved in our sports can access advice and guidance on child welfare matters from the Child Safeguarding Team, Swim England and NSPCC Swimline Child Protection helpline or from the statutory agencies.
- All Swim England organisations must adopt Wavepower and ensure that when they receive new information the manual is updated as appropriate.

Responsibility for child safeguarding within Swim England

The responsibility for child safeguarding within Swim England belongs with all adults who work with, or have responsibility for, children in our sports. Shown below are the roles within Swim England who have specific responsibility for safeguarding children in our sports.

Chief Executive Officer

Jane Nickerson, Chief Executive Officer, has the ultimate responsibility for child safeguarding, together with the Swim England Board. The Board ratifies any changes to Swim England Rules and Regulations in respect of all matters including child safeguarding and protection.

The Chief Executive is the only person in Swim England with the power to suspend a club or an individual Swim England 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 Director of Legal and the Child Safeguarding Team.

The Child Safeguarding Team

Swim England has an in-house Legal Department which has prime responsibility for the formulation of rules and regulations in relation to child safeguarding and has formed the Child Safeguarding Team.

Director of Legal and Governance

The Child Safeguarding Team is headed by Ash Cox. Ash is a solicitor and has worked in child safeguarding for over 15 years. He leads on the development and sharing of child safeguarding strategies under the international influence agenda. Most recently he presented at the European Swimming Championships in 2018 and as a guest presenter for the International Olympic Committee International Federation webinar series on "Safeguarding Athletes from Harassment and Abuse in Sport in 2019".

National Child Safeguarding Officer (NCSO)

Joanne Garey joined the team in June 2018. She is employed full-time by Swim England and is the first point of contact for all child safeguarding related matters. Joanne has a BA (Honours) Degree in Health and Social Care and has worked as a Teaching Assistant in a Special Needs School for over three years before joining Swim England.

Independent Child Protection Officer (ICPO)

Keith Oddy has in excess of 30 years' experience in policing the busiest areas of London. He 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 Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Team, jointly working with Children's Social Care for three years prior to his appointment as the Swim England 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.

National Child Safeguarding Manager

Jenni Dearman is an Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives and holds a Level 3 Diploma in Law and Practice. She has been with the Child Safeguarding Team in excess of 10 years with responsibility alongside the team for case management and working with statutory agencies on child protection cases. Additionally she has provided advice and guidance on a wide range of child safeguarding and welfare issues to Swim England members. Jenni has now taken up a project focussed role within the team which will focus on improving child safeguarding practice across our sports. All Swim England clubs and members can discuss their concerns with the Child Safeguarding Team and will be offered advice and guidance on action to be taken in safeguarding and welfare issues. In some situations they may become directly involved with the club, normally through the Club Welfare Officer to try and resolve the issues.

The Child Safeguarding Team

This team are responsible for writing Wavepower and are actively involved in promoting and sharing best safeguarding practice with other sports organisations.

Swim England holds the NSPCC, Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU), Advanced Standard for Safeguarding Children in Sport. The Child Safeguarding Team are responsible for maintaining and embedding that standard which is formally assessed by the CPSU on a yearly basis.

The ICPO has responsibility for the Child Welfare Complaints Procedure. This procedure is available to all members and is published in full in the Swim England Handbook and at swimming.org/swimengland/swim-england-handbook.

At any time, should the Child Safeguarding Team believe their advice has been dismissed, believe that the advice in Wavepower has been ignored or dismissed and/or that policy and procedures set out in Wavepower have been breached, the ICPO can raise a complaint against the organisation or individual member involved with the Office of Judicial Administration.

Club, County and Regional Welfare Officers

The volunteers who perform the Welfare Officer role are a vital part of the Swim England Child Safeguarding Team. They are often the first point of contact on the ground for members and parents/guardians 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 Swim England Rules and Regulations. Many Welfare Officers have experience in child safeguarding through their professional employment outside Swim England 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 Child Safeguarding Team, County and Regional Welfare Officers can become directly involved with child safeguarding issues often to support a Club Welfare Officer. They may meet with the individuals involved or lead meetings with parties to try to directly resolve the issues presented.

Role descriptions for Club, County and Regional Welfare Officers are shown in Wavepower on pages 56-58.

All Welfare Officers can discuss concerns, request help or advice from the Child Safeguarding Team.

Swimline

Swimline is the Swim England and NSPCC Child Protection Helpline and is available for anyone involved in our sports, including children and young people, who believe that the welfare of a child is at risk. This could be due to neglect or abuse, bullying or fear of someone, or anything that is worrying you and you don't know who to discuss this with.

Who will take the calls and what happens?

When you ring you will hear a message. This will explain that if you wish to speak to someone urgently or it would not be convenient or safe for someone to call you back you can press option 2 to transfer through to the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline. This will be answered by trained and experienced counsellors who will advise you and will act to protect any children involved. If your call is not urgent, someone is able to call you back, or if you wish to speak to someone who understands one of our sports, you will need to leave your contact details and a brief description of your concern. A member

of the Child Safeguarding Team will call you back. In all circumstances Swim England will act to protect a child if a referral suggests a child may have been harmed or be at risk of harm.

Other things you should know

Swimline calls are free from a landline and do not appear on itemised bills. Call costs from mobiles may vary and will appear on itemised bills. Swimline does not use the 1471 code or any other call return or call display facilities. If you leave a message we will aim to ring back during the next working day. If you ring over the weekend we will aim to contact you on Monday.

You can call Swimline on 0808 100 4001.

You can call the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline direct on 0808 800 5000. The helpline is open for 24 hours each day and calls are free of charge.

Acknowledgements

Swim England has drawn on the work from a number of organisations during the production of Wavepower 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:

Swim England Youth Advisory Panel

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit

The NSPCC

The Football Association

Kidscape

SelfharmUK

MIND

Swim England would also like to thank and acknowledge Welfare Officers, coaching staff, parents/guardians, members, volunteers and all those who work with children in our sports for their ideas and feedback on the content of Wavepower.

Key definitions

Abuse	For definitions of the different types of abuse and some common indicators, please see pages 29-33 of Wavepower.
Child	A “child” is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. “Children” means children and young people throughout. 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 their status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004.
Child Protection	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. 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.
Children’s Social Care	This may also be known as Social Services or Children’s Social Care Team (the name may vary around the country).
Designated Officer (also known as Local Authority Designated Officer or LADO).	Supports organisations where concerns have arisen in relation to the behaviour towards children of someone in a position of trust.
Key concept: Who is responsible for safeguarding?	Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) 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, promoting their welfare and protecting them from harm is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play.
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Team	Usually a secure co-located information hub of Children’s Social Care, 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.
Our sports	These include swimming, para-swimming, diving, high diving, artistic swimming (formerly known as synchronised swimming), water polo and open water swimming.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	<p>Is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protecting children from maltreatment • preventing impairment of children’s health or development • ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care • taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
Safeguarding partners	<p>A safeguarding partner in relation to a local authority area in England is defined under the Children Act 2004 as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the local authority • a clinical commissioning group for any area which falls within the local authority area • the Chief Police Officer for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area.

Glossary of other terms

BSCA	British Swimming Coaching Association
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CPSU	Child Protection in Sport Unit
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
ICPO	Independent Child Protection Officer
LADO (aka DO)	Local Authority Designated Officer (England only) also known as Designated Officer
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
NCSM	National Child Safeguarding Manager
NCSO	National Child Safeguarding Officer
NPCC	National Police Chief’s Council
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
OJA	Office of Judicial Administration
TTL	Time to Listen course

