



# CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

This swimming club is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members. Every individual in the club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare and the rights, safety and welfare of other members.

To ensure that this club follows best practice we shall work closely with Swim Ireland our Governing Body. We shall comply with the guidelines of the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport. In keeping with the legal framework for Child Protection we will comply with the procedures as laid down in "Choosing To Protect" and all coach officials, volunteers and poolside helpers will be vetted and references checked. We will also work to the adult / child ratios as follows: 1 adult : 10 children (for junior group) and 1 adult : 15 children (for senior group).

All children should be treated with integrity and respect and in a manner which enhances their self-esteem at all times.

All adults' actions should be guided by what is best for the child and carried out in an atmosphere of care and respect.

If a sports leader or a parent/guardian is uneasy or suspicious about a child's safety or welfare their concerns should be raised with our appointed Child Liaison Officers who are:

**CHRISTINA ARCHIBALD**  
**GAVIN CORRIGAN**

The following guidelines are being implemented for the safety of your children. We feel that wherever possible the child's experience should be positive with the emphasis on the enjoyment of the sport and fair play at all times.

## **GUIDELINES FOR SPORTS LEADERS**

**Sports leaders (coaches, assistant coaches, helpers and instructors) must avoid:**

- Spending excessive amounts of time with children away from others;
- Taking sessions alone;
- Taking children to sports leader's homes;
- Taking children on journeys alone in their car.

**Sports leaders must not:**

- Use any form of corporal punishment or physical force on a child;
- Exert undue influence over a participant;
- Engage in rough physical games, sexually provocative games or make sexually suggestive comments to or about a child;
- Take measurements or engage in certain types of fitness testing without the presence of another adult.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS / GUARDIANS**

Parents / guardians have the primary responsibility for the care and welfare of their children within sport. They should work with club leaders in partnership to promote good practice so that sporting participation is enjoyable and safe. They should encourage their children to tell them about anyone causing them harm and support all efforts to protect against bullying, verbal, physical or sexual abuse. Any concerns should be raised with the club's child liaison officer in the first instance.

**Parents / guardians should remember that children learn best by example. To assist in the promotion of good practice with the club they should:**

- Be aware of the relevant sports leaders and their role within the club;
- Show appreciation of and respect for sports leaders and their decisions;
- Encourage their children to practice and compete fairly .... "play by the rules";
- Focus on their child's efforts rather than performance;
- Focus on the fun and participation of their child in swimming;
- Liaise with club leaders in relation to times / locations of training sessions, competitions, medical conditions of their children and any requirement for their child's safety.

**Parents / guardians, in order to promote good practice should be:**

- Encouraged to take an interest in the running of the club and any sporting activities in which their children take part;
- Informed of training and/or competitive programmes and be satisfied with the environment which is created for their children;
- Informed if their child sustained an injury during sporting activities;
- Informed of problems or concerns relating to their children;
- Informed in advance and have their comments sought in relation to matters regarding "away trips" or "specially organised activities".

**Parents / guardians should not:**

- Ignore or dismiss complaints / concerns expressed by a child which relate to his/her involvement in sport;
- Put undue pressure on their child to please or perform well;
- Take safety for granted;
- Treat the club as a child minding service.

Comments and suggestions by parents / guardians should always be considered and their complaints acknowledged and dealt with as they arise through an effective and confidential complaints procedure.

## **GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**Children are entitled to:**

- Be safe;
- Be treated with dignity and respect;
- Be happy, have fun and enjoy their sport;
- Make a complaint in an appropriate way and have it dealt with through an effective complaints procedure;
- Be afforded appropriate confidentiality;
- Have a voice in the running of their club;
- Be listened to;
- Be believed.

**Children should undertake to:**

- Play fairly, do their best and have fun;
- Shake hands before and after competition, whoever wins, and mean it;
- Respect officials and accept their decisions with grace not a grudge;
- Respect fellow team members, give them full support both when they do well and when things go wrong;
- Respect opponents, they are not enemies, they are partners in a sporting event;
- Give opponents a hand if they are injured or have problems with equipment;
- Accept apologies from opponents when they are offered;
- Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat;
- Approach the child liaison officer s with any questions or concerns you may have.

**Children should not:**

- Cheat;
- Use violence;
- Shout at or argue with officials, club leaders, team mates or opponents;
- Bully;
- Tell lies about adults or other children;
- Spread rumours;
- Keep secrets about any person who may have caused them harm.

**SANCTIONS**

The use of sanctions is an important element in the maintenance of discipline. If children or young people breach the above rules they can expect to be sanctioned. Ordinarily a verbal warning will be given in the first instance if a minor rule is broken. Repeat of negative behaviour will lead to sanctions such as “time out” and persistent or serious breaches will necessitate parent involvement. Physical activity such as swimming lengths of the pool will not be used as a sanction as this can lead to resentment of swimming and sport.

**Play Fair ~ Stay Safe ~ Have Fun**

Child

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Parent

Signed: ..... Date: .....