



# Orpington Ojays Swimming Club

(Affiliated to London Region A.S.A., S.C.W.P. & S.A., C.B.S.A., L.W.P.L.)

## Child Protection Policy, Procedures & Guidelines

## **1. Introduction**

This policy, and the Orpington Ojays Swimming Club (OOSC) related Child Protection Guidelines, have been produced in accordance with Wave Power, the ASA Child Protection Policy. They have been agreed and adopted by the Executive Committee, September 2008, and will be reviewed annually in accordance with OOSC's ongoing commitment to the safety of children in sport. They will be distributed to all those working directly with children and be easily available for public viewing via the website and parent information packs. The terms 'child' and 'young person' refer to young people below the age of 18.

OOSC believes that the safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility, particularly when protecting children from abuse. Everyone involved in swimming- administrators, officials, coaches and teachers, parents and children themselves can help to prevent or stop abuse.

Abuse can happen anywhere there are children, and sadly there are people who will seek to be where children are, simply in order to abuse them. According to The Children Act 1989, Working Together to Safeguard Children 1999 and Safeguarding Children 2006, everyone at OOSC with responsibility for the care of a child has a duty to be diligent in promoting children's wellbeing and to safeguard them from harm.

This policy and its guidelines support the following principles:

- The welfare of the child is the first consideration

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- All children, regardless of age, gender, racial origin, religious belief, sexual identity or disability have a right to enjoy and participate in sport protected from all forms of abuse or exploitation
- OOSC has responsibilities for the welfare of all its younger members. All those working or volunteering to work within OOSC have a duty to familiarise themselves with the Child Protection Guidelines
- All those within OOSC have a responsibility to report child protection concerns to the Club Welfare Officer or Welfare Sub-committee. The CWO will refer the matter to the relevant statutory or voluntary bodies. All allegations will be taken seriously and acted upon and responded to within an agreed time frame
- It is the job of the OOSC Welfare Officer to ensure that all child protection procedures are in place and followed appropriately at all times. All those working, seeking to work or volunteering regularly within OOSC are required to undergo CRB checks to ensure suitability to work with young people in accordance with Government and A.S.A. guidelines
- OOSC has a responsibility to maintain absolute confidentiality in all cases involving child protection and poor practice in line with current legislation

**ORPINGTON OJAYS SWIMMING CLUB WILL SUPPORT ANYONE WHO,  
IN GOOD FAITH, REPORTS HIS OR HER CONCERNS THAT A CHILD IS  
AT RISK OF, OR SUFFERING FROM, ABUSE**

## Contacts

**It is the responsibility of all members of OOSC to promote the safety and wellbeing of our children.**

If you are experiencing abuse or harm, or are concerned about a child or member of staff please act on your concerns. These concerns can relate to neglect or abuse, bullying or fear of someone or something that is worrying you and you don't know who to discuss this with.

You can seek help within the club from

1. The Club Welfare Officer

Karen Hunnisett

(E) [karenhunnisett@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:karenhunnisett@hotmail.co.uk)

(H) 01689 827125

(M) 07919 831769

2. Your coaches or teachers

3. A member of the executive committee

2.1 A.S.A Swimline

If you are unable to contact any of the above, or want to speak to someone else, call the



**A.S.A. Swimline**  
**Telephone 0800 100 4001**

**If there is an issue which causes concern, the ASA will act to protect the child.**

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Swimline is answered by trained and experienced counsellors who will advise you and will act to protect children. If there is no problem with someone calling you back, you will need to leave your telephone number and a time when it would be convenient for one of the Swimline volunteers to ring you back. **If there is an issue which causes concern, the ASA will act to protect the child.** Calls are free and not listed on itemised phone bills unless from a mobile. Swimline does not use the 1471 code or any other call return or call display facilities.

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 safe or convenient for someone to call you back-you can press a number that will transfer you straight to the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline.

#### 2.2 Additional Contacts

You can also contact

**NSPCC Child Protection Helpline Telephone 0800 800 500**

Calls are free and not listed on phone bills unless on a mobile.

Calls are answered 24hours a day.

## **2. Types of Child Abuse**

The Children Act and Working Together to Safeguard Children acknowledge four main types of child abuse:

### **2.1. Physical Abuse**

As the term implies this can involve hitting, throwing, shaking, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm or deliberate ill health to a child. In the context of swimming, this might also include forcing a child to train beyond their capabilities.

### **2.2. Sexual Abuse**

Includes forcing or enticing a child or young person 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 materials or encouraging children to behave in a sexually explicit way. In the context of swimming, it could involve the inappropriate videoing or photography of children for the sexual gratification of the viewer.

### **2.3. Emotional Abuse**

This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child that adversely effects their development. A child may be made to feel unloved, worthless and inadequate. It occurs when a child is not given love, help and encouragement and is constantly derided, ridiculed or even ignored. Conversely, this also occurs when children are over protected or have inappropriate expectations placed upon them. In the context of swimming 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.

### **2.4. Neglect**

This is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or

psychological needs such as failing to provide shelter, warmth, food, clothing, medical needs, or being unresponsive to a child's emotional needs. It is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. In a swimming context, this may include failing to ensure that a child is safe or exposing them to harm, or ignoring a swimmers personal, disability or intimate needs.

## 2.5. Bullying

In addition to these four areas, bullying is also the cause of many referrals. Racial taunts, the use of racist language and bullying will not be tolerated at OOSC (See separate Anti Bullying Policy)

Abuse is often committed by a person well known and trusted to the child. It can also be committed by another young person or sibling. All adults involved in swimming at OOSC have a responsibility to report concerns of a child abuse nature or poor practice appropriately and to act in a manner at all times that keeps children safe from harm.

### 3. Indicators of child abuse

#### 3.1. Recognising abuse

The recognition of abuse is not always easy - even for parents. It is important to remember that every child is unique and it is difficult to predict how their behaviour will change as a result of their experience of abuse. The impact of abuse is likely to be affected by age, the nature and extent of the abuse and the help and support they receive. The following are some of the more common behaviours seen in children-they may give an indication of abuse but not confirmation.

- The child says that they are being abused, or another person says they believe that abuse is occurring
- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, bites or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- The child has an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent or which has not been adequately treated
- The child's behaviour changes, either over time or quite suddenly, or he or she becomes withdrawn and quiet, or alternatively aggressive
- The child appears to not trust particular adults, a parent or coach with whom he or she would be expected to have, or once had, a close relationship
- Refusal to remove clothing for normal activities or keeping covered up in warm weather
- An inability to make close friends
- A deterioration in physical appearance or rapid weight loss/gain
- Pain, itching, bruising or bleeding in or near genital area
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or behaviour for the child's age.



Physically disabled children and those with learning difficulties are particularly vulnerable to abuse and may have added difficulties in communicating what is happening to them. A fear of retribution for telling can be a powerful silencer and dependency on others for primary needs such as food; can make a child feel powerless to report abusive behaviour. Difficulty in identifying abusive situations or behaviour may allow it to continue. Often, it is not one indicator alone that alerts to the possibility of child abuse. Do not ignore apparently innocent, recurring indicators.

## **5. What To Do If You Have Concerns About The Welfare Of A Child**

### 5.1. Listening to Children

As an adult with trust and influence with children, coaches, volunteers and parents are in a strong position to recognise or receive information about abuse. Please remember, it's not your responsibility to decide whether or not a child is being abused, your role is to act on your concerns.

Children will express themselves verbally or non-verbally and it is important to respond sensitively and carefully to what they are saying and how they are behaving.

If a child or young person talks to you about a concern:

- Try to react calmly.
- Remember the child is likely to be frightened or anxious.
- Please take what the child says seriously.
- Tell the child that he/she was right to tell and is not to blame.
- Reassure the child, but do not make promises of confidentiality – explain that you will have to speak to someone else who can help.
- Recognise the inherent difficulties interpreting what is said by young children
  - Only ask questions if you need to clarify what the child is telling you - don't ask the child about explicit details
  - However don't prevent a child from recalling events
  - Don't ask leading questions - a leading question is one that pre-supposes the answer e.g. 'Did x hit you?'

- Make a detailed note of what the child has told you, but don't delay passing on the information
- Inform the Welfare Officer and complete an incident record sheet as soon as possible, forwarding it to the Welfare Officer. The maximum time limit for this should be 24 hours.

It is never easy to respond to a young person who tells you that they are being abused, and you may feel upset and worried yourself. Make sure that you are offered adequate support and an opportunity for de-briefing, bearing in mind confidentiality.

## 5.2. Actions To Avoid

The person receiving the disclosure should not: -

- Panic
- Allow their shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information than is offered
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- Approach the alleged abuser
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets.

## 6. Reporting Your Concerns

As a member, official or parent involved in an ASA affiliated club you should follow the guidelines as outlined below.

### 6.1. Young persons in immediate danger or injured

**If the child or young person is in danger or has been injured, you must ensure that they are safe and immediately contact the Emergency Services by dialling 999.**

### 6.2. Young persons NOT in immediate danger

#### 6.2.1. OOSC member, parent/carer/friend

If the child is not in immediate danger but you have concerns you should:

- Contact the Welfare Officer, coach, Executive committee member or team manager – unless, of course, you suspect them of being involved or

Ring the Swimline 0808 100 4001 or NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 500

#### 6.2.2. Coach, committee member or team manager

Refer the matter to the Welfare Officer

Talk to the child's parents/carers about concerns, relating to changes in behaviour if you think there may be an obvious explanation such as a bereavement or pressure from studies/exams

Ring the Swimline 0808 100 4001 or NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 500

Contact the ICPO, local Social Services Department or the Police.

### **6.3. Recording your concerns**

Do not delay reporting your concerns. Make detailed notes of what you have seen or heard as soon as you possibly can. These notes must be forwarded to the Welfare Officer who is able to advise on the procedures to follow if you have a concern.

Your information should include:

- The nature of the suspicion or allegation
- A description of any physical evidence
- The child's account of what has happened
- Dates, times and any other relevant factual information
- The distinction between fact, opinion and hearsay.

If you are working with athletes away from home, at a training camp, or competition, tell the Team Manager or the Chief Coach. Again, please remember to make a detailed note of what you've seen or heard but don't delay passing on the information.

All incidents are recorded in the Incident File. This is held by the Welfare Officer. When this is not available at the time of reporting, your notes will be included at a later time and you will be asked to sign that they are a true account. The Incident File and all relevant information will be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people in line with Data Protection law.

Recorded incidents may be passed to the ASA Legal Affairs Department.

## 7. CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.

Information will be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

This includes the following people: -

- The OOSC Welfare Officer / Welfare Committee
- OOSC Club Chairman
- OOSC Head Coach
- The parents of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- The person making the allegation
- ASA Governing Body Legal Department
- Social Services/Police
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child)
- The Executive Committee and those who work with the child will be advised of parts of information necessary for the support and welfare of the child.

## **8. Good Practice Guidelines**

It is possible to reduce situations in which abuse can occur and help to protect staff/volunteers by promoting good practice.

All CASC coaches, committee members and volunteers should demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations.

The following guidelines will help to create a safe and positive culture and climate:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating young people equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always put the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with swimmers (e.g. it is not appropriate for volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child).
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Make swimming fun, enjoyable and promote fair play.

- Young people and their parents/carers should always be consulted and their agreement gained before using any form of manual support in the water. Ensure that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly. It is particularly important to agree appropriate actions regarding children who are very young, very lacking in confidence or those with physical or learning disabilities or difficulties.
- Keep up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in swimming.
  - Involve parents/carers wherever possible. Encourage them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, always ensure parents, coaches, or volunteers work in pairs.
  - Ensure that if mixed teams are taken away, they should always be accompanied by a male and female volunteer. However, remember that same sex abuse can also occur.
  - Be an excellent role model and display high standards of behaviour and appearance.
- Give praise and enthusiastic, constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
  - Recognise the developmental needs and capacity of young people – avoid excessive training or competition and do not push them against their will.
  - Secure parental consent in writing to act *in loco parentis* if the need arises, to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment



- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given
- Request written parental consent if volunteers are required to transport young people in their cars.
- In competitions and galas, look out for people who don't appear to be relatives or friends of children who are swimming.
- Attend Child Protection courses that are offered by the club
- Role model the OOSC Code of Conduct and abide by the ASA Code of Ethics

## 9. **Practices to be avoided**

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of a club official e.g. Chairman, Chief Coach or the child's parents.

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Avoid taking a child alone on a car journey
- Avoid visiting children at home or having children visit you at home

## **Forbidden Practices**

### **9.1. General**

You should not: -

- Engage in or encourage rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Allow bullying, racist or sexist comments or humiliating behaviour
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control or use humiliation as punishment
- Allow allegations made by a child go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature for children, that they can do themselves
  - Invite or allow a child to stay with you at your home unsupervised
  - Share a bedroom or changing room with a child or young person.

## **9.2. Use of Social Networking Internet Websites**

You must not:

- Request that a young person in your club become a named friend on ANY social networking site or accept an invitation from a young person to become a named friend on their page unless the contact with the child is through an ASA club and the parent/guardian of that child has provided their written consent for you to do so.
- Special rules apply to coaches/teachers/officers aged 16 and 17 and in such circumstances where contact may be essential to the professional role, guidance should be sought from the Club Welfare Officer.

## **9.3. General guidance**

It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do some things of a personal nature for children or young people, particularly if they are very young or have a disability. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and prior consent of the parents/carers and the children or young people involved.

**If you accidentally hurt a child or young person, he/she seems distressed in any manner, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, or misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, report any incident as soon as possible to another colleague, and make a brief written note of it. Parents or carers should be informed of the incident and the Club Welfare Officer notified.**

## **10. Use of photographic/ filming equipment**

OOSC adheres to the ASA rules on the use of photographic or video equipment at all sessions. The close video recording of children from poolside is **not** recommended or allowed unless justified to and pre-agreed by the committee (e.g. to assist in swimming stroke development).

### **10.1. Video Recording**

Before a video recording is taken, the written consent must be obtained from the parents of the children with an invitation to the parents to attend the video recording and subsequent viewing of the video.

If any concern is raised, video recording should cease and the video must not subsequently be used. After videoing, unless it can be justified as to why the video is to be kept, the video should be destroyed once it has served its purpose.

At all times the videoer should be extremely careful in the content of the video. All parents/carers wishing to take video recordings should sign the Video/Photograph Log book.

## **10.2. Photography**

No one unconnected with an event or swimming session, i.e. not a parent/carer, should take photographs unless they are a suitably approved photographer and have the consent of the meet manager or coach. All parents/carers wishing to take photographs must sign the Photograph Log book. Under ASA guidance on the taking of photos once a parent has signed the book they may take photos on the belief that this is of their swimmer in the main. Other swimmers nearby may be taken but should not be the main object of the photo. Another person can object to a parent/carer taking a photo if they believe their child to be the main object of the photo or if they have any concerns about the photography. Permission must be sought before any photography occurs.

The publishing of a photograph of a swimmer under 19 either on a notice board or in a published article should only be done with parents' written consent and in line with ASA guidelines. Photos for publication are head and neck only, or in tracksuits if full length, and don't give details identifying the swimmer such as full name, place of residence or school attended. All parents have the right to refuse to give permission to have their child photographed and should ensure that the club has written copy of this.

## **10.3. Mobile telephones**

A mobile phone must be registered as a camera if it has that facility in line with our policy on photographic/video equipment and it is intentionally used for this purpose. OOSC recognises that children need mobile phones to keep in touch with parents, particularly in emergencies, but supports a requirement that manufacturers ensure they add a "noticeable sound" that it is audible if a phone camera is used.

The photographic/video facility should never be used in a changing room and any instances of such use should be reported immediately to a club officer and/or the pool management. If planning to use an official photographer at the Club Championships, the organisers will adhere to the ASA guidelines outlined in the Wavepower document.

## **11. The OOSC website**

OOSC recognises that the internet is a rapidly growing medium which has a lot of advantages for communicating information and ideas, but it is also proving to be a difficult area to police in relation to inappropriate access to the young and vulnerable.

OOSC undertakes:

- not to include photographs which show full length images of children in swim suits
- to ensure that permission is agreed before any photograph of a child or young person is displayed on the website
- to ensure that information on the site only includes names, results, selection lists, and information directly related to swimming e.g. PB's, best events, medals won, but does not include personal references e.g. where people live or go to school or any information which allows swimmers to be contacted either through the internet or by reference to individual phone numbers and addresses.
- any contact details for club officers are only included with their permission.

**If parents/carers wish to refuse to allow their child/children to be photographed at any time, they should notify the Welfare Officer in writing/ using the Publicity Permission Form.**



## **12. Recruitment and Training for Coaches, Teachers and Volunteers.**

OOSC recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children and takes all possible steps to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children:

- All paid employees are subject to compulsory CRB checks, renewed every three years, and must provide evidence of their qualifications
- All staff and volunteers are expected to sign an ASA self declaration form
- All staff and regular volunteers are expected to sign up to the ASA Code of Ethics and OOSC Code of Conduct
- All staff and regular volunteers are expected to sign that they have read and have access to a copy of this policy
  - All Staff and regular volunteers are expected to adhere to and role model the Equality, Anti Bullying, Recruitment, Safe Sport Away policies as appropriate
  - All staff and regular volunteers will be invited to attend recommended Child Protection training courses. The Welfare officer and subcommittee, coaches and teachers must attend the Time to Listen Workshop, or another 3 hour course once every three years. Staff and volunteers should attend the Safeguarding Children workshop or an equivalent course offered by the club.

Up to date training allows staff and volunteers to:

- Reflect on their own practice, ensure good practice and protect themselves from false allegations
- Recognise their responsibilities and report their concerns about poor practice or possible abuse
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child or young person
- Work safely and effectively with children.

The Welfare Officer is responsible for ensuring that all staff and volunteers receive regular updates regarding changes to procedure and law.

It is the responsibility of the Welfare Officer to ensure safer recruitment guidelines are followed and to ensure that all ASA Wavepower requirements for the OOSC workforce are in place.

Any member of the club who would like to work poolside with the swimmers will need to consider applying for a CRB check. Please note there is no portability for existing CRB certificates. For more information please contact the Welfare Team.

Karen Hunnisett  
Club Welfare Officer  
October 2010

## 14 Staff & Regular Volunteer Declaration

Help us to maintain appropriate records to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our swimmers.

Please sign and return this form to the Welfare Officer to confirm that you have received, read and that you understand and will adhere to the child protection policy and procedures.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

(e.g. coach, chaperone, poolside helper)

ASA Membership Number \_\_\_\_\_

Safeguarding Children Courses Attended

\_\_\_\_\_

Courses Required \_\_\_\_\_

CRB Number (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

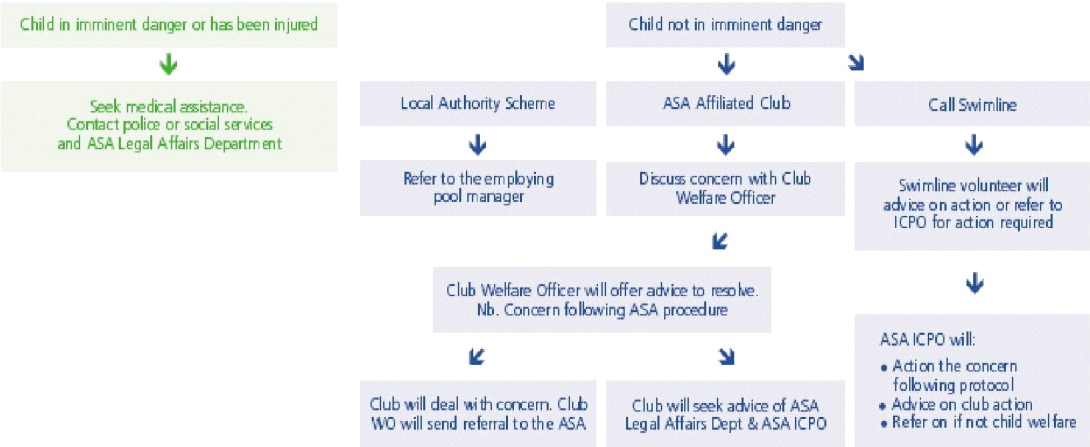
Purple ASA self Declaration Form completed Yes/No

Please return to the OOSC Welfare Officer

# 15 Wavepower Referral Chart



Procedure Flow Chart - REFERRAL



RECORD OF INCIDENT

- All clubs should have an incident book where incidents, including those of a child welfare nature should be recorded. The book should be held by a nominated member of the club, and be kept in a secure and confidential manner. It should be available at all club sessions.
- The club welfare officer or another officer of the club should complete the ASA referral form whenever a child welfare issue is raised and send it to the Legal Affairs Department of the ASA.