



WELFARE: Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Statement

Davenport Dolphins Swimming Club is a not for profit organisation whose mission it is to provide a competitive swimming club where members can develop their swimming skills and enjoy taking part in competitions in a safe and friendly environment.

Davenport Dolphins Swimming Club believes that the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility particularly when it comes to protecting children from abuse. Everyone in swimming – Club Coaching staff, elected Officer of the Club, Club committee member, parent, friend, children themselves, everyone - can play their part.

Abuse can occur anywhere there are children - at home, at school, in the park, at the club. Sadly, there are some people who will seek to be where children are simply in order to abuse them. We believe that everyone within the Davenport Dolphins Swimming Club has a very important part to play in looking after the children with whom we are working. This is both a moral and arguably a legal obligation. The Children's Act 1989 indicates that everyone who has the care of children should "do what is reasonable in all circumstances for the purpose of safeguarding or promoting the child's welfare".

This child protection policy stems from the following principles: -

- **The child's welfare is the first consideration**
- **All children, regardless of age, any disability they have, gender, racial origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to be protected from abuse.**

Under the Children Act 1989:

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18

Davenport Dolphins safeguards its members by:

- Providing an environment which is emotionally and physically safe.
- Developing positive relationships which support them.
- Ensuring that working practices actively protect them.

The Club takes the issue of Safeguarding & Child Protection very seriously and follows the Amateur Swimming Associations guidelines. These guidelines can be viewed on: www.britishswimming.org

Instructors and other ancillary staff are required to undergo Safeguarding & Child Protection Training as part of the Swim21 accreditation process. This training has to be repeated every 3 years. The training includes recognising abuse, how to respond to a disclosure and how to initially deal with a problem and then who to contact if the matter cannot be dealt with

The Welfare Officer is Mrs Lesley Sharp: www.welfare@ddsc.co.uk

One of her many roles is to ensure that all Daventry Dolphins Swimming Club helpers** are CRB checked and in receipt of clearances. The Club Secretary, Mr Steve Bond ensures that all helpers are enrolled as Club Members and have ASA Membership

** This includes swimmers who are under 18yrs that assist as lane helpers.

CONFIDENTIALITY LISTENING TO CHILDREN

As an adult with trust and influence with children, Daventry Dolphins Swimming club coaching and ancillary staff & volunteers are in a powerful position to recognise or receive information about abuse. However, remember it is not your responsibility to decide if a child is being abused, your role is to act on those concerns.

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

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

- Try to react calmly.
- Remember the setting - the child is likely to be frightened or anxious.
- Tell the child that he / she was right to tell and is not to blame.
- Take what the child says seriously.
- Recognise the inherent difficulties interpreting what is said by young children.
- Do not interview the child or ask anymore questions than that enables you to feel you are clear enough about what has happened to pass your concerns on. They may be asked to recount their story to Social Services or the Police.
- However don't prevent a child from recalling events.
- **Reassure the child but do not make promises of confidentiality - explain that you will / may have to speak to someone else who can help.**
- Inform the Welfare Officer and complete a report in the Incident Book as soon as possible but within 24 hours.

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.

RESPONDING TO NON-VERBAL CONCERNS

Changes in a child's behaviour can be the result of a wide range of factors and this makes it difficult to identify if the changes are linked to abuse. Even signs such as bruising or other injuries cannot be taken as "proof" of abuse. However, if you have concerns you have a responsibility to act on those concerns.

Contact the Welfare Officer and fill in an Incident Form as soon as possible but no later than 24 hours after to record carefully what you have observed.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

All Daventry Dolphins Swimming Club volunteers are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The Club has a Code of Ethics to follow. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means: -

- Always working 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 putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with swimmers (e.g. it is not appropriate for volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Making swimming fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual / physical support is required, it should be provided openly. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when the child is in the water. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance in swimming.
- Involving parents / carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging 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 chaperone. However, be mindful that same sex abuse can also occur.
- Being an excellent role model and displaying high standards of behaviour and appearance.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people - avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to administer emergency first aid and / or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if volunteers are required to transport young people in their cars.

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 the club official i.e. Chairman, Chief Coach etc. or the child's parents.

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Avoid taking or dropping off a child to an event.

PRACTICES NEVER TO BE SANCTIONED

The following practices should never be sanctioned. You should never: -

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow staff or children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- 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.

NB It may sometimes be necessary for Daventry Dolphins Swimming Club staff to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parents and the swimmers involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him / her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

INCIDENTS THAT MUST BE REPORTED / RECORDED

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to the Welfare Officer, any Club Officer (Chairman / Secretary / Treasurer) and record the incident, as soon as possible in your diary and in the Incident Record Book within 24 hours You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed: -

- If you accidentally hurt a swimmer.
- If he / she seems distressed in any manner.
- If a swimmer appears sexually aroused by your actions.
- If a swimmer misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done or said.

When people talk about Child Welfare, it is assumed that it is always a case of some sort of abuse, whether it is sexual, emotional, physical or neglect. Current 'Every Child Matters' guidelines is about "improving the life chances of ALL children and young people, reducing inequalities and helping them to achieve" and it is relevant to everyone working directly with them, or providing services which impact on them. The five outcomes of Every Child Matters are:

Staying Safe:

The Club tries to ensure that its members are safe from bullying and discrimination and that they participate in a safe environment.

Being healthy:

The Club promotes healthy lifestyles, both physically and mentally and positively discourages its members from taking illegal substances.

Enjoying and Achieving:

Members should enjoy attending the Club and taking part in its activities, as well as achieving social and personal development.

Make a positive contribution:

Members should develop positive relationships with others and choose not to bully or discriminate against others. They have the opportunity to help fundraise.

Achieve economic well being:

Members will be given the opportunity to acquire skills that may be need for employment or assisting them in society. Well being includes feeling good about themselves.

The Club can provide evidence of good practice

- The Club has public liability insurance and the Certificate is displayed on the Club notice board.
- Promoting healthy lifestyles for its members.
- The Club has safeguarding & child protection policies / guidelines to follow, and carries out Criminal Records bureau (CRB) checks on Teaching / Coaching and support staff. The Club provides details of who to contact in the event of a disclosure of abuse or of any other Welfare concern.
- The Club displays the 'Swimline' poster and can make available the Wave Power (ASA Child Protection Policy) book on request.
- The Club has a Constitution and is committed to treat everyone equally within the context of its activity. This shall be, for example, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion, disability or political persuasion, on any grounds.
- The Club shall implement the A.S.A. Equal Opportunities policy.
- The Club has a pricing policy
- The Club has a Disability Statement policy
- The Club has an Equity policy
- The Club carries out regular risk assessments for Club nights, home competitions, away competitions by car, away competitions by coach and updates them every 12 months or as and when needed.
- Accidents and Incidents are recorded in the Clubs accident / incident report book.
- The Club monitors attendance and punctuality.
- The Club has a 'Code of Conduct' for Swimmers.
- The Club has an 'anti-bullying' policy.
- The Club has a 'Code of Conduct' for Parents / Guardians.
- The Club has a Code of Ethics for Instructors and other Staff.
- The Club maintains records of medical conditions.
- The Club has a photography permission document and maintains records of all photography.
- The Club celebrates the success of its swimmers by holding Presentation of Awards Ceremonies.

- Club Instructors hold relevant Amateur Swimming Association qualifications and are members of either the Institute of Swimming or the British Swimming Coaches and Teachers Association.
- Club instructors and staff attend courses to improve their level of knowledge, this includes Safeguarding & Child Protection / Swimming seminars / Swim Teachers Rescue Test and First Aid, 'How to run a Club', Competition Officials courses.
- The swimmers are represented on the Club Committee by Swimmers Representatives.
- The members are encouraged to help fundraise and make contributions on behalf of the Club.

In relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection, there is a Dolphins web-link link called the Strategy for Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sport.

The Wave Power poster is displayed on the Club notice board.

Other useful Freephone confidential telephone numbers are:

NSPCC Helpline: 08088005000

Childline: 0800 1111

Additional websites with downloads for information are:

1. Kidscape-have a helpline with information on downloadable leaflets on what to do if your child is being bullied. The Amateur Swimming Association has formed a relationships with Kidscape and can when required refer swimmers who have been bullied to attend courses. www.Kidscape.org.uk
2. www.culture.gov.uk Help keep your child Safe in Sport. A child protection leaflet for parents. Downloadable booklet.
3. Child Protection in Sport Unit Tel:0116 234 7278 www.thecpsu.org.uk also has useful downloadable documents including
4. Club safety list for parents
5. Protecting your child by listening
6. How you can help make sport safe
7. Setting the right example
8. Every Child Matters- www.everychildmatters.gov.uk