

Sedbergh Swimming Club

Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

This policy aims to demonstrate that Sedbergh Swimming Club ('the Club') is committed to keeping safe all children and adult members. The Swimming Club acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

It is important that the Swimming Club has policies and procedures in place so that all staff, volunteers and members can work together to prevent abuse and know what to do should a concern arise.

The Swimming Club provides teaching, development and the practice of swimming for its members which includes people from vulnerable groups (eg children and adults at risk).

Sedbergh Swimming Club recognises that children and adults may be the victims of different types of abuse including neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse. To help swimming clubs with child and adult welfare Swim England have produced a child and adult safeguarding policies and procedures publication called – Wavepower 2024. Sedbergh Swimming Club uses this publication as a point of reference and for guidance in relation to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk. Note – Sedbergh Swimming Club is not affiliated to Swim England.

Policy Statement

Sedbergh Swimming Club is committed to providing an environment in which all children, young people and adults participating in its activities have a safe and positive experience. The Club believes that all our members involved in the aquatics sports have the right to stay safe and have fun.

In order to achieve this the Club agrees to:

1. Refer to the policies and procedures in Wavepower for guidance.
2. Recognise that all people participating in the Club (regardless of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, ability or disability) have a right to enjoy their involvement in aquatics in a safe environment and be protected from harm.
3. Ensure that all individuals who work with children and adults at risk in the Club, whether paid or voluntary, provide a positive, safe and enjoyable experience for them.
4. Appoint a Welfare Officer with the necessary skills and training who will take the lead in dealing with all child and adult safeguarding matters raised within the Club. The Welfare Officer must not be in a close relationship with any other member of staff, whether voluntary or paid, within the organisation.
5. Ensure that details of how to contact the Welfare Officer are known to all staff, members and parents of members.
6. Ensure the Welfare Officer is available to discuss issues of concern on matters of safeguarding and deal with such concerns appropriately.

7. Ensure the safe recruitment of all staff and volunteers who work for the Club including the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and 2 references – see Recruitment Policy.
8. Ensure that all individuals who work with children or adults at risk in the Club have the appropriate training and have read the Club's codes of conduct for teachers, assistants, lifesavers and other staff.
9. Provide all members of the Club and parents of members with the opportunity to raise concerns in a safe and confidential manner if they have a concern about a child or adult's welfare.
10. Ensure that all child and adult safeguarding matters are dealt with appropriately taking guidance from Wavepower.
11. Ensure that confidentiality is maintained appropriately and in line with the best interests of the child or adult.
12. Ensure all papers relating to child and adult safeguarding matters are held in a safe and secure manner.

This Statement needs to be read in conjunction with the following policies/procedures:

- Confidentiality Policy
- Privacy Statement & Notice

And is supported by the following:

- Code of Conduct for teachers, assistants, lifesavers, and other staff
- Good Practice in the Care of Children
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Complaints Procedure

Sedbergh Swimming Club takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and adults and we will:

- Respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse
- Have a system for dealing with concerns about possible abuse
- Maintain good links with statutory childcare authorities.

Every individual has a responsibility to inform the Club's Welfare Officer of concerns relating to the safeguarding of children and adults.

The Club's Welfare Officer is:

Jackie Lawson who is nominated by the Club to act on their behalf in referring allegations of suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. Contact details: Mobile 07895 771890 or email Sedberghswimmingclub@gmail.com.

In the absence of the designated person, the matter should be brought to the attention of a member of the Management Committee. Email Sedberghswimmingclub@gmail.com.

The Designated Person must decide in the case of child safeguarding if the concerns should be communicated to Cumbria Safeguarding Hub or the Police. RLSS will be contacted for advice and guidance if it's felt necessary.

If a concern or disclosure involves an adult at risk the initial person to whom it's revealed must follow the procedures specifically related to adult safeguarding, initially ensuring they comply with the issue of 'has consent been given to share the information further?' - see Adult Safeguarding below.

In the absence of the Welfare Officer a member of the Management Committee should be contacted.

In the situation that the Welfare Officer is accused or reported as being involved in any safeguarding issue, the Chair of the Club will take responsibility for taking the appropriate action deemed necessary to outwork the Club's Safeguarding Policy.

What a member of Staff should do if a child discloses that they are being harmed or abused:

- treat the disclosure seriously;
- remain calm;
- listen carefully to what is said, allowing the discloser to continue at their own pace;
- be sensitive;
- keep questions to a minimum, only ask questions if you need to identify or clarify what the person is telling you and do not ask leading questions;
- reassure the person that they have done the right thing in revealing the information;
- ask them what they would like to happen next;
- explain what you would like to do next in response to the concern;
- act swiftly to report and carry out any required actions if you are a Welfare Officer; and
- record in writing what was said, using the child's own words, as soon as possible, along with any actions taken or proposed.

You must not:

- dismiss or ignore the concern;
- make negative comments about the alleged perpetrator;
- make assumptions or speculate;
- come to your own conclusions;
- probe for more information than is offered;
- make promises that cannot be kept, including that you will keep the disclosure secret when you cannot;
- conduct an investigation of the case yourself;
- confront the person thought to be causing harm;
- take sole responsibility for the concern; or
- tell anyone else about the concern who has no need to be made aware of it.

Report your discussion as soon as possible to the Club's Welfare Officer.

Once a child has talked about abuse the Club's Welfare Officer must consider if it is safe for a child to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On a rare occasion it might be necessary to take immediate action to contact the Cumbria Safeguarding Hub and/or the Police to discuss putting into effect safety measures for the child so that they do not return home.

To directly report concerns relating to children contact –

Cumbria Safeguarding Hub: 0333 240 1727

Allegations against staff or volunteers should be reported to the Club's Welfare Officer who will consult with the Local Authority's Designated Officer on how the matter should be taken forward in line with the procedures for managing allegations against staff.

In all cases the Club's Welfare Officer or if absent, a member of the Management Committee should complete the following RLSS UK Incident Report Form.

Adult Safeguarding

Sedbergh Swimming Club believes that all our members involved in aquatics sports have the right to stay safe and have fun. We will safeguard adults by endeavouring to ensure that our activities are delivered in a way which keeps all adults safe.

The Club is committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm to adults. This requires the recognition of adults who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how adult abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and a necessity to report safeguarding concerns.

The Club is committed to implementing best safeguarding practices and to upholding the rights of all adults to live free from harm and abuse, including exploitation and neglect.

Legislation

Adults at Risk are defined within legislation.

- The law provides a framework for good practice in adult safeguarding, placing the overall well-being of the Adult at Risk at the centre of any intervention.
- The law emphasises the importance of person-centred safeguarding, referred to as 'making safeguarding personal', however, it also provides a framework for decision-making on behalf of adults who cannot make decisions for themselves.
- There is a framework for organisations to share concerns they have about Adults at Risk with the local authority, including information sharing and cooperation.

Safeguarding of adults in England is covered by various pieces of legislation, including:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Care Act 2014
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulations

The principles underpinning adult safeguarding are:

1. **empowerment** – people should be supported and encouraged to make their own decisions with informed consent;
2. **prevention** – it is better to take action before harm occurs where possible;
3. **proportionality** – the least intrusive response that is appropriate to the risk presented should be taken;
4. **protection** – support and representation should be given to those in the greatest need;
5. **partnership** – local solutions should be provided by services working within their own communities. Such communities have a key role to play in prevention, detection and reporting; and
6. **accountability** – safeguarding should be delivered with accountability and transparency

Who is an Adult at Risk?

An Adult at Risk is an individual aged 18 years and over who:

- a. has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and
- b. is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- c. as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

All three requirements must be met in order to be considered an Adult at Risk.

Abuse and Neglect

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. Any or all of the following types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, omission or ignorance.

There are different types and patterns of abuse and neglect and different circumstances in which they may take place.

Safeguarding legislation includes the following types of abuse:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Neglect
- Financial

Abuse can take place within a sporting context and anyone could be the cause of harm to another person. For example: a member of staff, a coach, a volunteer, a member or a spectator.

Wellbeing principle

The concept of 'wellbeing' is woven throughout UK legislation and is part of the law about how health and social care is provided. Our wellbeing includes our mental and physical health, our relationships, our connection with our communities and our contribution to society.

Being able to live free from abuse and neglect is a key element of wellbeing.

For that reason any actions taken to safeguard an adult member must take their whole wellbeing into account and be proportionate to the risk of harm.

Mental capacity and decision making

We make many decisions every day, often without realising. UK law assumes that all people over the age of 16 have the ability to make their own decisions, unless it has been proved that they are unable to do so. It also gives us the right to make any decision that we need to make and gives us the right to make our own decisions even if others consider them to be unwise.

The law says that to make a decision we need to:

- understand information;
- remember it for long enough;
- think about the information; and
- communicate our decision.

A person's ability to do this may be affected by things such as learning disability, dementia, mental health needs, acquired brain injury and physical ill health.

Most adults have the ability to make their own decisions given the appropriate support. If someone has a disability that means they need support to understand or make a decision this support must be provided. A small number of people cannot make any decisions.

Being unable to make a decision is described as 'lacking mental capacity'.

A person's mental capacity can change. If it is safe and possible to do so, wait until they can be involved in decision making or can make the decision for themselves.

Mental Capacity must be considered when we believe abuse or neglect might be taking place. It is important to make sure an Adult at Risk has choices in the actions taken to safeguard them, including whether or not they want other people informed about what has happened. However, in some situations the adult may not have the mental capacity to understand the choice or to tell you their views.

Legislation describes when and how we can make decisions for people who are unable to make decisions for themselves.

The principles are the same:

- We can only make decisions for other people as a last resort where they cannot make the decision for themselves at the time it is needed. Therefore, if the decision can wait, we should wait, for example by obtaining assistance to help the person make their decision or waiting until they can make it themselves.
- If we have to make a decision for someone else then we must make the decision in their best interests (for their benefit) and take into account their overall wellbeing and what we know about their preferences and wishes.
- If the action we are taking to keep people safe will restrict them then we must think of the way to do that which restricts to their freedom and rights as little as possible while minimising the risks posed.

Many potential difficulties with making decisions can be overcome with preparation. A person needing support to help them make decisions whilst taking part in a swimming Club will ordinarily be accompanied by someone e.g. a family member or formal carer whose role includes supporting them to make decisions.

There may be times when we need to make decisions on behalf of an individual in an emergency.

Decisions taken in order to safeguard an adult who cannot make the decision for themselves could include:

- sharing information about safeguarding concerns with people that can help protect them; and
- stopping them being in contact with the person causing harm.

What a member of Staff should do once an adult has spoken about abuse

When made aware of concerns about an adult Member, a Welfare Officer must share such concerns with RLSS where any of the following consent conditions apply:

1. the adult Member has consented to the information being shared;
2. the adult Member is believed to lack the mental capacity to decide on the next steps themselves (if in doubt, please refer to the Safeguarding and Welfare Team);
3. the adult Member or someone else is at risk of harm; or
4. where a concern has been reported to an external body (such as the Police in an emergency), this must be reported as soon as practically possible.

The following three stages of action must be taken for anyone who may have a concern or is made aware of a concern about an adult Member's wellbeing:

Stage 1 – React to the concern, disclosure, suspicion or allegation in a timely and appropriate manner.

Stage 2 – Record the relevant information using the RLSS UK Incident Report Form.

Stage 3 – Report the information to the appropriate person(s) and/or organisation(s), subject to the above consent conditions being met.

Responding to a direct disclosure

If an adult discloses to you that they are being harmed or abused, or you are a Welfare Officer who receives information which gives a cause for concern, you should:

- treat the disclosure seriously;
- remain calm;
- listen carefully to what is said, allowing the discloser to continue at their own pace;
- be sensitive;
- keep questions to a minimum, only ask questions if you need to identify or clarify what the person is telling you and do not ask leading questions;
- reassure the person that they have done the right thing in revealing the information;
- ask them what they would like to happen next;
- explain what you would like to do next in response to the concern;
- ask for their consent for the information to be shared outside of Sedbergh Swimming Club;
- make an arrangement as to how you or the Club Welfare Officer can contact them safely;
- help them to contact other organisations for advice and support (e.g. Police, Domestic Abuse helpline, Victim Support).
- act swiftly to report and carry out any required actions if you are a Welfare Officer; and record in writing what was said, using the adult's own words, as soon as possible, along with any actions taken or proposed.
- if someone has a need for immediate medical attention you must always call an ambulance on **999**;
- if you are concerned someone is in immediate danger or a serious crime is being committed, you must contact the Police on **999** straight away;
- remember to be person-centred and to make safeguarding personal by discussing

your concerns with the adult Member and seeking to understand what they would like to happen where it is safe for you to do so.

The policy applies to all staff, volunteers and members of the Club and anyone working on behalf of the Club.

Reviewed: 6/9/26

RLSS UK Incident Report Form

If a child or young person or an adult at risk informs you directly that he/she, or another child or adult at risk, is concerned about someone's behaviour towards them please remember the following while completing this form.

- React calmly so as not to frighten or deter the child or adult at risk.
- Tell the child or adult at risk that he/she is not to blame and that he/she was right to tell.
- Take what the person says seriously.
- Keep any questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- Reassure the child or adult at risk but DO NOT make promises of confidentiality which might not be feasible in light of subsequent developments.
- Record in writing exactly what has been said using the child or adult at risk words.

Person's Details	Child ☐ Adult at risk ☐
First Name	
Surname	
Parents / Carer's name(s)	
Home address	
Postcode	
Telephone number	
Date of Birth	
Age	
Gender	Female ☐ Male ☐ Other ☐

Ethnicity	
White	British ☐ Irish ☐ Any other (please specify):
Mixed	White & Black Caribbean ☐ White & Black African ☐ White & Asian ☐ Any other mixed background (please specify)
Asian or Asian British	Indian ☐ Pakistani ☐ Bangladeshi ☐ Chinese ☐ Any other Asian Background (please specify):
Black or Black British	Caribbean ☐ African ☐ Any other Black Background (please specify):

Your details	
First Name	
Surname	
Club name	
RLSS UK Personal Society Number	
Your position within Club	
Home address	
Postcode	
Telephone number	
Mobile number	
Incident details	
Date of Incident	
Time of Incident	
Are you reporting you own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else	
If responding to concerns raised by somebody else please provide their name and position within the Club	
Incident details: Please provide details of the incident (what was observed or reported to you) or concerns you have, including dates, time and venue.	

Please detail exactly what was said, if your concerns are the result of a child speaking to you, include date, time and venue:	
Have you spoken to the parent/s?	Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes please provide details of what was said:
Have you spoken to the child? If Yes what was said	Yes ☐ No ☐
Have you spoken to the person the allegations are being made against?	Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes please provide details of what was said:
Please provide details of further action taken to date	
Statutory authorities and agencies (Police, Social Services, Children Services or Adult Services)	
Have you informed statutory agencies (Police or Children's Services/Adult Services)	Yes ☐ No ☐

Name of Statutory authority/Agency	Log number: Name of person: Position of the person: If yes please provide details of what was said:
Police	Log number: Name of person: Position of the person: If yes please provide details of what was said:
Were there any witnesses to the incident?	Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, please ensure you get a full witness report from them and ask the witness to complete the Witness Report Form
Your Signature	
Print Name	
Date	