



## Saffron Walden Swimming Club Safeguarding and Welfare Policy

### Introduction

Ensuring the safety of our swimmers is a key part of how Saffron Seals operates. It helps us to provide a safe, happy and fun environment where the swimmers can develop their swimming skills. The underlying principles are that:

- Safeguarding swimmers is the first consideration.
- All swimmers regardless of age, any disability they might have, gender, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation have a right to be protected from abuse.
- All swimmers must be treated with dignity and respect.

There are a couple of definitions that are important to explain at the start of this document:

1. **Safeguarding** is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding means: protecting children from abuse and maltreatment; preventing harm to children's health or development; ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
2. A **child** is defined as a person under eighteen years of age (Children Act 1989).

At Saffron Seals where we refer to children and safeguarding we are doing so as defined in this policy and in Wavepower.

The responsibility to safeguard children does not belong to any one person. Instead it belongs to everyone who plays a part in delivering the Club's activities.

To help clubs like Saffron Seals with safeguarding Swim England produce their **Wavepower** publication. This details the child safeguarding policies and procedures that Seals must comply with.

Wavepower is a large document and it has been split into sections for easier access. The full document can be accessed at the following site <https://www.swimming.org/swimengland/wavepower-child-safeguarding-for-clubs/>

Swim England Child Safeguarding Contact: [safeguarding@swimming.org](mailto:safeguarding@swimming.org)

### The Seals Approach

Saffron Seals acknowledges that children, young people, and all its members and coaches have the right to be treated with respect and that their concerns should be listened to and acted upon. Accordingly, members who make allegations of abuse will be supported by the Club, and all information received will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

The Club aims to provide an environment that is safe, secure and free from threat for all members and, in order to achieve this Saffron Seals:

- Adopts and implements the Swim England Wavepower 2024 policies and procedures in full.
- Recognises that all swimmers participating in the club (regardless of age, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, ability or disability) have a right to enjoy their involvement in swimming and be protected from harm and be in a safe environment.
- Ensures that those individuals, who work at the club (paid or voluntary), whether it be with children and/or adults at risk, provide a: positive, safe and enjoyable experience for members.
- Appoints an independent Club Welfare Officer (CWO) with the necessary skills and training as outlined by Swim England. The CWO will take the lead in dealing with all child safeguarding matters raised within the club.
- Ensures that the Club Welfare Officer's name and contact details are known to all staff, members and parents of members and be available to discuss issues of concern on matters of safeguarding and deal with such concerns appropriately and in line with Wavepower 2024 guidance.
- Ensures all those persons who work with children in the club have undertaken the appropriate training and relevant DBS (formerly CRB) checks and adhere to the required practices for safeguarding children as outlined in Wavepower 2024.
- Ensures that all individuals recruited for both voluntary and paid roles in the club activities have been recruited through the safer Swim England recruitment procedure outlined in Wavepower 2024.
- Ensures that all individuals who work with children and/or adults at risk in the club have the appropriate training, agreed to club policies and codes of conduct including to adhere the guidance outlined in Wavepower 2024.

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- Provides all club members with the opportunity to raise concerns in a safe and confidential manner if they have a concern about a child's welfare or safeguarding. The CWO's contact details are published on the Saffron Seals website for non-members and/or members (including the members area) to access, as well as communicating these contact details to new members in a welcome email.
- Ensures that all child safeguarding matters, whether they be concerns about child/adult at risk welfare or safeguarding, are dealt with appropriately in accordance with the guidance for reporting and action in Wavepower 2024.
- Ensures that confidentiality is maintained appropriately and in line with the best interests of the child/adult at risk.
- Ensures all papers/reporting relating to club safeguarding matters are held in a safe and secure manner.

Saffron Seals requires all its members to sign up to and adhere to our Codes of Behaviour, codes which support our safeguarding ambitions.

The Club have a Club Welfare Office (CWO) who should be contacted regarding safeguarding concerns and who also advises and supports the Committee and Coaching Team on their responsibilities.

Other useful numbers if you wish to report concerns of abuse include:

- NSPCC 0800 800 5000
- Childline 0800 1111
- Swimline 0808 100 4001 or 0800 731 7466

If you are a Club member and you want to raise a concern, you can speak to any adult who is involved in the Club whom you trust, and your concern will be dealt with. If you don't feel able to talk to someone, sometimes it's easier to write things down and pass on a note. There's a leaflet here that you can print off, that gives some ideas for what you can do, and a form that you can use if you like:

**CHILD POWER**

**We Want You**

- To feel welcome and safe in our sport with a friendly and happy atmosphere within your club.
- To be cared for by experienced people who understand your needs.
- To receive support, praise and encouragement when you achieve.
- To receive help with areas you find a little more difficult or challenging.
- To tell somebody if you feel unhappy or afraid in anyway in your club.
- To say "STOP" if you do not like something that is happening to you.

**We Will**

- Always listen to you and your needs, as you are important to the ASA.
- Always try to help you if you are afraid and unhappy.
- Treat you as a person, respect you and value your thoughts.
- Provide you with opportunities to learn new skills and build your confidence.

Sometimes grown ups and adults find it difficult to recognise that you are worried or unhappy about something. They need your help to tell them.

**IF YOU ARE WORRIED OR UNHAPPY ABOUT SOMETHING PLEASE "TELL" YOUR CLUB WELFARE OFFICER OR AN ADULT YOU TRUST AT YOUR CLUB - THEY WILL HELP YOU!**

If you find it difficult to tell somebody at your club you can tell: -

**Your Parents/Carers**  
**Your Teacher**  
**An adult you trust**

If it is just not possible to tell anyone close to you there are others who can help by calling: -

**Swimline 0808 100 4001**  
**Child Line 0800 1111**  
**NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000**

You can also visit the following websites: -

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)  
[www.worriedneed2talk.org.uk](http://www.worriedneed2talk.org.uk)  
[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)  
[www.there4me.com](http://www.there4me.com)  
[www.bullying.co.uk](http://www.bullying.co.uk)

Once someone is told why you are unhappy they can tell your club who will help you and something will be done about it.

If you don't want to give your name you don't have to, just leave your name blank on the attached slip and ask somebody you trust to hand this in for you to your club.

Your club will share your concern only with people that need to know so they can help you.

**YOUR VOICE**

If you don't want to tell someone yourself you can complete this slip and hand it to a grown up or adult you trust at your club or your Club Welfare Officer who will help you.

If you don't want to write your name you don't have to, just leave your name blank and ask someone you trust to hand it in for you to your club.

**Name:** .....

**Club:** .....

**I am unhappy because.....**

.....

.....

.....

**What can we do to make you feel happy again?**

.....

.....

.....

**Please can you make me feel happy again?**

**If you receive this form from a child (under 18) please take it to the Club Welfare Officer for action.**

**wave power**

However, it is not the CWO's responsibility to deal with day-to-day matters of dissatisfaction, unless a member believes these matters are leading to a safeguarding issue.

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## Process for Raising Concerns about the running of Saffron Seals

If you are dissatisfied with any of the following matters:

- Coaching / Training programme provided by the Club or your role within it (if any)
- The swimming programme generally
- Supervision within the Club
- Any other matter directly affecting the Club's activities

you should proceed in line with the following approach:

1. If it relates to any Coaching / Training swimming programme or supervision matter raise it informally with the Head Coach or any other member of the Coaching Team, if you prefer.
2. If it relates to any other matter affecting the Club's activities raise it informally with any Committee member.
3. If you are dissatisfied with the response given or the decision made you should raise the matter with the Club Committee by writing to the Club Secretary giving details of your concerns and why you are unhappy with the response or decision given.
4. The Committee will normally consider your letter at the first available Committee meeting and will investigate and discuss the matter as required.
5. The Committee may, at their discretion, continue the matter pending such further investigation and discussion as may be required to the next available Committee meeting.
6. The Committee will normally advise you of their decision in writing within 14 days of the meeting or continued meeting at which the matter was discussed and will endeavour also to advise you in writing of any decision to continue the matter.

The Committee undertake to consider and determine all matters as quickly fairly and reasonably as possible.

## **The Role of the Club Welfare Office (CWO)**

This role is essential in providing a first point of contact for children, parents and adults within the Club who have a safeguarding concern.

In partnership with the Club's Committee, the CWO ensures that the Club is adopting and implementing safeguarding policy and procedures which are necessary for it to demonstrate its duty of care to children. The importance of the role cannot be underestimated – the CWO may become involved in the most private aspects of a Club member's life and take part in meetings and discussions with the Police and Statutory Agencies in order to safeguard a child/children.

The CWO does not hold any other position on the Club Committee, and is not an active teacher or coach at the Club. In addition, the CWO is not related to other members of the Committee or members of the Coaching Team.

## Duties of the Club Welfare Office (CWO)

- To assist the Club to put Wavepower, Swim England's Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures document, in place.
- To assist the Club to put implementation plans in place for safeguarding.
- To be the first point of contact for Club staff, volunteers, young people, and parents for any issues concerning safeguarding.
- To ensure that all incidents are reported correctly and referred, in accordance with Wavepower.
- To act independently and in the best interests of a child at the Club, putting their needs above that of others and the Club itself.
- To ensure that all relevant Club members, volunteers and staff have a DBS Enhanced Disclosure and the opportunity to access appropriate child safeguarding training.
- To ensure that Swim England Wavepower procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed.
- To ensure that all appropriate existing staff or volunteers have an up-to-date DBS Enhanced Disclosure. These should be updated every 3 years.
- To be aware of and have a note of contact details of the Local Children's Services, Police, Local Authority Designated Officer and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and the Swim England Safeguarding Team.
- To ensure that Codes of Conduct are in place for Club staff, volunteers, coaches, competitors and parents.
- To sit on the Club Management Committee to advise on safeguarding issues or be in attendance as necessary.
- To ensure confidentiality is maintained and information is only shared on a 'need to know' basis.

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## Additional Information and Terms

### What is Child Abuse?

It's generally acknowledged that there are four main types of abuse – Physical, Sexual, Emotional and Neglect.

PHYSICAL ABUSE may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm or deliberate ill health to a child. It might also occur if a child is forced to train beyond his/her capabilities.

SEXUAL ABUSE involves forcing or enticing a child 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 material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child that adversely effects their development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, and inadequate, or where inappropriate expectations are put upon them.

**In a sporting context 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.**

NEGLECT is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as failing to provide shelter, food, clothing, or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

**In a sporting context it could also mean failing to ensure that a child is safe or exposing them to harm.**

### What is Poor Practice?

Poor Practice is less clearly defined, but the following are possible examples:

- use of any physical or humiliating punishments;
- failure to act when you witness possible abuse or bullying;
- being unaware of or breaching Codes of Conduct;
- spending excessive amounts of time alone with young people when coaching;
- allowing any form of inappropriate touching;
- allowing young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- making sexually suggestive comments even in fun;
- reducing a person to tears as a form of control;
- allowing allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged or not acted upon;
- leaving a child unaccompanied for prolonged periods;
- doing things of a personal nature that young people can do for themselves.

Many types of abuse and poor practice have been observed and reported in the UK swimming environment.

Abuse is often committed by a person well known and trusted to the child in the swimming club. It can also be committed by another young person. Sibling and peer abuse has been recognised as an ongoing aspect of child protection in swimming and should be recognised and addressed. Other concerns have involved the use of racist language and racist taunts which will not be tolerated by the club.

All adults involved in swimming 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.

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## In Summary

We want members of Saffron Seals:

- to feel welcome and safe when participating in the Club's activities
- to be cared for by appropriately qualified people who care
- to receive support, praise and encouragement when goals are achieved
- to receive help with areas that are found to be more challenging
- to feel safe and confident to tell somebody if they feel unhappy or afraid in any of the Club's activities
- to be able to say "STOP" if they don't like something that is happening to them.

As a club, Saffron Seals will

- always listen to you and your needs
- always try to help if you are afraid or unhappy
- treat you as a person, respect you and value your thoughts
- provide you with opportunities to learn new skills and build you confidence.

We engage a Club Welfare Office (as a volunteer) to support the Club in delivering this environment and to help all members in safeguarding matters.

We expect all our members, volunteers and paid coaches to respect this policy and to respect the role of the CWO. Any attempt to use the Club's policy and principles on safeguarding for alternative or personal grievances will not be tolerated.

For any questions on this policy please contact the Executive Committee members or the CWO.